

**AGENCY OF EDUCATION  
Barre, Vermont**

**TEAM:** School Finance

**ITEM:** Will the State Board of Education grant an amendment to enable the approved tutorial at 204 Depot School of Bennington, VT, to provide a four-bed stabilization program for adolescent females, ages 13 up to 18, who are in DCF custody?

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

**That the State Board of Education grants an amendment to enable the approved tutorial at 204 Depot School of Bennington, VT, to provide a four-bed stabilization program for adolescent females, ages 13 up to 18, who are in DCF custody. This approval is through June 30, 2017, to coincide with the tutorial's current approval period.**

**Approval is subject to the condition that the tutorial immediately report to the Agency 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 §828

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

1. 204 Depot Street is a 10-day, staff-secure stabilization program for eight male residents, ages 13 up to 18, who are in the custody of the Department for Children and Families (DCF). 204 Depot is governed by Seall, Inc., a VT corporation which since 1971 has been providing community-based residential programs in Bennington, VT. 204 Depot Street is requesting an amendment to its current approval to provide a four-bed stabilization program for four female residents, ages 13 up to 18, who are in DCF custody. Both the program for the male residents at 204 Depot and the program for the female residents, which will be housed at 206 Depot Street, are designed for short-term crisis stabilization, ideally 10 days or less, but no more than 30 days unless a variance is requested by Seall, Inc. and granted by the Residential Licensing and Special Investigations Unit (RLSI) of the Agency of Human Services.
2. The female residents at 206 Depot Street will follow a structured daily schedule. They will be required to participate in the tutorial program upon arrival. The educational services at 206 Depot will be provided by licensed educators from The Tutorial Center in Bennington. The tutorial maintains an operating schedule that includes instruction for no less than 10 hours per week, two hours per subject, and the operating schedule can be amended to ensure that the instructional services address the individual needs of a participant with disabilities on an IEP.

3. The adolescent females will reside at 206 Depot Street in a wood-framed house located in a residential neighborhood. There are four bedrooms on the second floor. The main floor consists of a staff office, living room, and kitchen/eating area. Tutorial services will be provided on the first floor in this building. In the basement there are laundry facilities, a locked “security room” that will contain resident belonging, a locked furnace room and an area for recreation. The inside of the house and surrounding areas will be monitored by a video surveillance system with recording capabilities. There is a good sized, enclosed backyard. The yard will be shared with the male youth residents at 204 Depot Street but not at the same time. A copy of the Certificate of Occupancy (CO) for 206 Depot Street is on file at the Agency of Education.
4. 206 Depot Street is licensed by the Department for Children and Families as a residential crisis stabilization program for a maximum of four female residents, age 13 up to 18. During DCF’s recent site visit, the conditions under which a variance for a 5<sup>th</sup> resident at 206 Depot Street could be considered were discussed. If/when 206 Depot seeks a variance from RLSI, Seall, Inc. will need to submit a plan for supervision that includes keeping the bedroom door in the “double” open whenever two residents are in the room, and also, ensure the presence of two female staff in the building with one positioned on the landing to provide close supervision whenever the residents are in their bedrooms.
5. The tutorial program at 204 Depot Street was visited on behalf of the Secretary by Alicia Hanrahan and Pat Pallas Gray on June 4, 2015.
6. Upon arrival or whenever possible prior to arrival, the adolescent’s last known school district is contacted to access school records and determine their special education status. 206 Depot Street will coordinate educational services with the district, including consideration of credit for coursework. Instruction and methods of instruction offered will be age and ability-appropriate and individualized to meet the needs of each participant.
7. The program at 206 Depot will be overseen by an Executive Director and a Case Manager.
8. 204 Depot has implemented confidentiality of student records policies and procedures consistent with federal and state law. The tutorial program will maintain a register of the daily attendance for each adolescent and report the attendance to the responsible school district.
9. The Agency of Human Services through the Private Non-Medical Institutions (PNMI) process determines the program participation rates for 204 Depot Street.
10. 204 Depot has developed policies for admissions, discipline, and significant change in placement.

**COST IMPLICATIONS:** none

**STAFF AVAILABLE:**

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