

2023

IDAHO PROPRIETARY SCHOOL REGISTRATION GUIDE

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WELCOME

Welcome to the Idaho Proprietary School Registration Guide. This guide is designed to help you understand Idaho's requirements related to the registration of proprietary schools.

If you are:

- Applying to register a new proprietary school,
- Renewing the registration of an existing school, or
- Making changes to a school's ownership or course offerings

...this guide is for you!

Proprietary schools offer vocational training for career paths that don't require associates, bachelors, or advanced degrees. In some cases (but not all) they prepare students to become licensed or certified in their fields. For a complete legal definition, see [Idaho Code §33-3401\(11\)](#).

The types of training available through proprietary schools vary widely. Some examples include: massage therapy, dental assisting, commercial truck driving, dog grooming, phlebotomy, medical coding, welding, culinary arts, and equine dentistry.

Throughout this guide, we will often refer to proprietary schools as simply "schools."

Proprietary schools are different from degree-granting institutions like community colleges and universities. They are also different from educational programs for elementary or high school students, since proprietary schools focus on postsecondary (after high school) education.

The Idaho State Board of Education manages the registration of proprietary schools. Our office can assist you with everything from your initial application to ongoing compliance.

We've created this guide to help you determine whether registration is required in your school's case. If you do need to register, the guide will:

- Explain the registration process,
- Describe the documentation you'll need to include with your application,
- Help you understand why registration is required in the first place, and
- Prepare you to maintain your registration as your business changes over time.

Though registration may seem like one more task on your long to-do list, we hope you'll see how it benefits not only Idaho's community and students, but also your proprietary school. If it seems a bit overwhelming, don't worry. We're here to help you along the way.

Ready? Let's go!

WHAT IS A PROPRIETARY SCHOOL?

Idaho law defines a proprietary school as a person, business, or other entity which offers courses of study, but which does not offer degrees.

History and Purpose

Idaho's legislature passed a law requiring proprietary school registration in 1993. The new statute directed the Idaho State Board of Education to write administrative rules describing the procedure for registration. Throughout this guide, you'll see citations to relevant statutes and rules. The final page includes a link for easy access to both.

References to statute will look like this: Section 33-2401, Idaho Code, or I.C. §33-2401.

References to administrative rule will look like this: IDAPA 08.01.11. IDAPA stands for Idaho Administrative Procedures Act.

Each of the United States has proprietary school registration requirements. Though the details vary, their primary purpose is always the same: to protect students as consumers.

No school operations, including advertising or instruction, may take place until registration is complete.
IDAPA 08.01.11.101.01

Idaho's registration requirements ensure that schools provide clear, reliable information to students and prospective students. The documents you develop through the registration process will:

- Describe the courses and programs you offer
- Provide complete details regarding the cost of attendance
- Clarify the outcomes students may expect, such as certification or job eligibility
- Explain the rights and responsibilities of students and school employees
- Provide a clear grievance process
- Ensure your marketing materials accurately represent your school
- Protect students' financial investments through a surety bond or accreditation

The application will also walk you through some practical aspects of operating a school. You will:

- Consider important resources such as finances, facilities, curriculum, and expertise
- Determine whether any trade or occupational board training standards apply to your school
- Draft policies to inform processes such as enrollment, attendance, refunds, and hiring
- Prepare to meet ongoing requirements including maintenance of financial records, agent background checks, and annual registration renewals
- Upon approval, ensure you are listed on the State Board of Education's website as a registered proprietary school

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN STATUTE AND ADMINISTRATIVE RULE?

Statutes are passed by the legislature. Administrative rules are typically developed by state agencies and approved by the legislature. Rules to add detail to statutory provisions. Both carry the force of law.

WHY DO I HAVE TO REGISTER?

The primary purposes of proprietary school registration are to protect students and ensure that quality educational programs are provided throughout the state.

REGISTRATION REQUIREMENT

Before we get into the details, let's talk about who needs to register as a proprietary school. Basically, you need to register if you:

1. Maintain a physical presence in Idaho, and
2. Offer courses that are vocational in nature.

Physical Presence IDAPA 08.01.11.101.01.b & IDAPA 08.01.11.300.02

What exactly does "physical presence" mean? The answer may surprise you. Your school is considered to have a physical presence in Idaho if one or more of the following apply:

- You operate or purport to operate from a location within the state of Idaho
- You own, rent, lease, or use any office or other type of physical location in Idaho
- You have a mailing or shipping center in Idaho
- You represent in any way, such as on a website or in marketing materials, that you have an Idaho street or mailing address, including a post office box

Idaho presence does not include:

- Distance or online education delivered to Idaho students from an institution located outside the state of Idaho
- Internships occurring in Idaho when students are employed by or provide services to a business in Idaho and receive course credit from an institution related to those activities
- Activities limited to recruitment or interviewing of applicants or potential students in Idaho

Registration FAQs

Q. My school is a registered non-profit. Do I have to register?

A. Yes. Registration requirements are unaffected by non-profit or for-profit status.

Q. I won't be charging tuition. Do I have to register?

A. Yes. However, you may not be required to carry a surety bond.

Q. My school is registered in another state. Do I have to register in Idaho?

A. Yes. Idaho's requirements apply regardless of registration in other states.

Idaho law does provide for certain exemptions from the registration requirement. We'll discuss those in the next section.

Idaho's registration requirements apply even if your school is a non-profit, doesn't charge tuition, or is registered in another state.

EXEMPTIONS FROM REGISTRATION I.C. §33-2403(4)

Idaho law provides certain exemptions from registration. If you aren't sure whether you qualify for one or more of these exemptions, give our office a call to talk it over.

Avocational Instruction

You are exempt from registration if your courses or programs are avocational in nature.

Proprietary schools are designed to prepare students for employment or self-employment. If the instruction you provide is for recreational purposes, rather than to prepare students for a vocation, you don't need to register.

For example, if you are teaching horseback riding, piano, archery, gardening, or orienteering, you likely don't need to register because people generally practice those skills as hobbies.

Similarly, if you are teaching people to train their own puppies, you are exempt because the purpose of the course is recreational. However, if you are teaching people to become professional dog trainers, you are not exempt because the purpose of the course is to prepare students to work in the field.

What if you're training the puppies themselves? Don't worry! Proprietary school registration is only for schools whose students are human.

Some proprietary schools offer training that can be both avocational and vocational, depending on the student's intentions. For example, an interior decorating course might be taken by both an ambitious homeowner and an aspiring designer. In this case, registration would likely be required.

Compulsory Education

You are exempt from registration if your courses or programs comply with compulsory education law.

Compulsory education is schooling that is required by the government. Idaho's compulsory education law (I.C. §33-2) requires that all children between the ages 7 and 16 be instructed in the subjects commonly taught in Idaho public schools.

If you are teaching typical school subjects to elementary or high school students, whether in a public, private, or homeschooling environment, you do not need to register.

However, you may need to register if you are teaching vocational skills such as welding, carpentry, or culinary arts to students (including those of high school age) beyond the scope of compulsory education.

Employee Training

You are exempt from registration if your courses or programs educate only employees who aren't charged tuition.

If you are offering courses for the training and preparation of your own employees, and do not charge them tuition, you are exempt from registration.

