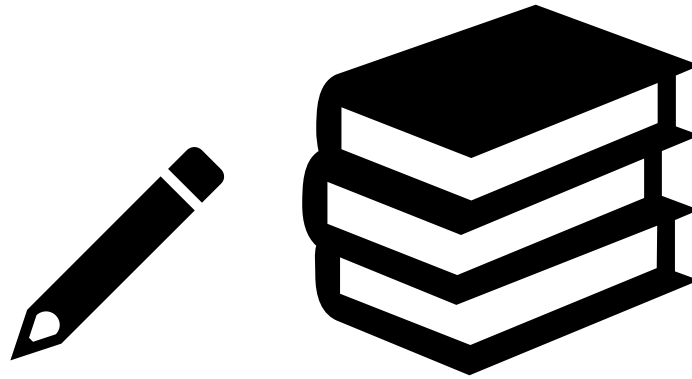


Independent School Tuition Rate Setting Technical Assistance Guidance, FY22



Technical Assistance Topics

Which independent schools must submit a tuition rate application?

What expenses may be included in a rate application?

State Board of Education Approved Capacity vs. Student Enrollment

Process for setting Tuition Rates at the AOE

CERT School Specific Information &
Off-Setting Revenue Requirements for all independent Schools

Application Dos & Don'ts & References, Resources & Additional Hotlinks



Tuition Rate Application Requirements

Federal and State legal requirements, as well as State Board of Education Rules Series 2200 and 2360 govern which schools may accept State-placed students.

In addition to specific program approval requirements, independent schools that primarily serve special education students, **must** submit a tuition rate application to the Agency of Education when seeking a tuition rate increase.

For information on Federal Laws, State Rules and Statutes governing independent school program requirements and State-placed enrollment go to:

[Special Education Rule Series 2360](#)

[Independent School Rule Series 2200](#)

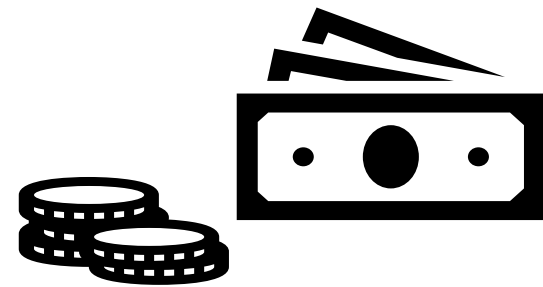
[Vermont Statute](#)

Application Information

The independent school tuition rate application, and corresponding instructions, may be found on the [AOE website](#).

The application is divided into several expenditure/program cost categories that includes: *

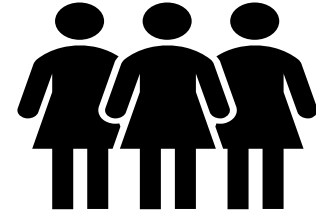
- ✓ Staffing and Benefits (including professional development & staff tuition)
- ✓ Contracted Service providers (SLPs, OTs, Mental Health providers, etc.)
- ✓ Student Excess Transportation Costs
- ✓ Operational Costs: Administrative Office & Educational Program
- ✓ Clinical Services & other Student Specific Mental Health services
- ✓ Office Supplies
- ✓ Education Supplies
- ✓ Equipment Costs & Depreciation
- ✓ Student core educational activity fees
- ✓ Rent, utilities
- ✓ School breakfast and hot lunch programs



* Please go to reference slide for more guidance on the topic of allowability

Application Rate Variances & Allowable Costs Continued...

Tuition Rate Calculation Considerations:



- Vermont independent school program models vary widely throughout the State
- Depending upon the educational needs of the students enrolled, educational costs will also vary widely even between and among independent schools serving similar student demographic groups
- Tuition rate applications require documentation of expenditures for the cost of serving each special education school's student population
- Expenditures are then checked for allowability based upon Federal & State laws and State Board of Education Rules

Student Capacity vs Student Enrollment

Student capacity...

is the *maximum* number of students approved by the State Board of Education at either initial approval or during program renewal process.

