

AGENCY OF EDUCATION
Barre, Vermont

TEAM: School Finance

ITEM: Will the State Board of Education grant renewal of approval as an Other Educational Program to the Brook Street Family Literacy Center's Teen Parent Education Program in Barre, VT?

SECRETARY'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the State Board of Education grants renewal of approval as an Other Educational Program to the Brook Street Family Literacy Center's Teen Parent Education Program in Barre, VT. This approval is for three years through June 30, 2022; and approval is conditional on the requirement that the program reports to the Agency of Education within five business days whenever any changes occur in programs, policies, facilities, financial capacity, staffing or administration during the approval period.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: Title 16 V.S.A. § 1073 (b)
State Board of Education Standards I-IV

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

1. Under the auspices of the Capstone Community Action Council, the Brook Street Family Literacy Center operates an Other Educational Program aka a Teen Parent Education (TPE) Program. Brook Street Family Literacy Center's TPE Program is a day program designed to serve a maximum of ten students, female and male in grades 7-12, who are pregnant and/or parenting. Capstone Community Action Council is a non-profit organization serving the needs of families in Central VT.
2. The educational purpose of the Brook Street Family Literacy Center's TPE Program is to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty and low literacy in Central VT families by providing intensive and integrated wrap-around education services to expectant and parenting students.
3. TPE Program participants are from public schools generally in the Central VT area. Participants are required to attend the program 5.5 hours each day and 22 hours each week. During the summer months, the requirement is 5.5 hours each day and 16.5 hours each week.
4. Capstone Community Action Council has Head Start and Early Head Start classrooms for children who need care while a parent(s) is at work or attending school. These programs are located in the building used for the TPE Program; and these programs are

licensed to operate by the Division for Children and Families. The onsite child care center is also accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

5. The TPE Program is housed in the historic Brook Street School in Barre. The classroom for the Program is on the second floor, where students work individually and in small groups to achieve their educational goals while their children, one floor below, are enrolled in the Head Start Early Childhood Center. A smaller classroom on the second floor serves as a testing site, meeting room, and another option for small group work. In the lower level of the building, there is a full kitchen and a large space for art, cooking, and fitness activities. Accessibility in the building is via an elevator. The TPE Program has received a Certificate of Occupancy (CO) from the Division of Fire Safety for use of the building for educational purposes.
6. The academic programs for the TPE Program participants are developed on an individual basis, and each school district works with the TPE Program staff to create individualized learning plans. The sending schools in many cases provides syllabi and materials; other schools may grant approval to the TPE Program to use its curricula/instructional materials. All TPE participants are required to be enrolled in a public school. There is a written agreement between the TPE Program and the enrolling schools which outlines the course(s) to be completed, the credit goals, and credit transferability. This agreement is signed by the program participant, parent/guardian (if applicable), and the enrolling school's counselor and administrator. In addition to core academics, participants receive prenatal and parenting education services, access to an on-site licensed clinician for weekly counseling, coached parent and child time in the early childhood classrooms, a cooking and nutrition program, and a healthy relationships program. Students have access to a library comprised of both fiction and non-fiction as well as resource books. There are laptops, printers, cameras and video recorders, art and other work supplies available on-site. Capstone also offers pre-employment and career exploration classes, and community work experiences. At the present time, there are six TPE Program participants enrolled.
7. The TPE Program has a full-time, licensed teacher who is qualified by training and experience to teach the core subject areas. The TPE Program is overseen and administered by a .8 FTE Family Literacy Center Coordinator. Other professional staff members who work with the program participants are an infant/toddler home visitor, a family advocate, and a part-time mental health consultant.
8. The school district of residence, pursuant to Act 192 of the 2007-2008 Legislative session, pays the Teen Parent Education Program 83 percent of the prior year's statewide average net cost per pupil as calculated under 16 V.S.A. § 825 minus debt service, prorated based on the participant's full-time equivalent enrollment in academic courses at the Teen Parent Education Program.

9. The enrolling school district is responsible for special education services to qualifying participants. The Teen Parent Education Program works with the student's school district which provides the services either directly or through contract with a private or public educational agency.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS: none

STAFF AVAILABLE:

Cassandra Ryan, Fiscal and Regulatory Compliance Coordinator