

AGENCY OF EDUCATION  
Barre, Vermont

**TEAM:** School Finance

**ITEM:** Will the State Board of Education grant renewal of general independent school approval and special education independent school approval, for students in grades 9-12, within the disability categories of Intellectual Disability, Specific Learning Disability, Visual Impairment, Hearing Loss, Speech or Language Impairment, Orthopedic Impairment, Other Health Impairment, Emotional Disturbance, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Deaf-Blindness, Multiple-Disabilities, and Traumatic Brain Injury, to Lyndon Institute in Lyndon Center, VT?

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

**That the State Board of Education grants renewal of general independent school approval and special education independent school approval, for students in grades 9-12, within the disability categories of Intellectual Disability, Specific Learning Disability, Visual Impairment, Hearing Loss, Speech or Language Impairment, Orthopedic Impairment, Other Health Impairment, Emotional Disturbance, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Deaf-Blindness, Multiple-Disabilities, and Traumatic Brain Injury, to Lyndon Institute in Lyndon Center, VT. This approval is for two years through October 1, 2018, to coincide with the school's New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) accreditation.**

**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)  
State Board Rule 2228 et seq

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

1. Lyndon Institute (LI) is an independent high school which serves day and residential students from 24 Vermont towns and 17 countries. The current population at LI is 501 students, of which 88 are boarding students. There are 63 students who are eligible for special education supports and services, and 50 students who have 504 plans.
2. Lyndon Institute is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), which is an accrediting agency recognized by the State Board of Education under Rule 7320. LI is expected to file a Two-Year Interim Evaluation Report in April, 2016, and a Five-Year Report in 2018, at which time the school's

- accreditation will be reviewed. The next regularly scheduled evaluation visit will be in 2023. The State Board of Education last granted renewal of general and special education independent school approval on May 18, 2010, through October 1, 2015.
3. Lyndon Institute was visited on behalf of the Secretary of Education by Alicia Hanrahan, Education Programs Manager and Laura Baker, Learning Disabilities/Special Education Consultant on January 21, 2016.
  4. Lyndon Institute has developed and implemented policies for admissions, discipline, Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), and graduation. These were reviewed and found to meet the State of Vermont's requirements.
  5. The school is staffed by a VT licensed special education Director, five full-time VT licensed special educators, a VT licensed speech pathologist and two, full-time Home-School Coordinators.
  6. Lyndon Institute's special education staff assumes the role of case manager for Caledonia North Supervisory Union students, and thus communicates and coordinates with Local Education Agencies and parents. Special educators at LI manage the IEPs for students in Essex Caledonia Supervisory Union and St. Johnsbury School District in collaboration with the sending school. The LI staff conducts special education evaluations for Essex Caledonia Supervisory Union and St. Johnsbury School District, writes and implements the Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), and hosts and participates in a wide variety of meetings.
  7. The special education staff at LI ensures that special education supports and services are provided based on each student's IEP; and a continuum of special education and related services are provided in several ways as outlined below. A full or partial placement in special education programs is determined by the Evaluation and Planning Team (EPT) and must be reviewed by the IEP team prior to placement. Related services such as counseling, speech and language, occupational therapy, physical therapy, or other related services are provided on a contractual basis.
    - a. General Education Environment: Utilizing a Consulting Teacher/Resource Room format, supports may consist of classroom or individual paraprofessionals, accommodation in teaching styles, classroom setting, and instruction and/or materials provided by either a special educator or paraeducator in conjunction with the classroom teacher.
    - b. Resource Room: The Resource Room services are available to students who are in need of more intensive services than available in a mainstream setting. This may include remedial services in reading, written language, math, speech/language and other basic skills.
    - c. Learning Services Program: The Learning Services Program is available to students who are in need of more intensive services. Instruction is offered in independent living skills, community based training, career education/work experience, communication and practical academics to prepare students for work

and daily living following high school. Support is provided during study hall time for those students needing further academic support to achieve success in their individualized program than what is available in a mainstream setting.

This program offers more hands-on learning and life skills training.

8. Lyndon Institute enters into a written agreement with each sending school district. This agreement outlines the sending district's and LI's respective obligations under Federal and state law, including the costs of services.
  
9. Lyndon Institute has a policy on prevention and reporting of harassment, hazing, and bullying that is as stringent as the Agency's model policy.

**COST IMPLICATIONS:** none

**STAFF AVAILABLE:**

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