You are also exempt if you offer courses for the training and preparation of a sponsoring employer's own employees. In this case, the sponsoring employer may pay you directly, but students must not be charged tuition.

The key to this exemption is that the students must actually be employed by the sponsoring entity when the training takes place. They cannot be prospective employees who might be hired upon completion of the training, nor may they be employees of an entity other than the sponsoring employer.

Title 54

You are exempt from registration if your courses or programs are regulated by another state agency pursuant to [Title 54](#).

Idaho's Title 54 lists certain types of professionals or entities that are regulated, licensed, or registered with state agencies. A few examples include accountants, surveyors, athletic trainers, and funeral directors.

It can be tricky to determine whether a school related to a type of entity listed in Title 54 needs to register as a proprietary school. This is because Title 54 sometimes regulates the practice of a profession but not the training of students in that profession.

Cosmetology is a common field in which training providers do not need to register as proprietary schools. They do, however, need to register with the [Idaho Division of Occupational and Professional Licenses](#). This is because [I.C. §54-58](#) specifies that cosmetology schools must be approved by the Barber and Cosmetology Services Licensing Board.

On the other hand, the Idaho Board of Massage Therapy establishes requirements for the licensure of massage therapists. A licensed massage therapist does not need to register as a proprietary school in order to give massages. However, [I.C. §54-40](#) requires massage therapy educational programs to register as proprietary schools.

If the field in which you plan to offer training is listed in Title 54, please contact our office to talk over the details regarding possible exemption.

Test Preparation Review

You are exempt from registration if your courses or programs provide review for test preparation.

If you plan to offer intensive review courses designed to prepare students for specific tests, you do not need to register as a proprietary school. Such tests include public accountancy tests, law school aptitude tests, bar examinations, medical college admissions, or similar exams.

The key to this exemption is the word "review." If your school offers the initial training that prepares a student to apply for certification or licensure, you are not exempt, even if the certification or licensure process involves an exam. Common examples include courses in phlebotomy and commercial driving.

This exemption applies only to courses that review something a student has already studied at length. For example, if your students just graduated from law school and are preparing to take the bar exam; you are exempt because you are providing an intensive review of material the students already learned.

Brief and Infrequent Instruction

You are exempt from registration if your courses or programs are both short and infrequent.

If you will offer only workshops or seminars lasting no longer than three calendar days and no more than four times per year, you do not need to register as a proprietary school.

Note that both brevity and frequency standards apply. If your courses are short but frequent, or infrequent but longer than three days, you are not exempt.

Religious Instruction

You are exempt from registration if your school is religiously affiliated and offers courses or programs that are solely religious in nature.

Parochial or denominational schools providing instruction relating solely to religion, and for which degrees are not granted, are exempt from registration. It is important to note that if the training extends beyond religion (perhaps to include teacher training or business), the exemption does not apply.

Western Governor's University

You are exempt from registration if your courses or programs offer postsecondary credit under Western Governors University.

Western Governors University (WGU) is an accredited university that is based in Utah but offers online courses to students in many states. Individuals or entities offering postsecondary credit through the consortium of public and private colleges and universities under the auspices of WGU are exempt from proprietary school registration.

Flight Instruction

You are exempt from registration if your courses or programs provide flight instruction with little or no advance payment.

This exemption applies if you are offering flight instruction and accept payment either on a per-flight basis, or if advance payment is limited to no more than 15 percent of the total course or program cost.

Certificate of Exemption

Our office can provide you with a Certificate of Exemption upon request. The state doesn't require you to hold a Certificate of Exemption, but it may help you demonstrate compliance to other entities.

FAILURE TO COMPLY

Idaho law prescribes both civil and criminal penalties for violation of the proprietary school registration statute.

Civil penalties may result when there is evidence that a person has engaged in, or is about to engage in, any act or practice that violates Idaho statute or administrative rule pertaining to proprietary school registration.

Intentional violation of Idaho statute regarding proprietary school registration is a misdemeanor punishable by 6 months of imprisonment, a fine of up to \$5,000, or both.

Intentional failure to register is a felony punishable by a year's imprisonment, a \$10,000 fine, or both.

WHAT IF I HAVE BEEN OPERATING WITHOUT REGISTRATION?

If you have been operating a school and just learned about the registration requirement, don't worry! Our office will be happy to work with you in good faith to achieve compliance.

PROCESS AND TIMELINE

Okay! You're still reading, so let's assume you've determined that you do need to register as a proprietary school. Now what?

The registration process is fairly straightforward. You're already on your way to completing the first step, which is to review this guide. Once you've done that, you will:

1. Complete your [New Proprietary School Initial Registration Application](#) form
2. Gather the required attachments listed on the application form
3. Ensure that the application and Certification of Compliance are signed by an appropriate official
4. Submit your application, attachments, and \$100.00 registration fee to the State Authorization Program Manager at the Office of the State Board of Education
5. Respond to our questions and requests for additional information
6. Obtain a surety bond
7. Receive notice of application approval and display your new registration certificate at your place of business

Applications are accepted by the Office of the State Board of Education year-round. They are reviewed by our State Authorization Program Manager, who is also available to assist you throughout the process.

Idaho law advises applicants to allow 3 - 5 months for review after applying. Fortunately, it usually doesn't take that long. Applications submitted in April, May, or June will be processed more slowly due to our workload associated with the annual renewals of schools that are already registered.

You can speed the process by ensuring your initial application is as complete as possible, then providing prompt and thorough responses to our feedback.

Once your initial application is approved, you'll be free to operate as a proprietary school. Your registration must be renewed annually, and renewal is not automatic.

Registration renewal applications and fees must be submitted each year at the beginning of May. Renewal applications are simpler than initial applications, but you'll still want to plan ahead to ensure you are prepared to submit all required documentation.

We'll talk about what to expect at renewal later. First, let's explore the initial registration application.

FEE? WHAT FEE?

The State Board of Education assesses an annual registration fee. The initial fee is \$100. Subsequent annual fees are based on your tuition receipts, at a rate of 0.5% of your gross Idaho tuition revenue – but not less than \$100 or more than \$5,000.

INITIAL REGISTRATION APPLICATION

Formatting and Submission Instructions

The New Proprietary School Initial Registration Application form begins with instructions. Please review them carefully so you can plan for appropriate formatting and submission.

If possible, you should submit your application and attachments via email, as a single PDF. In some cases, file size will demand that you break your submission into a few, separate PDFs. The upper limit of five PDFs should be plenty. You may need to use an online file-sharing service (like DropBox or Google Docs) instead of email, but we prefer that you avoid this if you can. Hard copies will not be accepted.

You can help make our review process efficient by:

- Submitting the smallest possible number of files. Please do not send each required document as a separate attachment. Applicants submitted in more than five PDFs will not be accepted.
- Arranging your documents logically. Many schools do this by ordering them to match the list of required documents in the application itself. Alternatively, you may wish to group many of the documents into functional references for your business, such as Policies and Procedures, an Employee Handbook, a Course Catalog, and a Student Handbook.

Your non-refundable, \$100 initial registration fee will need to be submitted by mail. We are unable to accept credit cards or other forms of online payment. Since you're new to our office and we receive many checks every day, please make sure yours is clearly marked with your school name. Better yet, write your school name and "proprietary school application" on the memo line.

