



Public Schools of North Carolina
State Board of Education
Department of Public Instruction

Report to the North Carolina General Assembly

Education of Children in Private Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities (PRTFs)

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Jointly Prepared By:

North Carolina Department of Health and Human
Services Division of Mental Health/Developmental
Disabilities/Substance Abuse Services

and

North Carolina Department of Public Instruction
Exceptional Children Division

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DPI Chronological Schedule, 2016-2017

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Education of Children in Private Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities

This is a report of the current status, pertaining to the joint report, as required by NC G.S. 122C-450.4 to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee and to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services. The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) have assumed the responsibility of the qualification and disbursement of funds for educational services in private Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities (PRTFs).

Leadership Team

Staff from the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) Exceptional Children Division (EC), Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services (DMH/DD/SAS), and the Division of Health Service Regulation (DHSR) have continued to work together this State fiscal year (SFY) to ensure that children in Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities (PRTFs) are receiving an appropriate education and to ensure that the requirements of the legislation are met. The leadership team is composed of the following agency representatives:

Department of Public Instruction, Exceptional Children Division

- William J Hussey, Director
- Carol Ann Hudgens, Section Chief, Policy, Monitoring and Audit
- Glendora Hagins, Monitoring Consultant; on-going assessment, monitoring, technical assistance and consultation to EC Programs.

Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services

- Eric Harbour, Child Lead, Community Mental Health Section
- Mary Ellen Anderson, Project Manager; on-going monitoring of PRTF requirements and execution and monitoring of contracts for funding

Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Health Services Regulation

- Stephanie Gilliam, Chief, Mental Health Licensure and Certification Section

Eligibility, Allocations and Contracts

In SFY16 there were 16 parent organizations in North Carolina with sites licensed through the DHHS Division of Health Services Regulation (DHSR) to provide PRTF services that fall under the requirements of the legislation. A list of the parent organizations is attached. These organizations also have non-public school registration with the Department of Administration. The Non-Public Exceptional Children Program Approval Process was developed and implemented through the DPI EC Division. Each licensed site was assessed through an on-site monitoring visit by EC Division consultants and the DMH Project Manager. Currently all contract programs have approval by DPI of their EC program. This information has been provided to DHSR. Fifteen (15) contracts were executed for SFY16 to provide funding for educational services. One PRTF agreed to meet all educational requirements but declined to contract. Allocations and budgets were approved by the EC Division and DMH/DD/SAS leadership teams as agreed upon in the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) dated 06/14/2015 and signed by the Superintendent of Public Instruction with the NCDPI and the Secretary of the NC DHHS. Funding was allocated to providers to ensure that teacher ratios were met, including the requirement of a licensed EC teacher if a student with an IEP was enrolled, and to ensure that quality educational services were being provided to students.

Technical Assistance, Monitoring and Support

PRTF Collaborative Meetings: DPI EC Division and DMH coordinated a PRTF Collaborative meeting on January 12, 2016, in Raleigh. Additional meetings during the SFY16 were not scheduled since the EC Division Consultants and the DMH Project Manager provided extensive technical assistance and support to meet the individualized needs of each facility throughout the 2015-2016 school year.

Professional Development Opportunities: The PRTF Summer Academy was held on July 25-26, 2016, as a session during the annual Summer Institutes sponsored by DPI EC Division in Greensboro. DPI EC Division Consultants and the DMH Project Manager served as facilitators of the session for participants representing the fifteen (15) contracted facilities and two (2) new facilities.

Administrative and educational staff in the PRTFs are provided information about the annual Conference on Exceptional Children sponsored by the DPI EC Division in Greensboro. During the 2015-16 and 2016-17 school years, conference and registration information have been emailed to the educational and meeting contacts for each PRTF.

Website: While the DPI EC Division continues to maintain information specifically for PRTFs on the EC Division's website, access to a wide-range of topics is also available on the division's website to support the PRTFs' programs for students with disabilities in the areas of:

- Conferences, PD and Webinars to promote professional growth and learning;
- Disability Resources for information about a variety of eligibility categories and services;
- Instructional Resource to access a variety of instructional services;
- Parent Resources to provide support to families;
- Policies for support to ensure compliance for improved services for students with disabilities;
- Recruitment and Retention to support employing and retaining teachers with EC licensure;
- Directory of regionally and statewide assigned EC Division Consultants; and
- A calendar of events and activities for the EC Division.

Specific information for the PRTFs can be found at - <http://ec.ncpublicschools.gov/policies/non-public-schools> and general information can be located on the EC Division's homepage at - <http://ec.ncpublicschools.gov/>

Handbook: The PRTF Handbook that was collaboratively developed during the SFY15 by the DPI EC Division and DMH/DD/SAS continues to serve as a resource to the facility staff. The handbook provides guidance to the PRTF administration and educational staff focusing on the legislative, special education and contract requirements. An electronic version of the handbook is available on the EC Division's website at - <http://ec.ncpublicschools.gov/policies/non-public-schools/prtf-handbook.pdf>. Printed copies of the guidance document have been furnished during on-site activities (technical assistance/support and monitoring visits), collaborative meetings and the PRTF Summer Academy.

