

AGENCY OF EDUCATION

Barre, Vermont

Team: School Finance

ITEM: Will the State Board of Education grant renewal of independent school approval to the Vermont Commons School, So. Burlington, VT, to serve students in grades 6-12, based upon the review by the Agency of Education and notification of continued New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) accreditation?

SECRETARY'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the State Board of Education grant renewal of independent school approval to the Vermont Commons School, So. Burlington, VT, to serve students in grades 6-12, based upon the review by the Agency of Education and notification of continued New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) accreditation. This approval is for four years through October 1, 2021, to coincide with the NEASC accreditation period.

Approval is subject to the condition that the school immediately report to the Agency 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. Vermont Commons School is an approved independent day school for students in grades 6-12. The students of Vermont Commons School experience a unique blend of academics and global immersion, master fundamental academic disciplines, grasp the profound interdependence of the natural and human systems they inhabit, and graduate with the values, knowledge, skills, and commitment necessary to become ethical and engaged ecological citizens.
2. Vermont Commons School is accredited by the New England Association of Schools & Colleges (NEASC), which is recognized by the Vermont State Board of Education pursuant to State Board Rule #7320. Other than routine annual reports, the next major responsibility regarding accreditation will be the decennial evaluation visit scheduled for 2021.

3. NEASC, as part of its accreditation review, conducted an assessment of financial capacity. The applicant has satisfied NEASC's requirements, and the Agency recommends that the Board support NEASC's findings of adequate financial capacity, for the purposes of State Board approval.

4. Vermont Commons School has a policy on the prevention and reporting of harassment, hazing, and bullying which is as stringent as the Agency's model policy.

COST IMPLICATIONS: none

STAFF AVAILABLE:

Cassandra Ryan, Finance Analyst
479-8545