There is no need to mail or deliver hard copies of anything except your check. All other materials must be submitted electronically.

Want to make your application stand out? Take the time to polish it! We recommend that you:

- Find a good proofreader who can catch any errors and point out information that is unclear.
- Make sure all the documents you submit are your own. Borrowing language directly from another school, business, individual, or other entity may be considered plagiarism. Avoid embarrassment by ensuring that you use others' work for reference only.
- Run through the application checklist prior to submission, just to make sure you've included everything.
- Use Adobe Reader, which is available for free online, to complete the application electronically.

WHO IS MY CONTACT PERSON AT THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION?

Registration is handled by Tamara Baysinger, State Authorization Program Manager.

You are welcome to call (208) 332-1587

or

email tamara.baysinger@osbe.idaho.gov

Proprietary School Information

School Name

This is an easy one, right? Well...sort of.

Proprietary schools are also individuals or private businesses, so the information you enter in this field may reflect a corporation name in addition to the school name. Depending on your situation, the school name you enter might look like one of the following examples:

- Sunhill Training Center
- Sunhill Training Center, LLC
- Career Makers, Inc. dba Sunhill Training Center

Be sure your school name isn't misleading to potential students. Avoid words like "college" or "university," since most people associate them with degree-granting institutions.

Business Entity Type

Even if you plan to operate as an individual or sole proprietor, your school needs to be registered with the Idaho Secretary of State before you apply to become a registered proprietary school. These two types of registration are unrelated to one another.

Business registration instructions may be found at the [Idaho Secretary of State's Office website](#). They'll walk you through registering as one of the following:

- An individual/sole proprietor operating under an assumed business name (ABN), which will be the name of your school
- A corporation whose name is the same as that of the school, typically when the school is the only business operated by the corporation
- A corporation operating under an ABN, which will be the name of your school, typically when the corporation operates other businesses in addition to the school
- A foreign filing entity operating in Idaho under your school name

WHAT IF MY CORPORATION IS REGISTERED IN ANOTHER STATE?

You still need to register with the Idaho Secretary of State. In this case, your corporation will register as a foreign filing entity.

Some proprietary schools are operated alongside related businesses.

For example, suppose you offer a dog grooming service in addition to teaching other people how to groom dogs.

In this case, it may be beneficial to register the dog grooming school with the Idaho Secretary of State separately from the dog grooming

service, either as a separate corporation or as an ABN. At the very least, you'll need to keep the school's financial records separate from those of the grooming service.

Contact Information

Please provide a current mailing address for your school. We realize that this may change as your business takes shape. You're welcome to provide updates as needed.

The form also asks for your website URL and links to any social media profiles.

But wait! Doesn't the law say you can't advertise until you are registered?

Yes, it does. For that reason, the following scenarios may apply:

- You may have a website developed, but not yet published online. Most website development tools will let you share a private link with us so we can review the content before it goes live.
- You may be holding off on developing your website. That's fine; you can update us later as soon as it's available.
- You may have a fully operational website because your school has active campuses in other states. That's fine, too; just be sure not to represent that you have an Idaho location until registration is complete.

AM I REQUIRED TO HAVE A WEBSITE?

No. If you do choose to have one, be sure it:

1) accurately represents your school

and

2) doesn't go live until you're registered.

When we review your website and social media, we'll be looking through our usual lens of consumer protection. We'll ask: Does the site clearly describe the offered programs? Does it avoid misrepresentation about job prospects, credit transferability, and outcomes? Is it easy to see how long courses will take and how much they will cost? Can we easily locate the school's grievance process?

Finally, the form will request a primary contact for state registration purposes. This is exactly what it sounds like – the person who will be the main point of contact between your school and our office. This may be one of the school's owners or founders, a key employee, or perhaps a compliance officer of a multi-state enterprise. Just pick the person to whom we should address our correspondence including reviews, reminders, and your registration certificate. If that individual changes, remember to let us know.

Physical Locations in Idaho

This is the place to list your school's Idaho locations. Include all different types of facilities, such as offices, classrooms, and training yards. If students will be placed in clinicals at other businesses, you don't need to list those here. Sites for clinical placements will appear in the information you provide to prospective students, which we'll discuss later.

Alongside each location's physical address, provide the name and contact information for the head officer of that location. Depending on the size and organization of your school, this may be the same person or multiple individuals. We're looking for the most senior individual who is in charge at each location listed. Make a mental note to keep our office updated as different head officers come and go over time.

WHAT IF I DON'T HAVE A LOCATION YET?

This is common among new schools. If you don't know what your physical address will be, just tell us what you do know at the time of application.

In what city are you searching for space? What's the status of your search?

We'll update our files as your plans coalesce.

Of course, it's possible that you'll add or change locations at some point. We have a simple form for you to fill out to keep our records current. The [Existing Proprietary School Location Change or Addition Form](#) will walk you through a handful of document updates and other considerations relevant to the new location.

School Representatives

This section asks you to provide information about all owners, school officials, and instructors. You do not need to include support personnel such as individuals handling accounting or administrative work.

Information about your school's representatives helps us understand the expertise they bring to their roles. This information is important to students as well, and you'll need to provide each student with a complete list of instructors and their qualifications.

Idaho requires that each owner, agent, instructor, and school official be appropriately qualified by any applicable trade board. If any of your representatives have occupational licenses, certifications, or degrees that are relevant to your school, be sure to include that information. For example, it's important to demonstrate that instructors at massage schools are licensed to practice massage therapy in Idaho.

This section also ensures we have a backup contact in case your primary contact can't be reached.

Accrediting Body

Upon arriving at this section of the application, most aspiring proprietary schools should simply check the box for "Not Accredited."

Accreditation is an intensive review process focused on ensuring that an educational program meets the established quality standards of an accrediting body, or accreditor. Accreditors are private associations that identify criteria for educational standards and evaluate whether schools meet those criteria.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ACCREDITATION AND REGISTRATION?

Accreditation is granted by an accrediting body that focuses on educational quality standards. Registration is approved by the State Board of Education and focuses on consumer protection.

Remember:

Registration does not equal accreditation!

It is important to understand that the Idaho State Board of Education is not an accrediting body. In fact, the Board does not review course or program curriculum; our focus is consumer protection. Proprietary school registration should not be considered an endorsement of the school or its courses.

Many proprietary schools teach programs for which accreditation is unavailable. However, some proprietary schools may choose to seek accreditation.

For the most part, accreditation status does not affect your proprietary school registration. However, your school will not need to maintain a surety bond if it is accredited by an accrediting body that is recognized by the State Board of Education. Our staff can help you determine whether your proposed accreditor is recognized by the Board.

Idaho does have a process by which the Board may choose to recognize other accreditation organizations on a case-by-case basis, though this is uncommon.

*Accreditation is not the same as registration.
Registering as a proprietary school does not make your school “accredited.”*

Course / Program Descriptions

Now for the fun part! This section requests three pieces of information:

1. The courses and programs you offer – In this column, simply provide the title of each course or program. Additional detail will be requested later.
2. The length of each course or program – In this column, describe the length of each course or program in the format that makes the most sense for your school. Depending on the nature of the offering, you may describe this in terms of hours, weeks, or months.
3. The outcome of each course or program – In this column, describe the outcome of each course or program. Will students walk away with third-party certification or licensure? Will they be prepared to apply or test for certification or licensure? If third-party certification or licensure is unavailable in your field, you may wish to offer a certificate of completion.