EC Program Approval Visits: DPI EC Division conducted follow-up visits after the facilities received funding for six (6) months. These visits were conducted by DPI EC Division Consultants in collaboration with the DMH Project Manager at the PRTFs managed by the sixteen (16) parent organizations. Additionally, initial EC Program Approval on-site visits were conducted at two (2) newly or relicensed PRTFs.

Technical Assistance and Support: DPI EC Division Consultants and DMH Project Manager provide customized and individualized support to the PRTFs' educational staff through a variety of exchanges (such as phone calls, face to face contacts and emails) in the areas of record requests, process and policy questions, transitions and discharges, budgets and contracts, etc.

Technical assistance and support were provided to newly licensed PRTFs and relicensed facilities in preparation for the EC Program Approval process.

On-site visits: The DMH Project Manager will continue to conduct follow-up visits to each PRTF at least annually to ensure compliance with educational and contract requirements. The DPI EC Division consultants conduct on-site visits as a part of monitoring as outlined in the EC Program Approval process.

Each PRTF is required to submit the Self-Assessment to the DPI EC Division monitoring consultant annually. The EC Program Approval process is conducted every three years to renew the facility's status as a program approved to provide special education services.

Information Sharing

PRTFs have been informed of the notification requirements to DPI. A procedure is in place to report admissions and discharges and to request records from previous schools. A form letter was developed that can be used by the PRTFs for record requests. PRTF staff have contact information for all EC directors in the local educational agencies (LEAs) or their designee, who can assist in the transition process for children being discharged. PRTFs can also contact the EC monitoring consultant and the DMH Project Manager if assistance is needed with obtaining records or discharge planning.

Reporting Requirements

A data base spreadsheet was developed and implemented for the PRTFs on August 1, 2015. Data was reported to DMH/DD/SAS on a quarterly basis. Since this was a new tool we did make adjustments during the year as we identified some barriers to implementation. We will continue to refine the tool and improve on data collection in the next fiscal year.

The contract PRTF agencies submitted the following data based on services provided from August 1, 2015-July 30, 2016.

- **Number of Children served** – 1014
- **Average Age** –
 - Two facilities only serve latency age children – generally ages 6-13. The average age in these two facilities was 10.
 - The remaining facilities serve adolescents – generally ages 12-17. The average age was 14.5
- **Average length of stay** – 140 days
- **Number of Children with IEPs** (identified as Exceptional Children) – 408
- **Categories of Disability** - number of children in each category for children identified as Exceptional Children:
 - Autism – 15
 - Emotional Disability – 195
 - Multiple Disabilities -5
 - Developmental Delay -8
 - Specific Learning Disability – 30
 - Other Health Impaired – 121
 - Traumatic Brain Injury – 2
 - Hearing Impaired – 2

- Speech/Language – 1
- Orthopedic Impairment – 2
- Category not identified – 27
- The remaining 606 children received regular education services and did not have an identified disability
- **Costs of Services** - Ensuring that teacher ratios and EC requirements are met continues to be the priority for funding allocations. Each PRTF is structured differently which makes determining costs and allocating funds a challenge. Based on recommendations of the EC monitoring consultant, many of the programs required additional technology and supplemental curriculum materials. These are expected to be one-time costs versus recurring operating expenses. In SFY16 DHHS requested reimbursement of \$3,002,509.00 from DPI for education services. During the contract process some funds were withheld in anticipation of two (2) new PRTFS opening in SFY16. However, these two programs were not licensed and approved in time to meet contract timeframes for SFY16. They will be included in allocations for SFY17.
- **Outcomes** – This was the first full year of funding for several programs. As noted earlier we are continuing to make adjustments to the database and improve on data collection. We do not have comprehensive data to report on outcomes at this time.

Recommendations

- Increased collaboration between education and treatment staff in the PRTFs. PRTF education programs are more successful in carrying out requirements when treatment staff and education staff collaborate and plan together from the time of admission through discharge. Treatment and education planning, including development of treatment plans and IEPs, must involve treatment and education staff. Education staff must be kept informed of possible client admissions or discharges to improve transition planning.
- Collaboration and coordination of efforts between the Department of Public Instruction, Department of Administration Non-Public Schools and the Division of MH/DD/SAS in providing oversight and monitoring of education services in PRTFs to ensure that all state and federal requirements are met. This will be accomplished through quarterly meetings and communication protocols.
- Improvement in the collection of data and reporting tools to provide more comprehensive data with a focus on outcome data.

Attachment
Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities

Alexander Youth Network

Barium Springs Home for Children

Brynn Marr Hospital, Inc.

Premier HealthCare Services, Inc.

Cornerstone Treatment Facility, Inc.

Cornerstone Treatment Facility Program, Inc.

Eliada Homes, Inc.

Premier Services of the Carolinas, LLC

Nova, Inc.

Strategic Behavioral Health Center - SBH Charlotte, LLC

Strategic Behavioral Health Center - SBH Raleigh, LLC

Strategic Behavioral Health Center - SBH Wilmington, LLC

Thompson Child and Family Focus

Veritas Collaborative, LLC

Yahweh Center Children's Village

Youth Focus, Inc.