

Site Review

Renewal- Greenwood School

Independent School Review Report Special Education

Site Review Conducted - November 29, 2022

Submitted by Independent School Review Team:
J. Deborah Ormsbee

Special Education Team:
Tracy Harris
Betty Roy



Site Review Scope of Work and Purpose

The Greenwood School is a residential special education school for boys in grades six through twelve, located in Putney, Vermont. The Greenwood School is accredited through the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC). Pursuant to SBE Rule 2224, approval may be granted without committee evaluation and the approval process in the case of any school accredited by a state or regional agency recognized by the SBE. NEASC is one of the accrediting bodies recognized by the SBE per rule 7320. A copy of the school's most current notification(s) from NEASC regarding its accreditation status will provide such information as is necessary to assure the State Board that the school is meeting the approval standards.

The Independent School Team conducted an onsite review of Greenwood School's special education program on November 29, 2022. The special education report is provided below.

The Independent School Team received Greenwood School's renewal applications and supporting documentation in a timely manner meeting all State Board of Education requirements under Rule 2227.

Special Education Report

Based on the rules for special education approval for independent schools, the special education team finds that the Greenwood School has met criteria for renewal of their approval status.

The Greenwood School was visited by representatives from both the Independent School and Special Education Teams on November 29, 2022. Greenwood staff interviewed by the review team included the Head of School and special education staff. Members of the AOE's review team toured the facilities, observed staff/student interactions in and outside of classroom settings, and reviewed student files. Only four Vermont students, who are eligible for special education services, were enrolled at the Greenwood School on the day of the visit and all four files were reviewed.

The following State Board of Education rules were reviewed for compliance:

2228.1 – Essential Special Education Supports

The Greenwood School demonstrated it has the staff, programs, and facilities to support students in the disability categories of Specific Learning Disability, Speech or Language Impairment and Other Health Impairment. The depth and breadth of special education and support services is remarkable.

2228.3 – Maintenance and Implementation of Written Policies and Procedures

The Greenwood School evidenced effective maintenance and implementation of written policies and/or procedures in the areas of: (1) admissions, (2) least restrictive environment, (3) discipline, (4) graduation, (5) faculty qualifications, and (6) faculty-student ratios.

2228.3.1 – Coordination with Sending Responsible Agencies, Parents, Public Agencies, and Other Service Providers

The Greenwood School provided evidence of (1) maintenance of educational records and disclosure to the students' parents and sending agencies, (2) participation in evaluation procedures and development of IEPs, 3) implementation of IEPs, and (4) providing prior notice to the sending LEA regarding the need for a change in a child's program or placement. The Director of Special Education is highly organized and goes to great lengths to ensure that all faculty members have access to their students' IEPs, consultation around their disabilities, and support in implementing accommodations and modifications in the classroom. Likewise, there is ample evidence of sound and trusting collaborations between the Director of Special Education and LEAs.

While the service pages of two IEPs were found to be out of compliance and the most recent comprehensive evaluation missing from the file of one student, there is documentation of repeated attempts from Greenwood School's special education staff to remedy this matter. The Agency will follow up with the district that is ultimately responsible for those documents.

2228.3.2 - Licensure Requirements

The Greenwood School maintains a student-faculty ratio of 2 to 1, with an average class size of four. One of the things that is exceptional about their faculty is the wide array of licensed support service professionals. The Director of Special Education holds a valid Vermont Special Educator's License and provides both direct services and consultation to teachers. The Director of Speech Language Services maintains an active Office of Professional Regulations License for Speech Language Pathology. The Director of Residential Life maintains a Vermont Professional Educator's License with an endorsement in Educational Speech Language Pathology. The Occupational Therapy Supervisor has an active OT License and National Certification; and oversees the work of a Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant, who provides direct services. The Director of Counseling is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker. These licensed professionals join a faculty filled with additional specialists such as a Director of Social and Emotional Learning, a Language and Learning Specialist, a Director for Assistive Technology, and a Dean of Students.

Recommendation:

The Independent School and Special Education Team recommends a five-year renewal of the Greenwood School to the Secretary of Education. The school has met all State Board of Education and statutory requirements to operate an approved special education independent school accredited with the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC). The Greenwood School meets the criteria for renewal of approval under Rule 2227 and the accreditation requirements for residential independent schools.