A word of caution: Choose your words carefully, so as not to mislead students about the nature of your course or program outcomes. Don't refer to “certification” unless a standardized, third-party certification is available. Definitely refrain from claims that students will earn a “degree.” Referring to a “certificate of completion” is almost always appropriate.

Registration Fee

Proprietary school registration isn't free, though it is relatively inexpensive in the big scheme of running a business. The initial registration fee is \$100.00. You should mail it to our office when you submit your application electronically. Mailing instructions are provided on page 1 of the application. Be sure to write your school name and “proprietary school application” on your check.

Once your school is registered, your annual fee will be assessed at a rate of 0.5% of your gross Idaho tuition revenue, or GITR. However, the fee will never be less than \$100.00 or more than \$5,000. You'll mail a check at the beginning of May each year when you submit your renewal application electronically.

You can save yourself a hassle at renewal time by tracking tuition revenue correctly from the very beginning. Be sure you can provide details of your tuition received and refunds issued on a quarterly basis.

We will verify your reported GITR against your Income Statement (also known as a Profit & Loss Statement), so be sure you're prepared to provide that information as well. Most small schools find that a basic accounting software product is all they need.

Note that the law requires you to keep your school’s financial records separate from any sponsoring individual or entity. If your school is run alongside another business, such as a commercial driving school operated by a trucking company, plan to keep the two entities’ financial records distinct.

Required Attachments

At this point in the application, you’ll see a list of checkboxes. These are the documents you are required to attach to your application.

It’s a long list!

Bear with us. Each item is specifically required by law, largely for the purpose of demonstrating your ability to offer a viable, effective educational program to well-informed students. Many new proprietary school operators find that developing these documents helps them organize for a smooth launch.

Shall we get started? Let’s follow along using the same numbering system as the application.

1. Instructors and Agreements

a. Copies of instructors’ resumes and current state occupational licenses or certifications, if applicable

Remember the list of instructors you provided earlier? This attachment provides evidence of those individuals’ qualifications. Resumes describe experience and expertise, while copies of licenses or certifications prove those credentials are current.

b. Written agreements with other entities relied upon to provide instructional or library resources, if applicable

If your school will rely on any third parties for instructional resources, you must document your arrangements through written agreements. Examples include a subscription to online course material, or a contract permitting students to get hands-on experience at a local studio.

2. Financial Information

a. Description of financial resources to ensure instructional objectives are accomplished, including consideration of:

- i. Classroom and training facilities**
- ii. Instructional materials, supplies, and equipment**
- iii. Instructors and staff**
- iv. Physical and instructional technology infrastructure**

The purpose of this attachment is to assure the state that your school is on solid financial footing. After all, your students can’t succeed if your school fails. This is the place to demonstrate that you’ve thought through what it will cost to operate your school and have secured the necessary resources to effectively support your instructional program.

Be sure to consider each of the items listed above, plus any other expenses that apply. Will you need textbooks? Specialized software? Classroom space? A carpentry shop? Medical devices? An online platform? Practice clients? A commercial kitchen? Write up a

few paragraphs describing what resources you'll need to provide the education you've promised.

Next, provide revenue and expense projections for your first year of Idaho operations. Include documentation of any loans, startup capital, or business sponsorships on which you'll rely.

If business finance isn't your strong suit, we strongly recommend that you enlist the assistance of an expert. This is also a great time to get to know your accounting software.

b. Written commitment to provide a full refund or comparable teach-out opportunity in the event the school is unable to fulfill its obligations to students

Have we mentioned that one of the state's primary concerns is protecting students?

To that end, Idaho requires your proprietary school to provide a full refund if the school is unable to fulfill its obligations to students for any reason. Examples include (but are not limited to) inability to hire adequate instructional staff, failure to provide courses at the agreed-upon times or locations, and insufficient availability of clinical placements.

WHY DO I HAVE TO PROVIDE A FULL REFUND?

Since proprietary school coursework usually isn't transferrable to other schools, half of a course or an incomplete program doesn't do a student much good. Your obligation is to ensure students get the outcome for which they've paid...or their money back.

Alternatively, it might be possible for you to offer a teach-out opportunity instead of a full refund. A "teach-out" is when students transfer from a discontinued program at one school to a substantially similar program at another school. Teach-outs must come at no extra cost to the student. Also, they must be practical; a student planning on hands-on learning in Boise is unlikely to be able to complete a teach-out in Coeur d'Alene. Of course, the receiving school must agree to provide the teach-out.

In this section, you should state your commitment to refund 100% of prepaid tuition or provide a comparable teach-out opportunity in the event your school fails to fulfill its obligations to students. Throughout the life of your school, be sure to remain cognizant of this requirement and have a plan for following through if needed.

c. Completed Surety Bond Worksheet and

d. Documentation of in-force surety bond adequate to cover the school's tuition liability

Don't worry. This isn't as complicated as it sounds.

We're still on the topic of financial protection for students. The surety bond requirement is Idaho's way of ensuring that students have another avenue to recoup their tuition

money if a proprietary school closes its doors or otherwise fails to fulfill its obligations. Please note: This is a backup to your 100% refund/teach-out commitment, not a replacement for it.

The unfortunate reality is that some proprietary schools do go out of business. There have been cases in Idaho in which students have arrived for class only to find the building locked and a note on the door: *Sorry, we're closed*. Permanently.

Imagine being a student who paid for a 10-week course, only to find the school shuttered in week two!

When this happens, the State Board of Education may file a claim against the closed school's surety bond. The Board may also make a claim against the surety bond of a school that is still in operation, but has failed to satisfy its contract with students. The bonding company pays the claim to the Board, which uses those funds to reimburse students for their lost tuition.

Getting a surety bond is fairly simple. Here's how to do it:

1. Use the [Surety Bond Calculation Worksheet](#) to determine your tuition liability; that is, how much coverage you need. Your tuition liability is the amount of money you have collected from students who have not yet completed the courses for which they have paid.
2. Work with a bonding agent (your local insurance agent can probably help) to get a bond. The annual premium is typically a small percentage of the coverage amount.
3. Ensure the bond meets all of Idaho's requirements for things like extended coverage and cancellation notice. The easiest way to do this is to ask your agent to use the Surety Bond Form provided by our office or [website](#).
4. Have an appropriate person sign the bond form as the Officer of the Principal.

The Surety Bond Form can be a little confusing. Here's how to fill out the first line correctly:

__[School Name]__, "(Principal)", desires to register in Idaho as a proprietary school under the name of __[Corporation Name]__, an Idaho __[entity type]__.

For example, the bond form for the fictitious school we used in the example on page 11 would begin:

__Sunhill Training Center__, "(Principal)", desires to register in Idaho as a proprietary school under the name of __Career Makers, Inc__, an Idaho Corporation.

WHAT IS MY TUITION LIABILITY?

Your tuition liability is the amount of money you've collected from students who have not yet completed the courses or programs for which they have paid.

