

State Board of Education Independent School Approval Review Committee

Draft Meeting Minutes

Meeting Place: Virtual Teams Meeting/Video/Teleconference

Call in #: 1-802-828-7667, Conference ID: 725 977 527#

1 National Life Drive

Montpelier, VT 05620-2501

Date: June 7, 2022

State Board of Education (SBE) Subcommittee Members: Tom Lovett - Chair, Jenna O'Farrell, Patrick Brown, Lyle Jepson

Agency of Education (AOE): Patrick Halladay, Deborah Ormsbee, Patricia Pallas Gray, Cassandra Ryan, Chris Case

Others: Lisa Bilowith - Jean Garvin School, Kristie Reed – Jean Garvin School, Jamie Seeholzer BRIGHTality and team, Rocky Spino – Brookhaven Learning Center

Call to Order/Roll Call/Amendments to the Agenda

Tom Lovett called the meeting to order at 9:04 am.

Approve Minutes from April 13, 2022 Meeting

Jenna moved approval of the April 13, 2022, meeting minutes. Patrick seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Public to be Heard

None.

Stone Path Academy – There is no new report. There will be a summative report provided in July, once the school year has come to an end.

School Reports

- **Baird School** - amendment to approval--add intensive special education program

Patrick outlined that the recommendation is for the Baird school to be approved with an amendment to an existing approval for an intensive special education program through June 30, 2022. Deb added that the AOE highly recommends the Baird program that includes a very rigorous academic program. It is a robust program with a variety of options. All programming is integrated.

Tom requested an update on the “cap” on enrollment. Flexibility in the cap is the recommendation from the AOE. Staffing is not currently an issue for them.

The amendment would go through the end of the month and would then align with their standard renewal process.

Motion - Patrick made a motion to bring the Secretary’s recommendation to the full board for approval at the June 15, 2022 meeting of the SBE. Jenna O’Farrell seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

- **Brookhaven Learning Center**- amendment to approval--serve female day students

The change would allow female students to be added as a coed population in the day program as an amendment, with alignment with the regular approval timeline for Brookhaven in 2024.

Rocky Spino, director, addressed questions. Staffing patterns will not be significantly impacted. Staffing has been steady. No facility changes will need to be addressed (i.e., bathrooms are unisex and private.) Staff believes adding female students to the day program will be less restrictive, more heterogenous, and “a more rich and realistic experience.”

Jenna O’Farrell made a motion to bring the Secretary’s recommendation for amendment to the full board for approval at the June 15, 2022 meeting. Lyle Jepson seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

- **The Jean Garvin School** - amendment to approval--add intensive special education program

Jean Garvin is also under the umbrella of the Howard Center. The amendment would add an existing special education intensive program to the regular program through June 30, 2023. The amendment is for one year while the school addresses the concerns outlined in the report from the AOE. The entire program review will be aligned with a review for continued approval in 2023. Technical assistance has been offered to the Jean Garvin School. They will be adding four teachers, clinical staff, two support staff, etc. They are half-way through the necessary hiring.

Motion - Patrick Brown made a motion to bring the Secretary’s recommendation for the amendment to the full board for approval at the June 15, 2022 meeting, approving the addition of a special education intensive program through June 30, 2023. Lyle Jepson seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

- **BRIGHTality** - initial approval

The request is for an initial approval for two years. The program has been reviewed (November 2021). The program is for grades 6-12 for up to 15 students. It is a tutorial program, which is a “for profit” organization. Governance and staff supervision were topics discussed. BRIGHTality staff would like to have a governance board as a means of support. American Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance was reviewed. A ramp now allows for access to the building. Bathroom facilities are now next in line for ADA compliance. A contractor will be working with them soon.

Life Space Crisis Intervention training will take place during the summer of 2022, as well as other training.

Recommended actions and compliance issues would be monitored by the AOE prior to the opening of the school year. The AOE offered to provide technical assistance to create a timeline for implementing the recommendations, which would then be provided to the committee at the next July meeting. In addition, Fire Safety will need to provide an initial certificate of occupancy, confirming code updates. A staff development timeline with associated topics will be necessary.

Division leadership will reach out to Secretary French to gain approval to draft a revised recommendation. They will draft a recommendation for the June 15, 2022 SBE meeting.

Motion - Patrick moved that a recommendation for conditional approval for BRIGHTality be offered to the SBE at the June 15, 2022 meeting pending ADA compliance and a specific timeline for professional development in Life Space Crisis Intervention (LSCI), Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) and mandated reporting. The motion was seconded by Jenna O’Farrell and passed unanimously.

Other

Jenna O’Farrell asked what type of demographic information is available from the AOE that would indicate the special education/independent school capacity for serving students and if there are projections concerning growth in capacity. A list of schools with existing capacity is not currently available. Gathering point in time data may not be accurate, as changes often take place. Creating demographic information, while going through the back log of approvals, will be difficult to achieve.

Tom asked for an updated list of independent school approved programs. The AOE is in the process of updating the list and the stages of review.

Next Steps: Action Items, Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on July 6, 2022 from 1:00-3:00 p.m. with up to six pending action items.

Adjourn

Patrick Brown moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:05 a.m. Jenna O’Farrell seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Minutes prepared by Lyle Jepson

