

AGENCY OF EDUCATION

Barre, Vermont

TEAM: School Finance

ITEM: Will the State Board of Education grant renewal of independent school approval to the Mountain School of Milton Academy, Vershire, VT, to serve students in grade 11, 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 grants renewal of independent school approval to the Mountain School of Milton Academy, Vershire, VT, to serve students in grade 11, 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 five years, through October 1, 2022, to coincide with the school's 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. The Mountain School Program of Milton Academy is a one-semester program for high school juniors, who come from private and public schools throughout the United States to spend four months on a working farm. The school combines a rigorous academic program with outdoor and farm activities and the social experience of dorm and community life.
2. The Mountain School Program of Milton Academy is accredited by the New England Association of Schools & Colleges (NEASC). NEASC is an accrediting agency recognized by the Vermont State Board of Education, pursuant to Rule 7320. Other than routine annual reports, the next major responsibility regarding accreditation will be the decennial evaluation visit scheduled for 2022.
3. NEASC, as part of its accreditation review, assessed financial capacity. The applicant has satisfied NEASC's requirements, and the Agency recommends that the

State Board support NEASC's findings of adequate financial capacity for the purposes of State Board approval.

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

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS: none

STAFF AVAILABLE:

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