There is one exception to the surety bond requirement: If your proprietary school is fully accredited by an accrediting body that is recognized by the State Board of Education, you don't need to carry a bond.

In rare cases, a school may have so much tuition liability that it cannot obtain an adequate surety bond. If this applies to you, please contact our State Authorization Program Manager to discuss an alternative financial instrument.

3. Policies, Processes, and Procedures

This is where the application process gets especially useful to you.

If your school doesn't already have written policies, processes, and procedures, now is the time to develop them. It may not be the most exciting project at the moment, but trust us, it'll come in handy.

Policies, processes, and procedures not only help you think through details and avoid many problems, but they also give you a place to turn when difficult situations arise.

Most schools choose to gather their policies into a single policy book, or else separate them logically into two documents, such as a student handbook and an employee handbook. Let's go through the list of required policies, processes, and procedures. You are welcome add additional policies at your own discretion.

a. Student admissions, including criteria taking into account the capacity of the student to complete the program and the ability of the school to handle the unique needs of the students it accepts

This is a perfect time to think through how you'll handle student admissions. Consider not only the application process, but also the qualities that would make a potential student a good fit for your school.

Your application process should clearly describe how prospective students may apply for enrollment. Do they need to submit an online form? Must they meet certain qualifications, such as having a high school diploma? Are there enrollment deadlines? How about a registration fee?

If your school will be unable to serve applicants who do not meet certain criteria, including the physical capacity to perform necessary coursework, this must be clearly stated. Think through the abilities that are required to complete your program, and make sure prospective students are advised accordingly.

Consider also how flexible your school can be in serving students with unique needs. Will you modify schedules or coursework to accommodate working parents or physical limitations, or

AM I OBLIGED TO SERVE ALL STUDENTS?

Not necessarily. As a private business, you are not subject to laws that pertain specifically to public schools, such as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. However, you should remain mindful of other laws that may apply.

Questions about whether and how you should address specific student needs are best directed to your attorney.

not? The goal is to identify what is realistic for both your school and the student, ensuring that all parties have the information they need to make wise decisions about admissions.

b. Dismissal of students and re-admission of dismissed students

Nobody really likes to think about dismissing students from their schools, but the fact is that you may someday need to do so. The situation will be much easier to address if you have clear policies in place.

This section should detail the grounds on which students may be dismissed from your school. Common grounds include: illegal substance use, sexual harassment, chronic tardiness or absenteeism, unsatisfactory work, cheating, plagiarism, disrespectful behavior toward instructors or students, and non-payment of tuition. These are only examples; you are free to craft a list that is appropriate for your school.

Next, address the process for dismissal. Be sure to detail how students will be notified of the dismissal or warning (written notification is best), whether and how students may appeal the decision, and how any refunds or outstanding balances will be handled. Many schools have policies that allow immediate dismissal for severe offenses, in addition to processes that give students opportunities to correct less egregious issues.

Finally, include information about the conditions under which dismissed students may be re-admitted at a later date. You may choose to disallow readmission for certain offenses, but permit students with lesser infractions to try again. Be sure to clarify details like whether the student needs to reapply and if they can pick up where they left off or need to start over from the beginning.

c. Plan for security and maintenance of student records, including admissions information and courses completed by each student

Every school needs to have a plan for keeping student records organized and secure. Systems range from locking file cabinets to password-protected databases stored in the cloud. Note that unless you receive certain federal funds, which is rare among proprietary schools, you are not obliged to comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Hopefully, your students will go on to enjoy long careers based on the skills you've taught them. If that's the case, you'll likely receive requests over many years – even decades – for copies of their records. This section of your policy should detail:

- Where students should direct requests for copies of their records
- Whether there is any cost for obtaining records
- How records will be maintained or provided to former students if the school eventually ceases operations

d. Hiring procedures

Like any business, your school should have clear procedures related to the hiring of instructors and other employees. The exact nature of these procedures is up to you. Will you require

certain qualifications? Ask for a resume? Conduct interviews or skills tests? Put all that in writing.

e. Working conditions

This is the place to describe the working conditions your employees may expect. Consider both the physical environment and factors such as working hours and mutual respect.

f. Instructor rights and responsibilities

The more clearly you lay out expectations for your school and its instructors, the less potential for conflict to arise. In this section, most schools include rights and responsibilities such as regular reviews by a supervisor, respectful interaction between instructor and student, deadlines for grading assignments, open office hours, etc.

g. Process for evaluation/assessment of all employees

Again, this is about ensuring that all parties know what to expect. Put in writing your process for evaluating employee performance. Will employees be required to set annual goals? Will you conduct classroom visits? May employees expect regular feedback, perhaps through conversations or written reports? Against what measures will performance be assessed?

Please note that we are looking for your evaluation process, not your actual evaluation form.

WHAT IF I WON'T HAVE ANY EMPLOYEES?

If this is the case, you may skip the employment-related sections for now. In their place, provide a statement explaining that the school will not have any employees initially, but commits to developing the required policies before hiring anyone in the future.

h. Process for approval of curriculum and other academic procedures to ensure quality

Let's move on from employment-related topics.

This section is about your process for selecting your curriculum and other academic procedures. How will you decide what textbooks to use, which videos to watch, and what tasks to assign?

If a licensing board or exam requires certain material to be covered, that will obviously influence your choices. Regardless, it's important to think through what ideas your students will need to understand, what skills they'll need to practice, and how you will present those opportunities throughout your course or program.

Will you evaluate and select from a variety of curricular options? Perhaps write your own? Use this section to describe the process by which you'll make quality choices.

i. Procedures for assessing/evaluating the effectiveness of instructional offerings

This section should help you plan for judging whether your academic program is working. How will you know if your curriculum is good and your homework assignments are effective?

Perhaps your former students will have a high success rate finding employment in the field. Perhaps they will complete course evaluations. Perhaps you'll engage a relevant expert to look over your materials periodically and provide advice about their continued relevancy.

In short, you should use this space to explain exactly what you'll do to make sure your program actually teaches students what they need to know.

Please note that we are looking for a description of your evaluation procedures, not copies of any actual course evaluation forms.

4. Marketing and Solicitation

Remember our focus on protecting students? That's what this section is all about: ensuring that the way you market your school transparently and accurately reflects your educational offerings and the outcome your students should expect.

a. Copies of all advertising and promotional materials used to solicit students, including URLs for online advertising

Attach to your application copies of any flyers, ads, brochures, and other promotional materials. You provided your website URL earlier in the application, but be sure to include any other online presence, such as social media or web-based advertising, here.

If your marketing materials are still under development, just send us what you have at the time of application. As new materials become available, keep our files updated with copies and links. We'll review them and let you know if we have any concerns.

AVOID COMMON MARKETING ERRORS

Don't give the impression that your school grants degrees. Avoid words like "college," "university," and "degree" that are associated with degree-granting institutions.

Don't say your school is accredited (unless you actually are).

Remember, proprietary school registration is not the same thing as accreditation.

Don't say your school is approved by the State Board of Education. Registration does not imply approval or endorsement of a program, which the Board does not do.

