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## MEMORANDUM

TO: Heather Bouchey, Acting Secretary of Vermont Agency of Education  
FROM: Tracy Harris, Coordinator for Behavioral Supports  
SUBJECT: Amendment for Manchester Village School's Approval  
DATE: August 7, 2018

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I'm writing to suggest my opinion that Manchester Village School be granted an amendment to their independent school approval, to include endorsement in the area of Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI).

I visited Manchester Village School on May 2, 2016 and concluded that, in my professional opinion, the school met the requirements for independent school approval based on the rules for Special Education Approval for Independent Schools. It is my understanding that the State Board of Education granted Manchester Village School a five-year re-approval to serve students in the areas of Autism Spectrum Disorders, Emotional Disturbance, Intellectual Disabilities, Other Health Impairment, Specific Learning Disability, and Speech-Language Impairment. The school was not seeking approval in the area of TBI at that time.

Since then, I have met with Mary Ann Moriarity, Director of the school, as well as with the clinical director, who has training and much experience in the field of neuropsychology, much of which is specific to TBI. I learned in my meeting with these individuals that the school has maintained its academic and therapeutic focus on serving their students who exhibit a range of special education needs and have also bolstered their staffing, resources, and practices with TBI-informed awareness.

My understanding is that part of their motivation to add these TBI-informed practices to the program was to meet the unique needs of a student from the Bennington-Rutland Supervisory Union who has been enrolled in the school for a number of years. This student's primary disability is ED and his secondary disability is OHI, but he school is aware and mindful of his history of TBI. The school is now seeking an amendment to their approval to include TBI as an endorsement at the request of the Bennington-Rutland Supervisory Union.

I recommend the addition of this endorsement to the fine work the Manchester Village School provides as an approved independent school for students with special education needs in Vermont.