

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Montpelier, Vermont

TEAM: General Supervision and Monitoring

ITEM: Will the State Board of Education grant renewal of general independent school approval, to serve students in grades K-12, to Mid Vermont Christian School, Quechee, Vermont?

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the State Board of Education grants renewal of general independent school approval, to serve students in grades K-12, to Mid Vermont Christian School, Quechee, Vermont. This approval is for five years through June 30, 2016.

Approval is subject to the condition that the school immediately report to the Department of Education whenever any changes occur in enrollment, programs, policies, facilities, financial capacity, staffing, or administration, during the approval process.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: Title 16 V.S.A. §166(b)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

1. Mid Vermont Christian School is an approved independent day school for students in grades K-12. The school was last granted approval by the State Board of Education on January 16, 2007 through June 30, 2011.
2. Mid Vermont Christian School was visited on behalf of the Commissioner by Brynne Reed and Pat Pallas Gray on November, 17, 2011.
3. Mid Vermont Christian School is housed in three separate buildings on approximately nine-and-a-half acres of land. The elementary school building houses the preschool through sixth grade and includes eight regular classrooms in addition to a library, teachers' room, an assembly/cafeteria area, and administrative offices. The junior/senior high school building houses seven through twelfth grades. On the first floor there are three classrooms, including a music room, a library, a faculty room, a conference room, and administrative offices. On the second floor there are eight classrooms, including a computer lab, a science lab, a world language lab, the yearbook project room, and an art studio. The gymnasium has a full-sized basketball/tennis/volleyball court in addition to a kitchen, two locker rooms, and an upstairs office. The gym is used for assemblies, lunch, physical education classes, sports, etc. The

facility is handicapped accessible, meets all the state and federal health and safety regulations, and is adequate to meet the needs of the school and its offerings.

4. The minimum course of study, as prescribed in 16 V.S.A. § 906, is provided and adapted to the age and abilities of the students. The school works closely with the local school district(s) to accommodate students who may need off-site educational assistance. At the time of the visit, there were 110 students. The school has support services, including library services, laboratory materials, guidance, and counseling services to meet its educational purposes.
5. Mid Vermont Christian School's staff includes a full-time headmaster, a full-time elementary school principal, and 18 subject and specialty area teachers. The staff is well-qualified by degree, training and experience in the areas in which they are assigned. A plan of professional development is in place for the staff.
6. The student health, attendance, and assessment records, and the school fire drill records, were reviewed and found to be in good order.
7. The school maintains an operating schedule that includes a total number of instructional hours each year that is not less than that required of a public school serving the same grades.
8. Mid Vermont Christian School submitted evidence of financial capacity to operate during the period of approval.
9. Mid Vermont Christian School has a policy on the prevention of harassment of students that is as stringent as the Department's model policy.

COST IMPLICATIONS: none

STAFF AVAILABLE:

Pat Pallas Gray
Independent School Consultant
828-5414

Mike Mulcahy, Coordinator
Student & Educator Support
828-5108

Brynne Reed
Education Consultant
828-5113

**State Board of Education
January 17, 2012
Item I2**

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Montpelier, Vermont**

TEAM: General Supervision and Monitoring

ITEM: Will the State Board of Education grant year-round initial general and special education independent school approval to serve a maximum of 10 male adolescents ages 12-17, within the disability categories of Emotional Disturbance, Specific Learning Disability, Learning Impairment, Speech or Language Impaired, and Other Health Impairment, to Fay Honey Knopp Memorial School in Rutland, VT?

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the State Board of Education grants year-round initial general and special education independent school approval to serve a maximum of 10 male adolescents ages 12-17, within the disability categories of Emotional Disturbance, Specific Learning Disability, Learning Impairment, Speech or Language Impaired, and Other Health Impairment, to Fay Honey Knopp Memorial School in Rutland, VT. This approval is for eighteen months, through June 30, 2013.

