



STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



June 15, 2021

Dr. Kim Shaunesey, Chief Administrator  
Charles F. Hayden School at Boys & Girls Village  
528 Wheelers Farms Road  
Milford, CT 06461

Dear Dr. Shaunesey:

Attached is the preliminary evaluation report for Charles F. Hayden School at Boys & Girls Village based on the findings of a Bureau of Special Education evaluation team. The report contains commendations, standard deficiencies with corrective actions, if applicable, and recommendations.

Please indicate in writing whether your program agrees with the report and accepts the delineated corrective action plan. The response must be sent to: Colleen Hayles, Education Consultant; Connecticut State Department of Education; Bureau of Special Education-APSEPs; P.O. Box 2219; Hartford, CT 06145-2219 or [colleen.hayles@ct.gov](mailto:colleen.hayles@ct.gov). Upon receipt of written acceptance of the report in its entirety, a recommendation for approval through June 30, 2026, will be submitted to the Acting Commissioner of Education.

We wish to thank you and your staff for the full support and cooperation extended to the Department's program review team. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact Ms. Hayles by telephone at 860-713-6922 or by e-mail at [colleen.hayles@ct.gov](mailto:colleen.hayles@ct.gov).

Sincerely,

Bryan Klimkiewicz  
Special Education Division Director

BK:chh


cc: Colleen Hayles, Education Consultant  
Daniel French, Ph.D., Education Director



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**TO:** Kim Shaunesey, Ph.D., Chief Administrator  
Charles F. Hayden School at Boys & Girls Village

**FROM:** Colleen Hayles, Education Consultant   
Bureau of Special Education

**DATE:** June 15, 2021

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

**Please note:** This Approved Private Special Education Program approval review was conducted remotely due to the current public health and safety requirements resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. All required activities and components, as defined in the *Principles, Procedures and Standards for the Approval of Private Special Education Programs*, were conducted remotely and in accordance with the approval process.

On April 27, 2021, an evaluation team conducted a virtual site visit review for re-approval of Charles F. Hayden School at Boys and Girls Village special education program. The team consisted of:

- Colleen Hayles, Education Consultant, Bureau of Special Education (BSE);
- Yvette Goorevitch, Chief of Specialized Learning and Student Services, Norwalk Public Schools; and
- Sean Kursawe, Education Director, Grove School.

During a previous virtual site visit on April 20, 2021, Ms. Hayles reviewed a sample of the education files of students, as well as staff files. In addition, Ms. Hayles reviewed the application materials submitted to the BSE by your staff.

At the exit conference on April 27, 2021, the evaluation team shared its impressions and preliminary findings. The following areas of the special education program have been reviewed:

- 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.

**1. Commendations:**

- The school provides a safe nurturing environment where students experience emotional, behavioral, and academic growth with the ultimate goal of a successful return to a mainstream environment.
- The program employs proven methods that are designed to build self-esteem, teach effective communication, promote teamwork, and celebrate success. Programs include, but are not limited to, Project Adventure high ropes course, art/music therapy, and fitness training.
- The program provides a progressive integrated learning model designed to afford students with a multidisciplinary curriculum, which is aligned with Connecticut Core Standards. The program is designed to provide students enrolled with the skills needed to be successful in school and in the community.
- The program administration has initiated systemic changes that reflect positive behavioral supports, the implementation of a consistent school-wide point system, and a proactive versus reactive approach to student behavior and social-emotional needs.
- Observations and interviews illustrated the program's focus of developing strong, trusting relationships with students. Staff were keenly aware of each student's needs, triggers, and successful means of redirection.
- Staff characterized the program's administrators as being supportive, available, and open to staff input. Staff shared that communication among themselves and with administration has significantly improved under the current leadership and that "voices are heard." Staff development, and where appropriate, individual administrator assistance in furthering skills and certifications was also noted.
- Classroom observations yielded evidence of positive staff/student relationships, programing flexibility, and attention to identified accommodations necessary in addressing individual student needs.
- When a student is placed within one of the residential programs administered by Boys & Girls Village, the program social worker provides ongoing collaboration and coordination and acts as a liaison with the residential staff.
- The program provides services to students who pose challenging behaviors and social-emotional issues that are addressed upon admission through the development of an individual safety plan.
- The services of an on-site psychiatrist are available to support students and provide assistance in assessment during critical events that may occur during the school day.
- The program has recently opened a new vocational education/training center that provides students with increased access to on-campus facilities and vocational opportunities. The

program also provides the services of two job coaches under the supervision of a special education teacher. The job coaches assist students in programs that focus on career skill development, which allows students to learn valuable skills that will give them access to high-wage, high-demand jobs, as well as post-secondary experiences. Additionally, classes are offered that focus on the life skills essential to success in the real world.

- The program has an arrangement with Housatonic Community College and Gateway Community College to provide coursework toward college credit to students on campus at the Charles F. Hayden School.
- Classrooms maintain a low student to adult ratio appropriately aligned to student need.