Student enrollment....

is the number of students enrolled **at the time** of tuition rate application submission.

The Agency **can only use** actual number of students enrolled at the time of application submission. Student enrollment projections are not allowed during rate calculation process.

Tuition Rate Calculation by The Numbers

Example Calculation Scenario


Harvest Acres Independent School:

Student enrollment is under SBE approved capacity.

Therefore, the 90% capacity AOE rule is applied....

Total annual program costs = \$1,255,788.00

SBE Approved Student Capacity: 30 students

Under-enrolled  calculate @ 90% Capacity = 27 students

$1,255,788.00 \div 27 \text{ students} = \text{per-pupil cost } \$46,510.67$

Tuition Rate Calculation Continued...

Scenario #2

Harvest Acres Independent School:

Student enrollment is at maximum enrollment of SBE approved capacity.
Tuition rate will be calculated using actual, current student enrollment numbers...

Total annual program costs = \$1,255,788.00

SBE Capacity student numbers: 30 students

Current number of students enrolled: 30

$1,255,788.00 \div 30 \text{ students} = \text{per-pupil cost } \$41,859.60$

Tuition Rate Application Dos & Don'ts

Do...

- ✓ Use the Agency of Education's tuition rate application, located on the AOE's website
- ✓ Submit rate application & all supporting documentation to AOE.RateRequest@vermont.gov
- ✓ List all staffing costs, by FTE, in staff section including all contracted personnel services
- ✓ Align expenditures to costs associated with school programming only

CERT Rate Independent Schools

Approved independent schools that are associated with a designated health agency, are required to apply for an annual daily rate with the Department of Mental Health Services as well as submit a tuition rate increase application to the Agency of Education.

Designated Agency Associated Independent Schools Must:

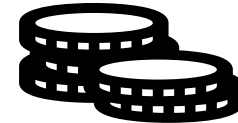
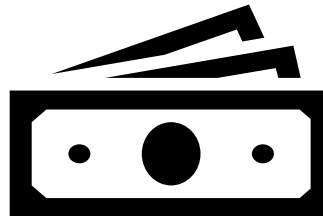
- ✓ Submit the same application to both the Agency of Education and Department of Mental Health to obtain tuition and treatment rates
- ✓ Include *all* off-setting income on correct application budget detail page including, but *not* limited to all Medicaid funding, grants, COVID-19 Relief Funds, ESY programing tuition funds, donations or additional fund-raising income.

Off-setting Revenue

Regardless of independent school program model, all special education schools seeking an annual tuition increase must include, on revenue budget detail page of the application:

All off-setting income including, but not limited to:

- ✓ all Medicaid funding
- ✓ grant funds & sources
- ✓ COVID-19 Relief Funds
- ✓ ESY programming tuition funds
- ✓ private donations
- ✓ additional fund-raising income



Do not include in tuition rate application...

- ✓ Services provided by contracted staff as expenditures on the application's *operational costs expense* page
- ✓ Vague expenditure descriptions such as: “miscellaneous operational expenses” or “program activity fees” and use appropriate, specific descriptions for each cost
- ✓ Combine costs from separate expense categories and include as one expenditure in an incorrect budget page
- ✓ An application with outdated program, address and staff contact information

To Receive Assistance on How to Complete and Submit a Tuition Rate Application

Please Contact...

J. Deborah Ormsbee

Independent School Program Coordinator, II

Agency of Education

Email: deborah.ormsbee@vermont.gov

802-828-1226

FY22 Tuition Rate Application Links

Application Links:

Email requests and supporting documentation to AOE.RateRequest@vermont.gov

- [Application Instructions](#)
- [Application Coversheet](#)
- [Tuition Rate Application](#)

Resources & Hotlinks

Federal Resources:

- [Equitable Services](#)
- [USED Guidance](#)

State of Vermont Resources:

- [Independent School Rule Series 2200](#)
- [Title 16 & Independent School Laws](#)
- [Special Education Rule Series 2360](#)