

New Hampshire

**Department of Education**

Office of Nonpublic Schools

# How to Start a Nonpublic School

## *A Timeline*

## **DISCLAIMER:**

The following timeline is designed to help a school obtain approval from the NH Department of Education to operate in the state of NH. The guide provides a general recommendation; your town's protocols may require more or less time.

Nothing in this guide should be construed as legal, business, or financial advice. It is important that you engage qualified professionals who can advise you on such matters.



*If your school plans to open on Sept 1, 2021, then...*

## Sept 2019 – Aug 2020

The school has read and understood:

- ▶ [NH Statutes and Definitions Relevant to Nonpublic Schools](#)
- ▶ [NH Code of Administrative Rules, Ed 400](#)

The rules that govern NH nonpublic schools are found in the Ed 400s and derive statutory authority from the revised statutes annotated (RSAs). Herein lies the definitions and processes for obtaining an initial approval. You can find both the rules and relevant statutes on the Office of Nonpublic Schools (ONPS) [website](#).



For questions on statutes, please consult your legal counsel.

# Sept 2019 – Aug 2020



The school has crafted items which include, for example:

- ▶ Mission statement
- ▶ Curriculum
- ▶ Grade levels
- ▶ Program of studies
- ▶ Student and parent expectation
- ▶ Grievances policies
- ▶ Learning materials
- ▶ In-class instruction protocols
- ▶ Remote instruction protocols
- ▶ Website



# Sept 2019 – Aug 2020

The school has also decided upon administrative items, such as:

- ▶ Nonprofit status/tax exempt status
- ▶ Recognition by an approval agency
- ▶ School insurance
- ▶ Property insurance
- ▶ Liability insurance
- ▶ Professional liability insurance
- ▶ Auto insurance
- ▶ Building and facility requirements
- ▶ Governance
- ▶ Bylaws
- ▶ Policies and procedures
- ▶ Staff guidelines



The NH DOE has no requirements for school insurance for nonpublic schools.  
Please consult a professional for guidance in this area.