This approval is also subject to the condition that the school immediately reports to the Department of Education whenever any changes occur in policies, programs, facilities, financial capacity, staffing, or administration during the approval period.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: Title 16 V.S.A. §166 (b)
State Board Rule 2228 et seq

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

1. Fay Honey Knopp Memorial School is in operation year-round and provides educational programming to male adolescents with sexual harming behaviors, who are being provided residential treatment services at HowardCenter's Park Street Program site in Rutland. The HowardCenter is a human services organization that offers services to children, youth, and families. The school operates under the auspices of the HowardCenter and has the capacity to serve a maximum of 10 male adolescents ages 12-17, within one or more of the following disability categories: Emotional Disturbance, Specific Learning Disability, Learning Impairment, Speech or Language Impairment, and Other Health Impairment. The primary goal of the

- programming is to safely reintegrate the adolescents into their home communities, by providing the opportunity for them to generalize their risk management strategies to a less restrictive setting while ensuring clients and families receive the support services needed to continue progressing towards a lower risk status. HowardCenter's Park Street Program is licensed by DCF as a residential child care facility. Placement of students in this program, and thereby into Fay Honey Knopp Memorial School, is made by the Department of Children and Families (DCF) or by the Department of Mental Health (DMH), with the participation of the student's Local Education Agency. The screening and approval of referrals is done through Central Review Committee (CRC).
2. The State Board of Education granted conditional general and special education independent school approval to Fay Honey Knopp Memorial School in June of 2011. The conditional approval was subject to the HowardCenter's submission of additional materials so that the department could have ample opportunity to review the application and conduct an onsite visit.
 3. On behalf of the Commissioner, an onsite visit was conducted by Claire Bruno, Pat Pallas Gray, and Brynne Reed on October 26, 2011.
 4. Fay Honey Knopp Memorial School's physical facility includes the residence in a large, one-level building with twelve single bedrooms on the ground level, a separate one-story, wood-framed commercial building that is configured for classroom and workshop space, and a third building that provides offices for the clinicians, school nurse, and program management personnel. The facility is leased from Vermont Achievement Center. The classrooms have computers, instructional areas, single high school desks in two rooms and a combination of tables and chairs in the other two. A reading library is located in the main computer classroom. There is a basketball court and a playing field directly outside of the school building. The pool and the gym at Vermont Achievement Center are accessible to the program participants. The three buildings used by the Park Street Program have been inspected by the Division of Fire Safety, and copies of the Certificates of Occupancy (CO) are on file at the Department.
 5. The minimum course of study, as prescribed in 16 V.S.A. §906, is provided and adapted to the learning styles, age and abilities of the students. All students at Fay Honey Knopp reside on campus and continue to engage in educational opportunities, essentially, around the clock. With extensive collaboration, communication, and planning occurring between the clinical staff in the residential program and the teaching staff in the school program, some courses are offered for high school credit in the after-school hours. Fay Honey Knopp students may earn up to seven and one-half credits per academic year toward their high school diploma, with two additional credits offered for students participating during the eight-week summer block. All school employees and Park Street staff are trained in Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) and Attachment, Self-Regulation and Competency (ARC). Fay Honey Knopp Memorial School has the resources and materials to support its educational program.
 6. The Fay Honey Knopp Memorial School is staffed by a full-time, licensed special educator, two full-time subject area teachers, a part-time behavioral specialist, a part-

time educational consultant, a part-time program director, and a part-time administrative assistant. Other professionals will be contracted based on needs of the school program and students; i.e. driver education, culinary arts, etc. The Park Street Program staff includes a full-time clinical director, two full-time family therapists/case managers, full-and part-time team leaders, residential counselors, awake night residential counselors, part-time administrative assistant, and a registered nurse. A contracted psychiatrist and a .85 FTE program director support the program staff.

7. Student health, assessment, special education and attendance records were reviewed and found to be in good order.
8. Fay Honey Knopp Memorial School's residential & educational program operates year round.
9. Fay Honey Knopp Memorial School has policies and procedures around confidentiality, maintaining educational records, and prior notice requirements for changes in a student's placement or program. The school/program does not suspend nor expel students.
10. Responsibility for room, board and educational costs are pre-determined and as a result there is no need for a written agreement assigning costs for residential students. Part of the cost of the residential and school program is funded through Private, Non-Medical Institution (PNMI) Medicaid, with the Medicaid reimbursement rate for treatment-related services being established through a rate setting process. Residential service costs not covered by Medicaid are paid with state funds, either through the Department of Mental Health or the Department of Children and Families. Educational service costs for these students not covered by Medicaid are paid by the Department of Education.
11. Fay Honey Knopp Memorial School has a policy on the prevention of harassment of students that is as stringent as the Department's model policy.