Don't neglect proofreading and graphic design. Put in the extra effort to portray the quality of your school. Enlist help if writing and design aren't your strong suits.

b. Copies of agents' certificates of identification

An "agent" is simply an individual who has the authority to solicit students on behalf of your school. This may include owners, managers, instructors, marketing personnel, and perhaps yourself.

Each agent must carry a school-issued certificate of identification. If the agent's employment or other relationship with the proprietary school changes, he or she must surrender the certificate.

Make sure your agent certificates include:

- The agent's name and address
- The school's name and address
- A statement that "the bearer is an authorized agent of the proprietary school and may solicit students for the proprietary school"
- Effective dates reflecting the fiscal year (July 1 – June 30) in which the card is issued

Our office can provide a template for agent certificates. Just ask!

Agents must take care that none of their statements or practices are deceptive or misleading. They must also avoid any representation that the Idaho State Board of Education has evaluated, accredited, or endorsed any course of study being offered by the agent or proprietary school. We strongly encourage all agents to review [I.C. §33-2404](#) carefully.

Your school is obliged to ensure that all its agents remain in compliance with Idaho law. You'll need to provide your agents with renewed certificates each fiscal year, as well as update the copies in our files as part of your annual registration renewal.

You may also need to conduct criminal history checks prior to issuing agent certificates. Let's talk about that next.

c. Copies of agents' criminal history check results, if required

Prior to issuing agent certificates, you may need to conduct criminal history checks on your school's agents. Checks must be conducted for each agent who has unsupervised contact with minors, and must include the State Bureau of Identification and the statewide sex offender registry.

Criminal history checks are valid for five years. You need to conduct a new criminal history check if an agent comes to you from a different proprietary school where he or she was previously checked. You also need to conduct a new check if an agent returns to your school after a break of six months or more.

Keep the results handy. You'll need to provide them to our office with each annual registration renewal.

If you discover that an agent or prospective agent of your school has been convicted of an offense listed in [IDAPA 08.01.11.302.07.a](#), or to have previously violated [Idaho's proprietary school statute](#), you must not issue them an agent certificate.

5. Information to be Provided to All Students / Prospective Students in Writing

In the interest of consumer protection, your school is required to make certain information available to all students and prospective students.

Many schools include the majority of this information in a student handbook. It often makes sense to post your handbook on your website, although this is not required. As you read the list below, you'll note that some items need to be updated at least annually, so plan your format accordingly.

a. Student rights and responsibilities, including due process in disciplinary matters for all students

What rights should students expect from your school, and what responsibilities does your school expect them to fulfill? Common considerations include the right to participate in school activities without discrimination and the responsibility to maintain appropriate attendance and participation. The details are up to you, so spend a bit of time thinking about what is important for your school and its students.

You must specifically address due process in disciplinary matters. How will you respond when students violate your school's rules? What steps will you take to ensure they are informed of the problem, have an opportunity to respond with their perspective, and are subject to fair and reasonable disciplinary action?

b. Grievance procedures, including name and contact information for the individual responsible for handling complaints and due process procedures

Our office will look carefully at your grievance procedure. Although there may be some overlap with the disciplinary due process discussed above, your grievance procedure should be broad enough to guide the process for all kinds of student complaints, not just those associated with school-initiated discipline.

*CAN STUDENTS COMPLAIN TO THE
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION?*

*Yes, but they must first exhaust the
school's grievance process.*

A good grievance procedure will include the following:

- Names and contact information for appropriate school personnel
- Specific steps for initiating a complaint (such as submitting a letter, form, and relevant documentation to a certain individual)
- Specific steps the school will follow in responding to the complaint (such as holding meetings to discuss the matter)
- Specific timelines that apply, including the deadline for a final decision
- Information regarding whose decision is final
- Information advising the student that complaints may be escalated to the Office of the State Board of Education if they cannot be resolved through the school's grievance process.

Be sure your grievance procedure includes specific action steps and timelines for both the student and the school. It should be clear to everyone when the process is exhausted.

c. Calendar of study including registration dates, beginning and ending dates for all courses, and holidays

Many students make enrollment decisions based partly on their ability to fit the school's program into their lives. They may need to adjust work or childcare schedules to accommodate your courses. Additionally, they must plan to meet your school's registration deadlines.

For this reason, it is important to keep a complete calendar of study updated and available to students and prospective students. If classes will be offered at multiple locations or using various modalities, such as online or in-person meetings, be sure to provide that information so students can plan accordingly.

d. Requirements for each course and/or program, including purpose, length, and objectives

Before enrolling at your school, prospective students should have a clear understanding of what each course and program will involve. Many schools offer this information in the form of a paragraph describing the purpose, length, and objectives of each course. You'll elaborate upon this information in your syllabi.

e. Syllabus for each course

A syllabus is a document that students can use as a roadmap to each course offered by your school. Syllabi should include the following information:

- A schedule including lesson dates, start and end times, locations, and modalities (online or in-person)
- A summary of the course's content and objectives, often broken down into what each lesson will cover
- Descriptions of in-class assignments
- Deadlines for homework and any other requirements, such as clinical hours
- Dates of any exams
- A list of required textbooks and other supplies
- Contact information for the instructor

I'M NOT REALLY A "SCHOOL." DO I STILL HAVE TO PROVIDE ALL THIS STUFF?

Some registered proprietary schools offer only a single training course as a practical matter, often in service to their main business interest. They don't really consider themselves schools.

If this is you, you'll still need to meet the requirements of Idaho law by providing all the required documents. However, since your course offerings are simple or limited, the documents will likely be brief and uncomplicated by comparison to larger schools.

f. Course completion requirements, including any practicums and clinicals

Course completion requirements must be provided alongside the course/program requirements discussed above.

Will students be required to achieve a certain overall grade? Will they need earn a particular score on an exam or pass a physical skills test? Will they need to log a prescribed number of lab or clinical hours? All course completion requirements must be readily available to students and prospective students.

g. The number and locations of clinical, practicum or internship positions available (if applicable)

If your course completion requirements include clinicals, practicums, or internships, you need to provide students and prospective students with details of how those requirements will be met. List the locations where clinicals will take place, as well as the number of positions available. Be sure to update both students and our office as this information changes over time.

h. Explanation of satisfactory progress, including the grading/assessment system

It is important for students to have a clear understanding of how their work will be assessed. They also need to know what level of achievement is required to complete each course or program.

Idaho does not require you to use any particular grading system, but you do need to describe the system you have chosen. This could be based on level of participation, letter grades, percentage of work completed, exam scores, or another method. Be sure it is clear to students what constitutes satisfactory progress so they can perform accordingly.

i. Listing of available services to support students

Your school may or may not offer services to support students. Common services include tutoring, job placement, and financial assistance. You aren't required to offer any of these, but you should certainly let students know if you do.

j. Amount of tuition, fees, and all other charges and expenses necessary for completion of the course or program

Prospective students should be able to easily determine the total cost of completing your courses or programs.

Tuition should be listed, of course, along with any registration fees. Be sure to include less obvious expenses as well. Will students need to buy certain clothing? Purchase textbooks, software, or lab supplies? Pay exam fees? Obtain medical or background checks?

