



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



TO: Mr. Dan Bailey, M.A, Chief Administrator
Devereux Glenholme School

FROM: Dr. Dori Papa, Education Consultant *DP*
Bureau of Special Education

DATE: May 31, 2023

SUBJECT: PRELIMINARY EVALUATION REPORT
Approval Review for a Private Special Education Program

On December 15, 2022, an evaluation team visited Devereux Glenholme School (Devereux) to conduct a program reapproval. The team consisted of:

- Dr. Dori Papa, Education Consultant, Bureau of Special Education (BSE/the Bureau);
- Ms. Kitty Clemens, Director, Cedarhurst School; and
- Ms. Sara Alberti, Director of Special Services, North Branford Public Schools.

During a previous site visit on December 14, 2022, Dr. Papa reviewed the education files of students as well as personnel files. In addition, Dr. Papa reviewed the application materials your administration submitted to the BSE.

At the exit conference on December 15, 2022, the evaluation team shared its impressions and preliminary findings. The approval process included a review of the program's:

- governance;
- administration;
- fiscal management;
- admissions;
- individual student records;
- program requirements;
- evaluation of student progress and reporting responsibilities;
- student management techniques;
- qualifications and requirements for instructional, administrative, and support personnel;
- health and safety; and
- termination of enrollment.

Commendations:

Staff interviewed shared that the leadership, specifically the education director, is highly collaborative, motivating, enthusiastic, organized, maintains an open-door policy, and is incredibly supportive of the entire educational team.

The program employs a full-time post-secondary coordinator. Devereux has developed a robust internship program for students that follows an authentic hiring process. The program prepares students for the rigor of the real world but also the process of securing their first job. The program bookends with the College and Career Readiness course offered because it allows students the opportunity to apply into action the skills learned.

Devereux conducts student surveys each semester about new activities of interest and those they would engage in during the daily after school enrichment program. Optional activities currently include chorus, arts and crafts, digital art projects, fine arts, recreational sports, creative writing, student council, Dungeons and Dragons, community service club, and an Equestrian and Ropes course. Students also practice advocacy skills to suggest new activities outside of surveys and to transition to another activity.

Staff interviewed shared that their longevity (10+ employment years) with Devereux is because “it is a very positive place to be.”

School staff interviewed shared that the individualized education program (IEP) development and progress monitoring process have become much more collaborative under the new education director’s leadership. The multidisciplinary team frequently meets to review strengths, challenges, learning strategies, and effectiveness of academic and behavioral interventions. An interviewee stated, “It is now a uniform process that is no longer a mismatch of unconnected information.” However, a contracted related service provider reported that there is a need for more formal mechanisms of communication and collaboration with outside service providers.

The evaluation team reported evidence of well-planned instruction aligned with Connecticut Core Standards, which appeared appropriate given the current level of performance for each student. Students observed were engaged in their instruction and demonstrated eagerness to respond to questions.

Devereux implements a positive behavioral intervention and support model across settings, which provides a strong foundation to implement the treatment plan developed for each student—articulated through an individualized behavior support plan. The program designs tiered or leveled interventions to provide instruction related to, and reinforcement of, desired behaviors, the teaching of new skills or behaviors, and the extinction of challenging behaviors. Additional support is available based upon data and the need for supplemental supports and services within the milieu.

The program provides strong collaboration, consistency, and carryover to the residential component for those students requiring a residential milieu or treatment setting.

The program has established a positive culture and climate evidenced by positive respectful relationships among students and between staff and students.

Standard Deficiencies:

Devereux Glenholme School must rectify the following standard deficiencies:

Standard F: Program Requirements - The local school district is responsible for the development and appropriateness of a student’s IEP and any changes made in that IEP. Each private facility shall request an IEP from the placing local education agency (LEA) prior to student enrollment and at least annually thereafter. The IEP shall serve as the basis for instruction for each student. The IEP presented by the LEA serves as the basis for admission and should identify the student’s current performance levels, the appropriate specialized instruction, and required related services. Each private facility should participate

in the planning and placement team (PPT) meeting, which discusses and determines placement in the facility prior to student enrollment. For students placed by other agencies, the private facility should obtain an IEP from the district having educational jurisdiction as soon as feasibly possible after placement.

Issue(s):

1. In one (1) of five (5) IEPs reviewed, the IEPs did not appropriately reflect the related services identified on page 11. Specifically, the IEPs did not clearly identify speech/language therapy services as provided individually or within a small group.
2. In five (5) of five (5) IEPs reviewed, there was no evidence that a Devereux special education teacher attended a PPT in accordance with Section P (Planning and Decision Making of the *Application for Approval of a Private Special Education Program*—page 29, Item 90) subsequent to the placement PPT.

Corrective Action: Implement a procedure to utilize upon receipt of an IEP after participating in a PPT meeting. Said procedure shall ensure that all the information in the IEP is complete and accurate and Devereux can implement the supports and services outlined in the document as written (i.e., require clarification of whether the program will provide any related service individually or within a group setting), and submit to the BSE copies of the next three (3) IEPs developed by the LEA’s PPT for students enrolled. The copies shall demonstrate careful review for accuracy and completeness, and if needed, illustrate implementation of written notification to the district requesting necessary changes (retain in student file). On or before June 23, 2023, submit to the BSE a copy of the process/procedures developed to review IEPs and the manner Devereux will use to notify/inform districts.

Recommendations:

The BSE offers the following recommendations to Devereux Glenholme School:

Contact the Connecticut State Department of Education Talent Office to arrange for the program’s chief administrator to participate in the System for Educator Evaluation and Development (SEED) training for administrators. ([CSDE Evaluation Training](#)). The chief administrator is responsible for conducting the education director’s evaluations.

Provide additional planning time as teachers interviewed expressed the need for this time to be “built into the master schedule” to increase opportunities for 1:1 collaboration between teachers.

Identify a “more private, closed-off space for confidentiality” to provide occupational therapy (OT) sessions as staff interviewed shared the need. Delivery of current OT sessions are in the school library—a public space. Staff suggested equipping the new space with some OT equipment for addressing gross motor skills.

Move forward with the plan to expand upon the current Robotics course offered as an enrichment course during after school hours, and due to its popularity, make it available as a full semester course during the school day.

Provide opportunities for teachers and related service personnel to visit and observe public school classrooms as well as other nonpublic school settings where students may transition upon a PPT recommendation. A clear understanding of the expectations, (academic and social/emotional) instructional models, and level of expected self-advocacy will assist in preparing students for this transition.

Preliminary Evaluation Report: Devereux Glenholme School
Approval Review for a Private Special Education Program
May 31, 2023

Within 15 working days from the date of this preliminary evaluation report, please indicate in writing to the BSE whether your program agrees with the report and accepts the delineated corrective action plan. Upon receipt of Devereux Glenholme School's written agreement and acceptance of the entire report, the Bureau will submit a recommendation for program approval through June 30, 2028, to the Commissioner of Education.

Upon such approval, the following will be applicable to Devereux Glenholme School:

Approved Ages to Serve:	9 to 22 years old
Approved Grades to Serve:	5th through 12th
Approved Enrollment Capacity:	105 students
Approval Expiration Date:	June 30, 2028

cc: Morgan Fulks, Education Director