COST IMPLICATIONS: none

STAFF AVAILABLE:

Pat Pallas Gray
Independent School Consultant
828-5414

Mike Mulcahy, Coordinator
Student & Educator Support
828-5108

Brynne Reed
Education Consultant
828-5113

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Montpelier, Vermont

TEAM: General Supervision and Monitoring

ITEM: Will the State Board of Education grant renewal of general and special education independent school approval, to serve a maximum of 40 students ages 12-21 in grades 7-12, within the disability categories of Emotional Disabilities, Specific Learning Disabilities, Other Health Impairment, and mild Learning Impairment, to Centerpoint, So. Burlington, VT?

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the State Board of Education grants renewal of general and special education independent school approval, to serve a maximum of 40 students ages 12-21 in grades 7-12, within the disability categories of Emotional Disabilities, Specific Learning Disabilities, Other Health Impairment, and mild Learning Impairment, to Centerpoint, So. Burlington, VT. This approval is for four years, through June 30, 2015.

Approval is subject to the condition that the school immediately report to the Department of Education whenever changes occur in enrollment, programs, policies, facilities, financial capacity, staffing, or administration, during the approval period.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: Title 16 V.S.A. §166(b)
State Board Rule 2228 et seq

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

1. Centerpoint is a comprehensive adolescent day treatment program that works in collaboration with Northeastern Family Institute-VT, The Baird Center for Children & Families/HowardCenter for Human Services, and Matrix Health Systems. Through this collaboration, Centerpoint offers an integrated therapeutic approach to the academic, social, and emotional development of each adolescent, who has been identified under the categories of Emotional Disabilities, Specific Learning Disabilities, Other Health Impairment, and mild Learning Impairment. Centerpoint School has three distinct parts—the “Point” Group serves high-school-aged students in a milieu-based, peer support model, with a 1:4 staff/student ratio; the “Center” Group is designed for middle school-aged students and integrates a strong behavior management system to accommodate the developmental levels of these students while working toward the model of peer support/peer feedback, with a 1:2.5 staff/student ratio; and CP Stepping Stones is designed for the higher needs students, who are struggling

with significant emotional, behavioral, mental health and learning challenges, which are served through an individualized, student-centered, community-based approach, with a 1:1 staff/student ratio.

2. Centerpoint was last granted renewal of general and special education independent school approval by the State Board of Education on February 21, 2006, through June 30, 2009.
3. Centerpoint was visited on behalf of the Commissioner on May 19, 2010 by Joan Larsen, Claire Bruno, and Pat Pallas Gray.
4. Centerpoint has three primary locations. The “Center” and “Point” Programs are located in the main school building in So. Burlington. This building provides six primary classrooms plus a number of small & large group rooms, a multipurpose room, kitchen/culinary area, and office spaces. CP Stepping Stones is located in a two-story building in Winooski, which also houses a restaurant. The first floor of the building is handicapped accessible. CP Stepping Stones’ students also use a small wood-framed house that is located within walking distance of the main school building in So. Burlington. The three buildings meet health and safety requirements and are adequate to meet the needs of the program. Copies of the Certificates of Occupancy (CO) for the buildings are on file at the department.
5. The minimum course of study, as prescribed in 16 V.S.A. §906, is provided and adapted to the age and abilities of the students, and is Standards based. In addition, the school has a functional life skills and transition-age curriculum which is utilized. The purpose of the program includes support in the attainment of coping skills and academic skills, and its learning experiences are adapted to the students’ individualized needs and learning styles. A myriad of treatment, counseling, assessment and therapy support services are available to all the students and their families. On the day of the visit there were 37 students enrolled.
6. The “Center” and “Point” staff includes a campus director, a special education coordinator, eight teachers, a Program Coordinator, two social workers, four counseling teachers (aides), a culinary arts instructor, and a social work intern. CP Stepping Stones’ is located at two sites in Winooski. The staff for Winooski includes four teachers, 12 consulting teachers, three social workers, a licensed special education, a campus director, a clinical director, and a program coordinator. All the staff at Centerpoint School is supported by a Director, a Head of School, a Medical Director, Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Director, a Clinical Coordinator, and six clinicians. The educational staff is qualified by degree, training and experience for each assignment. A program of professional development is in place for the staff.
7. The student health, attendance, and assessment records were reviewed and found to be in good order. The fire drill records were in good order, also.
8. The school maintains an operating schedule that includes a total number of instructional hours each year which is not less than that required of a public school serving the same grades. Centerpoint also offers extended year services in the summer months.
9. The school submitted financial information to verify it has the capacity to operate during the period of approval.