No expense should come as a surprise. List all costs in a single location to make this easy for everyone.

k. Payment schedule for each course or program

Your school is welcome to offer any type of payment schedule, as long as it is clearly explained to students and prospective students. Some schools require full tuition up front. Others accept payments on a prescribed schedule. A few collect tuition after training is complete.

l. Cancellation policy

Students will occasionally need to leave your program prior to completion. Your policies should clearly explain the process for cancellation both before and after classes have begun. Consider whether students must provide notification in writing, and to whom. Address whether readmission will be permitted at a later date, and under what circumstances. Will students be able to resume a program where they left off, or will they need to start over?

m. Refund policy

You may recall that if a school cannot fulfill its obligations to students, the law requires the school to provide a full refund or comparable teach-out opportunity. However, your school can handle refunds differently under other circumstances.

A good refund policy considers various situations, such as:

- Student cancellations prior to the start of classes
- Student cancellations after the start of classes
- Student dismissals due to disciplinary, academic, or attendance issues

Be sure to provide clear information about whether refunds are available, whether and how they will be prorated, and how quickly they will be issued.

n. Written acknowledgement form

Before any student makes a financial commitment to your school, he or she must execute a purchase statement that includes the following statement:

“I understand that [proprietary school name] is registered with the State Board of Education in accordance with Section 33-2403, Idaho Code. I also understand that the State Board of Education has not accredited or endorsed any course of study being offered by [proprietary school name], and that these courses may not be accepted for transfer into any Idaho public postsecondary institution.”

As part of your application, you’ll need to provide a copy of your purchase statement form to our office. Afterwards, take care to keep each student’s executed purchase statement in his or her individual file at your school.

Acknowledgements and Certification of Compliance

Congratulations! You have now assembled all the required documentation to submit with your proprietary school registration application.

The final steps in completing your application are simple, but very important. They include reviewing a set of acknowledgements and signing a Certification of Compliance. These documents are designed to ensure your understanding of your obligations as a registered proprietary school, so please read them carefully.

Acknowledgements

The acknowledgements appear on the final page of the application. By checking each box, you'll affirm that you have reviewed and agreed to the following:

1. All of your courses that are regulated by another state entity meet the regulating agency or board's standards for licensure or certification.
2. You understand that your school must maintain legal compliance.
3. You will update our office within 30 days if any of the information in your application becomes incorrect or incomplete.
4. You understand that your registration will expire on June 30 of each year unless renewed. Schools whose renewals are not completed by July 1 must cease all operations. Renewal applications are due on the first business day of May.

Certification of Compliance

Finally, you will read the Certification of Compliance that is attached to the application form. After reading carefully, check the boxes at the top to verify your compliance, and have your principal officer for Idaho operations sign the last page. Doing so will give you an opportunity to review Idaho's requirements regarding proprietary schools. Since you've read this handbook, the requirements will look very familiar.

NEXT STEPS

And just like that, you're done! It's time to submit your application.

Refer back to page one of the application and follow the submission instructions provided there. We'll review your application as expeditiously as possible and work with you on any changes.

Idaho law advises applicants to anticipate a three-to-five-month review period for new proprietary school applications. However, we can often complete reviews much more quickly. You can help us review your application more quickly by making sure your documentation is complete, thorough, and well-organized.

Remember to avoid beginning any school operations, including advertising, until you've received notice from our office that your registration is complete.

When your application is approved, we'll mail you a Certificate of Registration that must be displayed at your place of business.

While you wait, it's never too early to prepare for renewal.

ANNUAL REGISTRATION RENEWAL

As you now know, proprietary school registrations must be renewed annually. Renewal does not occur automatically, so you'll need to submit a renewal application each year.

Our [Proprietary School Annual Registration Renewal Application](#) is simpler than the initial registration application. It is designed to walk you through any updates that you may need to provide. It will also help you calculate your annual registration fee and revisit compliance requirements.

Similar to the initial registration application, the renewal application provides submission instructions on page one, followed by spaces for contact information, course and program updates, and enrollment data. This is followed by a fee calculation table, a list of required documentation, attestations, and the Certification of Compliance.

Much of this information will be familiar from your initial application. If you need a refresher, simply flip back to the relevant section of this guide.

Below, we'll cover a few items that may be new to you.

Renewal Timeline

Your renewal application, complete with your fee and supporting documentation, is due on the first business day of May each year. Early submissions are welcome.

We will process renewals within 30 days. Applications are reviewed in the order in which they are received. To be considered received, your application must be complete, including supporting documentation and your annual fee.

Assuming your application is approved, we'll mail you a new Certificate of Registration by July 1. Remember to post the updated certificate at your place of business.

If your registration is not officially renewed by July 1, your proprietary school must cease all active operations until you receive approval of registration. Failure to do so could result in civil or criminal penalties including injunctive relief, fines, and imprisonment in the county jail.

Annual Registration Fees

Your annual registration fee will be based on your gross Idaho tuition revenue, or GITR. The fee is 0.5% of your GITR, but not less than \$100 or more than \$5,000. The renewal application includes a simple table that will help you report your tuition received and refunds issued on a quarterly basis. When you've entered that information, the table will calculate your GITR.

If your calculated GITR is less than \$100, pay the minimum fee of \$100. If your calculated GITR is more than \$5,000, pay the maximum fee of \$5,000. Otherwise, pay the exact amount calculated, without rounding up or down.

MY INITIAL REGISTRATION JUST GOT APPROVED. DO I HAVE TO SUBMIT A RENEWAL APPLICATION?

If your initial registration application was approved on or after January 1, you do not need to apply for renewal during the same calendar year.

Your fee is due at the same time as your renewal application. While the application itself should be submitted electronically, you'll need to mail a check for your fee. Our mailing address is on page one of the renewal application. Remember to put your school name on the check so we know how to apply it.

WHAT IS GITR?

G – Gross, not net. Be sure you report tuition revenue without subtracting out your expenses.

I – Idaho. If your school has campuses in other states, be sure you report only Idaho revenue.

TR – Tuition Revenue. Report only tuition, not other moneys collected (such as for lab supplies or exam fees) minus any refunds issued.

Financial Documentation

Maintaining appropriate financial documentation will make all your business processes easier, including annual registration renewal.

Separate Finances

Idaho law requires you to keep your proprietary school finances separate from those of any affiliating person or entity. If you're a sole proprietor, be sure to handle your school accounting separately from your personal accounting. If you operate another business in addition to your school, track the two entities' finances separately from one another. Doing so will make reporting much easier – not to mention keeping you in compliance with the law.

Recognized Accounting Practices

Idaho requires you to use recognized accounting practices. Acceptable methods include cash basis and accrual basis accounting. Although most businesses use the accrual method because it provides a more accurate picture of financial health, some choose the cash method for its relative simplicity.

Choosing an accounting method is important for tax purposes as well. The Internal Revenue Service requires small businesses to choose either cash basis or accrual basis accounting, then use it consistently year over year.

If you are not familiar with recognized accounting practices, enlist the expert help you need to get started right. Accounting software products are also helpful and appropriate for most proprietary schools, even those that are too small to have accounting personnel on staff.

Tuition Revenue and Refunds

Your renewal application will require you to report your tuition revenue and refunds by quarter.

