



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER
OFFICE OF VOCATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES
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March 2006

To: District Superintendents
Superintendents of Schools
CSE Chairpersons
Directors of Special Education
Special Act School District Superintendents
State-Operated School Superintendents
Superintendents of Residential State-Supported Schools
Approved Residential Private School Executive Directors

From: Edward Placke, Ed.D. *Edward Placke*

Subject: Modifications of the New York State Education Department's (SED) Approved Schools for Students with Disabilities' Website Regarding Addition of Data to Display In-State Residential Bed Vacancies

This memorandum is to notify school district and in-state residential school (this term is used generically to refer to the residential programs affiliated with the provider organizations listed on the next page) officials involved in serving students with disabilities that the Department has developed an additional tool to assist in the placement process. Over the past several years, the Governor, Legislature and State agencies have studied trends in the placement of students with disabilities in residential settings. It has become evident that New York State needs to expand capacity to meet the more intensive needs of these students, while at the same time ensuring that students are not placed residentially when less restrictive options are appropriate and available. It has become apparent that New York needs to do more to inform districts of such availability and to assist them in placing students within the State and as close to their homes as possible.

During a series of meetings with individuals from in-state residential schools and the organizations representing them, all groups consistently recommended that the Department develop a mechanism to assist districts in having timely data on placement openings in these residential schools available to them.



The initial step for reducing out-of-state placements is to have in-state residential school providers transmit current information on placement openings to the Department. I am requesting that each in-state residential school report weekly the number of available residential openings based on sex, age and disability to the Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID). The website for VESID's private school listings is: www.vesid.nysed.gov/specialed/privateschools/home.html. This information will be updated weekly to provide Committees on Special Education (CSE) with the number and location of available residential openings across in-state residential schools. Specific instructions for entering the information are provided on the attached form, including the starting date for this initiative. It is expected that school district CSEs will access the website whenever they are in need of a residential placement and will call the Intake Officer at those schools that appear to have an appropriate opening. Therefore, providers are asked to also include the Intake Officer's name and contact information.

Ongoing communications among CSEs, parents and in-state residential school providers will be a critical factor in achieving this goal. The Department anticipates that this procedure will result in appropriate and more expedient placements of students with disabilities into in-state programs by improving the availability of information on program vacancies to school districts. Your continued cooperation in implementing this process is crucial to its effectiveness.

The following organizations have discussed this initiative with the Department, have indicated their support and have agreed to assist the Department in evaluating its effectiveness:

Cerebral Palsy Association of NYS
Coalition of Special Act Public School Districts of NYS
Council of New York Special Education Administrators
4201 Association
Interagency Council of Mental Retardation & Developmental Disabilities Agencies, Inc.
NYS Coalition of 853 Schools / Council of Family and Child Caring Agencies
NYS Council of School Superintendents
NYS School Boards Association

All Districts Superintendents are asked to share this memorandum with each of their School Superintendents and ask them to ensure that their Directors of Special Education/CSE Chairpersons receive a copy. We appreciate your support of our efforts to serve New York State students with disabilities within the State to the extent possible and appropriate. Please e-mail any questions on this vacancy posting process to VESIDSPE@mail.nysed.gov.

Attachment

cc: Rebecca Cort
James DeLorenzo
Daniel Johnson
Thomas Hamel

Vacancy Specifics for Each Approved In-State Residential Program

In an effort to provide the most up-to-date information to school districts related to vacancies at in-state residential schools, please complete the following with your program specific information. This form will be sent electronically to all in-state residential schools each Wednesday, **beginning on March 29, 2006**, and information should be completed in the boxes below and submitted each Friday, **beginning March 31, 2006**. Please complete the Intake Officer contact information the first time you submit this form by including the name, title and phone number of the person to be contacted regarding any further information needed related to the vacancies. This form should be submitted to VESIDSPE@mail.nysed.gov each Friday, even if you are reporting "0" vacancies (in which case, you would simply enter "0" under "Gender Male" and "0" under "Gender Female"). The participating organizations have agreed to help NYSED evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of this system, and future helpful modifications can be expected.

School Name – Common or popular name of school

Intake Officer - Name, title and telephone number

Gender – Indicate how many vacancies are male or female

Age Range – The age range associated with the vacancy

Disability – Type of disability to be served

Date Available – This would reflect what you have for **current** vacancies (as of date of submission of form) and **projected** vacancies (upcoming numbers and dates of availability within the next month)

Additional Information – Indicate number of vacancies that are for **ambulatory** students vs. **nonambulatory** students. You may also include in the appropriate box any additional information you think school districts would find helpful.

Popular Name	VACANCIES						
	Gender	Age Range	Disability	Number and Date Available		Additional Information	
				Current	Projected	Amb.	Nonamb.
School Name:	Male						
Intake Officer:	Female						