10. Centerpoint has developed policies for admissions, discipline, and significant change in placement. These were reviewed and found to be appropriate.
11. The Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) is part of the school's philosophy and each student's placement is based on individual needs for a LRE.
12. Centerpoint has a policy on prevention of harassment of students that is as stringent as the Department's model policy.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: none

STAFF AVAILABLE:

Pat Pallas Gray
Independent School Consultant
828-5414

Mike Mulcahy, Coordinator
Student & Educator Support
828-5108

Claire Bruno
Special Education Consultant
828-5116

**State Board of Education
January 17, 2012
Item I2**

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Montpelier, Vermont**

TEAM: General Supervision and Monitoring

ITEM: Will the State Board of Education acknowledge that the New England Association of Schools & Colleges (NEAS&C) granted continued accreditation to serve students in grades K-8 to Maple Street School, Manchester Center, VT?

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the State Board of Education acknowledges that the New England Association of Schools & Colleges (NEAS&C) granted continued accreditation to serve students in grades K-8 to Maple Street School, Manchester Center, VT. This approval is for five years through October 1, 2016, to coincide with the school's New England Association of Schools & Colleges (NEAS&C) accreditation.

Approval is subject to the condition that the school immediately report to the Department of Education whenever any changes occur in enrollment, programs, policies, facilities, financial capacity, staffing, or administration, during the approval period.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: Title 16 V.S.A. § 166(b)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

1. Maple Street School is an approved independent day school for students in grades K-8.
2. Maple Street School is accredited by the New England Association of Schools & Colleges (NEAS&C). NEAS&C is recognized by the Vermont State Board of Education for accrediting purposes per State Board of Education Rule #7320. The school was granted continued NEAS&C accreditation on November 14, 2011 through October 1, 2016. Maple Street School is scheduled to file a Two-Year Interim Evaluation Report on October 1, 2013; in addition, routine annual reports will be filed.
3. The State Board of Education acknowledged NEAS&C's accreditation for Maple Street School on February 20, 2007, through October 1, 2011.

4. Maple Street School has a policy on the prevention of harassment of students that is as stringent as the Department's model policy.

COST IMPLICATIONS: none

STAFF AVAILABLE:

Pat Pallas Gray
Independent School Consultant
828-5414

Mike Mulcahy, Coordinator
Student & Educator Support
828-5108

**State Board of Education
January 17, 2012
Item I2**

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Montpelier, Vermont**

TEAM: General Supervision and Monitoring

ITEM: Will the State Board of Education acknowledge that the New England Association of Schools & Colleges (NEAS&C) granted initial accreditation to serve students in grades 7-12 to Vermont Commons School, So. Burlington, Center, VT?

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the State Board of Education acknowledges that the New England Association of Schools & Colleges (NEAS&C) granted initial accreditation to serve students in grades 7-12 to Vermont Commons School, So. Burlington, VT. This approval is for five years through October 1, 2016, to coincide with the school's New England Association of Schools & Colleges' (NEAS&C) accreditation.

Approval is subject to the condition that the school immediately report to the Department of Education whenever any changes occur in enrollment, programs, policies, facilities, financial capacity, staffing, or administration, during the approval period.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: Title 16 V.S.A. § 166(b)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

5. Vermont Commons School is an approved independent day school for students in grades 7-12.
6. Vermont Commons School was granted initial accreditation by the New England Association of Schools & Colleges (NEAS&C) in November of 2011. NEAS&C is recognized by the Vermont State Board of Education for accrediting purposes per State Board of Education Rule #7320. Vermont Commons School is scheduled to file a Two-Year Interim Evaluation Report by October 1, 2013 and a five-year report in 2016, at which time the school's accreditation will be reviewed.
7. The State Board of Education granted renewal of independent school approval to Vermont Commons School on October 19, 2004 through June of 2009. The school was granted NEAS&C candidacy in the fall of 2009.

8. Vermont Commons School has a policy on the prevention of harassment of students that is as stringent as the Department's model policy.

COST IMPLICATIONS: none

STAFF AVAILABLE:

Pat Pallas Gray
Independent School Consultant
828-5414

Mike Mulcahy, Coordinator
Student & Educator Support
828-5108

Brynne Reed
Education Consultant
828-5113