

**AGENCY OF EDUCATION
Montpelier, Vermont**

TEAM: School Finance

ITEM: Will the State Board of Education grant renewal of independent school approval to serve students in grades K-12 to Lake Champlain Waldorf School, Shelburne, VT, 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 serve students in grades K-12 to Lake Champlain Waldorf School, Shelburne, VT, 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 June 30, 2026.

This approval is conditioned on the requirement that the school reports to the Agency of Education within five business days 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: 2223

1. An independent school may operate and provide elementary and secondary education if it is approved by the State Board of Education.
2. The State Board of Education shall approve an independent school if it substantially complies with the Board's rules for independent schools, promulgated as Series 2200 (Independent School Program Approval).
3. Lake Champlain School is seeking renewal of general independent school approval. Lake Champlain School was last granted renewal of approval by the Vermont State Board of Education on February 21, 2017, through June 30, 2021.
4. Per SBE Rule 2223, approval may be granted without committee evaluation in the case of any school accredited by a state or regional agency recognized by the State Board for accrediting purposes.

BACKGROUND:

5. Lake Champlain Waldorf School is an independent day school serving students in kindergarten through twelfth grade. The Lake Champlain Waldorf School prepares students to become creative and independent thinkers able to impart purpose and direction to their lives and to meet the world and their fellow human beings with wisdom, courage, and compassion. The school's mission, philosophy and objectives are rooted in the Waldorf tradition. The Lake Champlain Waldorf School is also accredited by the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA).
6. Lake Champlain Waldorf School is accredited by the New England Association of Schools & Colleges (NEASC), which is recognized by the Vermont State Board of Education pursuant to State Board Rule #7320. Other than routine annual reports, the next major responsibility regarding accreditation will be the Five-Year Interim Report due in the fall of 2021.
7. NEASC, as part of its accreditation review, conducted an assessment of financial capacity. The applicant has satisfied NEASC's requirements, and the Agency recommends that the Board support NEASC's findings of adequate financial capacity, for the purposes of State Board approval.
8. Lake Champlain Waldorf School 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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