You'll need to attach documentation that demonstrates the accuracy of your reported tuition revenue and refunds. In most cases, this will take the form of an Income Statement (also known as a Profit and Loss Statement, or P&L) generated by your accounting software. Note that the "Profit and Loss" page of your tax filing is not the same as a P&L, and it is not an acceptable substitute for an Income Statement.

Be sure your accounting software is set up to report your tuition revenue and refunds quarterly, and as separate line items. These line items should be clearly labeled as "tuition" and "tuition refunds." Having

this information clearly labeled and separate from other revenue and expenses will save you from having to answer clarifying questions from our office.

Planning Ahead

Take these steps from the beginning to make annual financial reporting easy:

- Manage your school's finances separately from those of any other individual or entity.
- Track your Idaho tuition revenue and refunds separately from any activity in other states.
- Choose either the cash or accrual method of accounting, and stick to it.
- Set up your accounting software with separate line items for tuition revenue and tuition refunds.
- Be sure you can access tuition revenue and refund reports by quarter (January-March, April-June, July-September, and October-December).

If you have related businesses or are a sole proprietor, take note:

You must keep separate financial records for your proprietary school.

Annual Data Reports

Idaho requires you to make certain information available to students and prospective students. This includes current data regarding course completion rates and job placement rates. You'll also be asked to submit this information with your renewal application. Planning ahead will make this easier.

Course Completion Rates

Course completion rates are usually easy to calculate. Simply divide the number of students who completed each course by the number of students who enrolled. Convert to a percentage, and *voilà!* You have your course completion rate.

For example, suppose 10 students enrolled in your welding course, but 2 dropped out partway through. Divide the 8 completing students by the 10 who originally enrolled, and you get 0.8. Your completion rate for the welding course is 80%.

Occasionally, calculation of completion rates is complicated by factors such as delayed completion. If a student dropped out for a few months and then reenrolled and finished, should she be counted or excluded? The law does not provide answers to specific questions like this. It's best to decide on a method that makes sense for your school, put it in writing, and apply it consistently.

Job Placement Rates

Job placement rates are calculated similarly. Divide the number of completing students who got jobs in the field by the total number of students who completed your program, and convert to a percentage.

For example, suppose 67 students completed your massage therapy program since the school opened its doors three years ago, and 59 of them went on to work as professional massage therapists. Divide the 59 practicing massage therapists by the 67 completing students, and you get an 88% job placement rate.

Again, you'll likely need to establish some internal rules to guide your calculations. Maybe it makes sense for your school to include only completing students who go on to work in the field within a year. Maybe your school offers a program that is avocational for some and vocational for others; in this case, you may wish to calculate your job placement rate only for completing students who intended to apply their education to a profession.

As you can see, tracking job placement rates can be tricky. You'll likely have to reach out to former students for updates. Let your students know that they can help you by staying in touch. Make your best effort to obtain accurate data. As a last resort, have a category in your tracking system for unknown outcomes.

Enrollment

Your renewal application will also ask you to complete a chart showing enrollment for each course or program offered by your school. Include all courses or programs in the list, even if your enrollment was zero.

The chart will ask you to provide a three-year enrollment history for each course. This helps us understand the health of your school and evaluate the adequacy your surety bond coverage.

Other Documentation

The renewal application includes a checklist of documents to attach. Some are required every year, while others need to be included only if they have changed from the previous year. The goal is to keep our files updated with your current information.

Here's what you should plan to submit:

Every Year

- Agent certificates
- Agents' criminal history checks, if applicable
- Documentation of current accreditation status, if accredited
- Calendar of study for the upcoming registration year, including registration dates, beginning and ending dates for all courses, and holidays

As Needed

- Surety bond adequate to cover anticipated maximum tuition liability for the upcoming registration year
- Copies of any new instructors' resumes and current state occupational licenses, if applicable
- New or updated promotional materials used to solicit students
- New or updated policies, processes, and procedures
- New or updated information required by law to be provided to all students

If you provided timely updates to your "as needed" documentation throughout the year, you do not need to send the same information again at renewal.

REPORTING CHANGES OVER TIME

As your proprietary school matures, it's bound to experience change. Idaho law requires you to update us within 30 days of any changes to the required documents that you've submitted for our files either during initial registration or at renewal.

Minor Changes

Most changes are very simple. If you hire a new instructor, send us their resume, relevant licenses, and agent certificate (if they are considered an agent). If your main contact person changes, provide us with a new name, email address, and phone number. If you tweak the length of an existing course or change the tuition amount, send us an updated student handbook and syllabus to match. You get the idea.

Substantial Changes

In a few cases, we ask for more detailed information. These include course or program additions, school location changes or additions, and school ownership changes. Forms available on [our website](#) will walk you through the submission of all relevant documentation, including possible recalculation of your required surety bond coverage.

Course or Program Additions

Course or program additions require the submission of an [Existing Proprietary School Course or Program Addition Form](#).

School Location Changes or Additions

School location changes or additions require the submission of an [Existing Proprietary School Location Change or Addition Form](#).

School Ownership Changes

School ownership changes are a bit more complicated, so we ask that you contact our office to discuss them well in advance.

We can transfer proprietary school registration from one owner to another without interruption. Doing so typically requires the school to submit updated versions of most of the documents required at the time of initial registration. You can use the required document checklist in the [Existing Proprietary School Annual Registration Renewal Application](#) as a guide.

The school's buyer should review all required documents carefully. In addition to obvious updates such as the school name, address, and personnel, this is a perfect time to overhaul policies, course descriptions, handbooks, and calendars.

Additionally, the buyer will need to register with the Idaho Secretary of State and obtain a surety bond reflecting the new principal and officer of the principal.

When all this is complete, we'll transfer the proprietary school's registration without a gap.

RESOURCES

The State Board of Education's website offers a variety of resources for proprietary school operators, students, and members of the public. Visit [our website](#) for information including:

Links to Statute and Administrative Rule

Proprietary school registration in Idaho is governed by [§33-24, Idaho Code](#) and [IDAPA 08.01.11](#).

Registration Applications

Applications for initial registration and annual renewal are updated periodically. You may download current versions as needed.

We also offer forms and templates for supporting documents, including a surety bond calculation worksheet, surety bond form, and agent certificate template.

Change Forms

Forms related to course or program additions, location changes or additions, and school ownership changes are available for download.

Student Complaint Form

Students who have exhausted a proprietary school's grievance process may escalate their concerns to the State Board of Education using the form available for download.

Registered School Listing

Curious which schools are properly registered as proprietary schools in Idaho? A list is maintained on our website for the public's reference.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Operating a business is challenging, and we appreciate your extra effort to meet Idaho's proprietary school requirements. Whenever you have questions, feel free to reach out for assistance.

Proprietary school students and members of the public are also welcome to get in touch with comments or questions.

Your primary contact person at the Office of the State Board of Education is our State Authorization Program Manager.

Tamara Baysinger, State Authorization Program Manager

Mailing Address: PO Box 83720, Boise, ID 83720-0037

E-mail: tamara.baysinger@osbe.idaho.gov

Direct Phone: (208) 332-1587

The Office of the State Board of Education's main phone line is (208) 334-2270. The office is physically located at 650 West State Street, 3rd Floor, in Boise, Idaho.

We're here to help. Let us know what we can do for you.