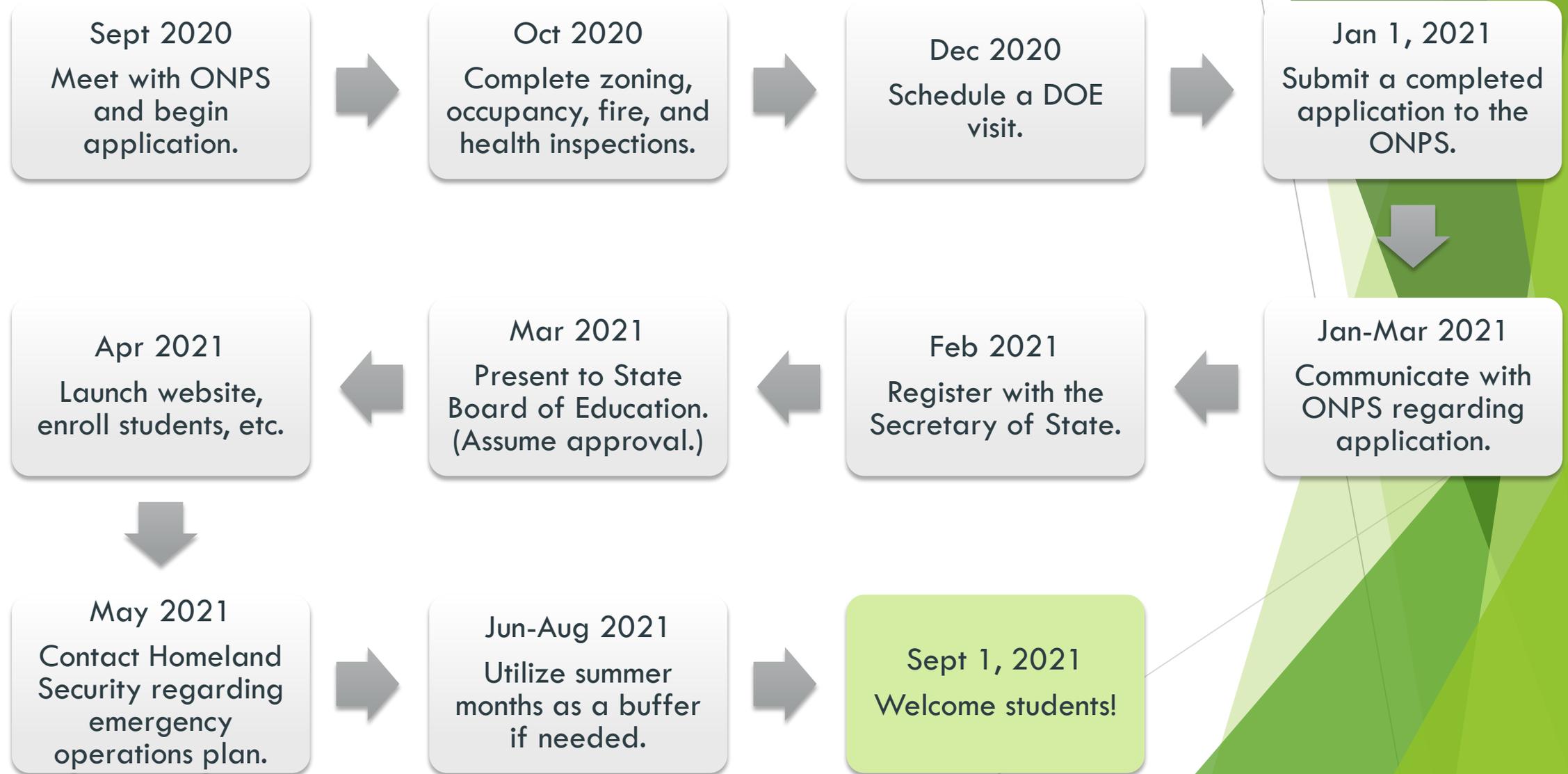


## Sept 2019 – Aug 2020

The school has identified the physical location of the school, and has begun to plan for its use by students.



# Moving Forward



## *Detailed Timeline*

# Aug – Dec 2020

### Sept 2020

- The school sets up a meeting with the ONPS and obtains an [application](#).

### Oct 2020

- The school contacts town officials to obtain required building documents: zoning verification form, certificate of occupancy, and health inspection, which can be found on our [website](#). The fire report will be completed during the first month that students occupy the building.

### Dec 2020

- The NH DOE schedules a site visit of the school upon obtaining the required, completed, and approved building documents.



## *Detailed Timeline*

### Jan – Feb 2021

#### Jan 1, 2021

- The school submits a completed application to the ONPS with two exceptions. Registration with the Secretary of State is completed after the ONPS does an initial review of the application. The fire report will be completed during the first month of student occupancy.

#### Jan-Mar, 2021

- The school addresses any concerns or provides clarification to the ONPS.

#### Feb 2021

- The ONPS provides the school with a letter of support to register its name with the [NH Secretary of State](#).



## *Detailed Timeline*

# Mar – May 2021

### Mar 2021

- The school presents to and seeks approval from the NH State Board of Education. The Board meets the second Thursday of each month. (We assume approval by the Board at this time).

### Apr 2021

- The school launches its website, promotes its programs, enrolls students, and commences all other operations.

### May 2021

- The school contacts the [School Readiness Program](#) at Home Security and Emergency Management in regard to the School Emergency Operations Plan.



## *Detailed Timeline*

### Jun – Sep 2021

#### Jun – Aug 2021

- The school can use this time as a buffer in the event that requirements or approvals are delayed, documents need to be resubmitted, or corrective actions need to be taken, for instance.

Sep 1, 2021

*Welcome students!*



For further guidance, please contact:  
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#### Reference Links

[Office of Nonpublic Schools](#)

[Forms](#)

[Administrative Rules Ed 400](#)

[Statutory Authority](#)

[Secretary of State](#)

[Fire Inspection](#)

[Health Inspection](#)

[Health Officer Directory](#)

[Zoning Verification](#)

[Emergency Operation Plan](#)

