

## SCHOOL OPENING CHECKLIST

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Prior to opening a new facility, complete the following items. If you have any questions, please contact Amy C. Clark, School Facilities Bureau administrator at the Department of Education (NHED) at [amy.c.clark@doe.nh.gov](mailto:amy.c.clark@doe.nh.gov) or (603) 271-2037. If public school construction is involved, be sure to contact the State Fire Marshal’s Office for approval at least 60 days prior to opening.

- Obtain local approval** - Contact Local Town Office.  
 Local code enforcement officer checks for RSA 155-A (State Building Code & State Fire Code). The facility will need to have a Certificate of Occupancy (CO) for *educational* use from its original approval by the municipality or if a CO is not available, documentation will need to be submitted stating the facility meets state building code and state fire code for educational use.
- Submit the School Health Inspection Form** – Contact Local Health Officer.  
 Prior to occupancy, an inspection needs to be completed by the local health officer. The inspection form can be downloaded here and given to the local health officer:  
<https://www.education.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt326/files/inline-documents/sonh/health-inspection-2-3-23.pdf>
- Test all drinking water sources for lead** – All schools and licensed daycares must test for lead and remediate for levels that exceed 5 ppb (RSA 485:17-a). For more information visit  
<https://www.des.nh.gov/water/drinking-water/lead-drinking-water>
- Inspect building for asbestos** – for *public schools and non-profit nonpublic schools only*  
 Federal law, [40 CFR 763.85](#), requires asbestos inspections and re-inspections of each school building they own or lease. Prior to student occupancy, submit documentation that the building(s) were inspected by a [certified asbestos inspector](#) and that all asbestos-containing materials identified are being safely managed. For more information please visit: <https://www.des.nh.gov/waste/asbestos/schools>.
- Building must meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) - public schools**  
 All public schools must be accessible to, and functional for, persons with disabilities. Prior to occupying a building, the school must meet Abfd 300 (the State regulations for barrier free design compliance), which requires facilities meet the ADA Standards for Accessible Design. It is strongly recommended that the new space is reviewed by an architect, engineer, or other professional knowledgeable in ADA regulations, and issue a letter stating compliance with Abfd 300 regulations. To be eligible for lease aid or other public funding, a certification letter will be required.
- Submit an Emergency Operation Plan (EOP) to Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEM)**  
 EOPs must be submitted to HSEM prior to opening. For more information, contact your regional emergency management school trainer. Regional contacts can be found here:  
[https://prd.blogs.nh.gov/dos/hsem/?page\\_id=1262](https://prd.blogs.nh.gov/dos/hsem/?page_id=1262);
- Obtain approval from the State Fire Marshall’s Office (SFMO) - for public school construction projects only**  
 Prior to construction, contact SFMO for a site review and approval. For more information, visit  
<https://www.nh.gov/safety/divisions/firesafety/building/engineering/>
- Schedule a school facility walk-through with the Department of Education (NHED)** – Once the documents above are complete and prior to opening, contact the School Facility Inspection Program to schedule a site visit. More resources can be found here: <https://www.education.nh.gov/who-we-are/division-educator-and-analytic-resources/school-safety-and-facility-management-bureau/school-facility-inspection-program>