

**AGENCY OF EDUCATION  
Barre, Vermont**

**TEAM:** School Finance

**ITEM:** Will the State Board of Education grant an amendment to the general and special education independent school approval for Vermont Permanency Initiative, d.b.a. New England School for Girls, Bennington, VT, to enable the school to increase the maximum student enrollment from 25 to 30?

**SECRETARY'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

**That the State Board of Education grants an amendment to the general and special education independent school approval for Vermont Permanency Initiative, d.b.a. New England School for Girls, Bennington, VT, to enable the school to increase the maximum student enrollment from 25 to 30.**

**Approval is subject to the condition that the school report to the Agency of Education whenever changes occur in enrollment, programs, policies, facilities, financial capacity, staffing, or administration during the approval period.**

**STATUTORY AUTHORITY:** 16 V.S.A. § 166 (b)  
State Board Rules 2228 et. seq.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

1. Vermont Permanency Initiative, d.b.a. New England School for Girls (NESG) is an independent, non-profit boarding facility providing educational, therapeutic, and reintegration services for female students ages 13-19 years of age. The students admitted at NESG are from out of state. Accepted students are in need of specialized services in a self-contained classroom and living environment due to academic and emotional difficulties that interfere with their ability to function in a traditional school environment. The mission of the school is to build a safe, trusting and responsible community in which students are encouraged to heal from past trauma, find pleasure and joy in their lives, and build inner resources for their future. Vermont Permanency Initiative d.b.a. New England School for Girls is owned and operated by Becket Family of Services, Inc. of Plymouth, NH.

2. Vermont Permanency Initiative, d.b.a. New England School for Girls received initial general and special education independent school approval, within the disability categories of Emotional Disturbance, Intellectual Disability, Multiple Disabilities, Other Health Impairment, Specific Learning Disability, Hearing Loss, and Speech or Language Impairment, on November 15, 2016. This approval limited the number of students to be served to a maximum of 25 female students, which coincided with the Residential Treatment Program License issued to New England School for Girls by the Department for Children and Families. On April, 19, 2017, the Agency of Human Services Department for Children and Families amended the license for the New England School for Girls from a maximum capacity of 25 to 30.
  
3. Due to the current renovations on the Maddison campus, the additional five students in the Subacute Program at NESG will be educated in a self-contained school setting at the Judy Fun House on Matteson Road. A licensed and experienced educator will provide the instruction in this self-contained classroom setting. A Certificate of Occupancy for the Judy Fun House is on file at the Agency of Education.

**FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:** none

**STAFF AVAILABLE:**

Cassandra Ryan, Finance Analyst  
479-8545