

AGENCY OF EDUCATION
Barre, Vermont

TEAM: School Finance

ITEM: Will the State Board of Education grant renewal of general and special education independent school approval, to serve male students in grades 6-12, within the disability categories of specific learning disability, speech or language impairment, and other health impairment, to Greenwood School, Putney, VT?

SECRETARY'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the State Board of Education grants renewal of general and special education independent school approval, to serve male students in grades 6-12, within the disability categories of specific learning disability, speech or language impairment, and other health impairment, to Greenwood School, Putney, VT. This approval is for five years, through October 31, 2022, to coincide with the school's accreditation through the New England Association of Schools & Colleges (NEASC).

Approval is subject to the condition that the school immediately 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 Rule: 2228 et.seq.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

1. Greenwood School is a 6-12th grade college preparatory independent boarding and day school for students confronting learning, attention, and executive functioning challenges. The Greenwood School teaches students with learning disabilities such as dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia, expressive/receptive language needs, and attentional difficulties (ADHD). The school, which was founded in 1978, can serve up to 55 students, which are placed privately as well as by school districts from Vermont and other states.
2. Greenwood School is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), which is a State Board of Education recognized accrediting agency pursuant to Rule 7320. In the normal course of accreditation events, the

school is expected to file a Two-Year Interim Evaluation Report, due April 1, 2019, and a Five-Year Report in 2022, at which time the school's accreditation will be reviewed.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Approval Recommendation: Special Education approval in the disability categories of; speech or language impairment (SLI), other health impairment (OHI), and specific learning disability (SLD)

Rationale: Based on the rules for Special Education Approval for Independent Schools, The Greenwood School has met the minimum requirements for independent school approval.

School Description: The Greenwood School is seeking re-approval in the areas of other health impairment and specific learning disability. They are seeking approval in speech or language impairment, grades 6-12. The students are grouped roughly by age and ability, and are taught by lead teachers with consultation from the special educator on staff.

Review Description: The Greenwood School, located in Putney, Vermont, was visited by Agency of Education staff on 3/16/17. During this visit, the Agency employee interviewed staff, toured facilities, observed staff/student interactions, and reviewed student files and IEPs. Comprehensive file reviews were conducted for four of the seven Vermont students. One student attending Greenwood under the category of Speech or Language Impairment has had a change in primary diagnosis since the time of review. Greenwood School was not approved for the disability category of SLI at the time of review, placing Greenwood out of compliance with rule 2228.2.

Review Findings:

2228.2 - The Greenwood School demonstrated the policies, procedures, and staff training to support students in the disability categories of; speech or language impairment, other health impairment, and specific learning disability. However, at the time of review they were not approved in the disability category SLI and were found to be serving a student in that category.

2228.3 - The Greenwood school demonstrated that they have 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 - The Greenwood school demonstrated evidence of minimum maintenance of (1) educational records, and coordination with LEA and parents through data and file review, (2) participation in evaluation and IEP procedures through IEP review, (3) implementation of IEPs through progress reporting.

Note on Evidence:

1. Based on a review of four IEPs and school documentation of schedules, staffing, and contract services, the following services were found to be undeliverable and have been corrected.
 - i. Math, Reading and Literacy Services were not deliverable for the required 5 days a week for one student.

2228.3.2 – The Greenwood School meets expectations regarding licensed staff. The special educator, speech and language pathologists, and occupational therapist were licensed by the appropriate state agency.

2228.4 – The Greenwood School demonstrated policies, procedures, and written agreements that outline tuition and establish division of legal responsibilities with regards to students on IEPs.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS: none

STAFF AVAILABLE:

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