## **2. Standard Deficiencies:**

The following standard deficiencies must be rectified:

### **Standard B: Administration**

A private facility shall have a written policy to assure that it complies with the provision of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA), Public Law 108-446; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act 20 United States Code Section 1232g; 34 Code of Federal Regulations Part 99; Connecticut General Statutes Sections 10-76a to 1076q, inclusive, and the current Connecticut regulations adopted thereunder, related to reporting of child abuse and neglect and bullying; and the prohibition of the use of restraint and seclusion in schools, and all other relevant federal and state laws and regulations and local requirements (the facility shall provide current approval from local fire officials and health officials to the Connecticut State Department of Special Education indicating compliance with codes).

**Issue:** A review of the current policies and procedures of the Boys and Girls Village and Charles F. Hayden School, submitted in the application, indicated that the following are not aligned with current legislation:

- prohibiting the use of emergency restraint and seclusion in schools as an identified intervention; and
- the procedure requiring that the responsible local education agency (LEA) be notified of all significant events related to the student placed (specifically, in the event of a suspension or a request for expulsion).

**Corrective Action Required:** Review the current policies and procedures and revise/develop policies specific to the school program, to ensure compliance with the current legislated requirements. Revise/develop policies to prohibit the use of restraint and seclusion as behavior interventions and identify such practices as emergency interventions only. In addition, a revision is required to the policies related to notification of significant events such as a suspension or the need for expulsion. On or before October 15, 2021, submit to the BSE a copy of the revised policies and procedures that have been reviewed and approved by the agency. Ensure that these policies and practices are represented in all information shared with parents and LEAs.

#### **Standard F: Program Requirements**

Each private facility shall have a written description of the education program for each student and shall have a written curriculum and sufficient instructional materials, supplies, and equipment in accordance with state requirements for educational programs for full implementation of the IEP.

**Issue:** A review of IEPs indicated inaccuracies or incomplete aspects that can impact the ability of Charles F. Hayden School to fully implement the IEP as it is written. The following incomplete fields or inaccuracies were identified:

In all IEPs reviewed, the description of the service delivery of the related services such as “counseling” and “speech and language” to be provided by the program was not appropriately specified. Rather, service is written to be delivered within both a 1:1 session and/or a small group session (inclusive) for a total period of time or identified as “flexible, dependent on student need.” Each student’s need for 1:1 counseling versus small group counseling or speech and language services and the appropriate number of hours per week must be clearly articulated separately on page 11 of the IEP.

**Corrective Action Required:** For the next three (3) planning and placement team meetings held, include a discussion and documentation of the specifics of related services to be provided and identify the appropriate setting (1:1 or small group) in which those services will be provided, ensuring that the program can accurately meet its obligation to implement the IEP as written. In the event that the LEA does not accurately identify such supports on page 11 of the IEP, document the program’s request for accuracy in the IEP and include such a request (as needed) in the student file. Submit copies of the next three IEPs proposed by the LEA and as needed include communication to the district to make appropriate adjustments to the service delivery description that clarifies the manner in which the service will be provided.

### **3. Recommendations:**

It is recommended that your program consider taking the following action:

- Continue the progressive efforts of the current administrators to foster transformational changes underway to create a supportive culture within the school that focuses on a proactive approach to address students’ needs. Those progressive efforts also provide positive social, emotional and behavioral supports, and a rigorous academic curriculum, to engage students and promote their success in school and beyond.
- Continue efforts to establish an atmosphere and culture that incentivizes quality staff to maintain employment in the organization to promote professional growth.
- Engage staff in ongoing discussion and training on how best to measure student growth—both academic and social/emotional/behavioral.
- Increase the number of staff appropriately licensed/endorsed through the Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicles—enabling them to transport students to community-based activities and transition experiences.

- Review the multi-age/multi-grade model of instruction currently in place and ensure that students are instructed within appropriate groupings with consideration given to the age of peers, as well as, the academic needs.
- Enhance professional development for special education teachers responsible for content area instruction at the high school level.
- Consider the addition of a reading specialist to expand services to students across the grade span who have literacy needs.
- Consider providing opportunities to staff responsible for instruction in specific content areas, to observe and collaborate with colleagues in the public school setting. Provide these opportunities to promote understanding of the current expectations within a general education setting and to maintain an appropriate level of academic rigor. Additionally, consider offering similar opportunities to public school/district staff to enable Charles F. Hayden School staff to share their experience and expertise.

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 your written agreement and acceptance of the entire report, a recommendation for program approval through June 30, 2026, will be submitted to the Acting Commissioner of Education.

Upon such approval, the following will be applicable to Charles F. Hayden School at Boys & Girls Village:

**Approved Ages to Serve:** 5–21 years old (Grades K–12)  
**Approved Student Capacity:** 99 students  
**Approval Expiration Date:** June 30, 2026

cc: Daniel French, Ph.D., Education Director