



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



*Health and  
Human Services*

# Report to the North Carolina General Assembly

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Education of Children in Private  
Psychiatric Residential Treatment  
Facilities

*SL 2014-100 (SB 744)*

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**Report to the North Carolina General Assembly  
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's Division (EC) and the Division of Mental Health Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services (DMH/DD/SAS) have continued to work together this State fiscal year (SFY) to ensure that children in Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities (PRTF) are receiving an appropriate education and to ensure that the requirements of the legislation are met. The EC Division added an additional staff person to the initial leadership team to provide initial and on-going assessment of educational programs, technical assistance and consultation. DMH/DD/SAS added an additional staff person to the leadership team with the primary responsibilities of on-going monitoring of PRTF requirements and execution and monitoring of contracts for funding. The leadership team is composed of the following agency representatives:

Department of Public Instruction, Exceptional Children's Division

- William J Hussey, Director
- Carol Ann Hudgens, Section Chief, Policy, Monitoring and Audit
- Glendora Hagins, Monitoring Consultant

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

- Courtney M. Cantrell, PhD, Director
- Eric Harbour, Child Lead, Community Mental Health Section
- Mary Ellen Anderson, Project Manager

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

- Mark Payne, Director
- Stephanie Gilliam, Chief, Mental Health Licensure and Certification Section

**Eligibility, Allocations and Contracts**

There are currently sixteen (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 schools registration with the Department of

Administration. The Non-Public Exceptional Children's Program Approval Process was developed and implemented through the DPI EC Division. Each licensed site was assessed through an on-site visit by EC program monitoring staff. Currently all sixteen (16) PRTFs have approval through the EC Division to continue to operate their educational programs. This information has been provided to DHSR. Ten (10) contracts were executed for SFY 2015-16 to provide funding for educational services. A total of fifteen (15) contracts will be executed in SFY 2016-17. One PRTF has agreed to meet all educational requirements but has 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) signed by June St. Clair Atkinson, Superintendent of Public Instruction with the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and Aldona Z. Wos, M.D., who was then Secretary of the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services. Funding was provided 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 programs were being provided to students.

### **Technical Assistance, Monitoring and Support**

PRTF Collaborative Meetings: DPI EC Division and DHHS sponsored PRTF Collaborative Meetings on October 1, 2014, January 16, 2015, and June 8, 2015, held at DPI. Future meetings will be held on a regular basis during this next fiscal year.

Training Academies: DPI EC Division sponsored two summer academies for charter schools and PRTFs. EC Division Consultants and the DHHS consultant hosted two hundred participants over the course of two-days of professional development on July 13-14, 2015, in Charlotte and July 16 -17, 2015, in Raleigh.

Website: The DPI EC Division's website includes information specifically for PRTFs, such as the EC Approval Process, a directory of PRTFs approved to provide EC Services and a link to the Division of Non-Public Education at <http://ec.ncpublicschools.gov/policies/non-public-schools>.

Handbook: A PRTF Handbook was developed collaboratively by the DPI EC Division and DMH/DD/SAS that provides information regarding legislative requirements, EC Program Requirements and DHHS contract requirements. The handbook was distributed to all eligible PRTFs during the Summer Academies.

EC Approval Visits: DPI EC Division conducted EC approval visits at 16 PRTFs during the 2014-15 school year. Follow-up visits during the 2015-16 school year are currently being conducted by a team of EC Division monitoring consultants and the DMH project manager.

Technical Assistance and Support: Locating EC records, answering process and policy questions and assistance with transition planning, is provided through phone calls, emails, site visits and regularly scheduled PRTF collaborative meetings.

On-site visits: The DMH/DD/SAS project manager will make follow-up visits to each PRTF at least annually to ensure compliance with education and contract requirements. Each PRTF is

required to submit an annual self-assessment to the DPI monitoring consultant by July 31 of each year. EC approval visits are conducted every three years.

### **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) who can assist in the transition process for children being discharged. PRTFs can also contact the EC monitoring consultant and the DMH/DD/SAS project manager if assistance is needed with obtaining records or discharge planning.

### **Reporting Requirements**

PRTFs were surveyed in September 2014 regarding student demographic information for the time period of October 1, 2013, to September 30, 2014. During this time period approximately 1,100 children were served. Of these 1,100, PRTFs reported that 257 children had individualized education plans (IEPs). The median length of stay was eighty eight (88) days.

A data base spreadsheet was developed and implemented by the PRTFs on August 1, 2015. Data will be reported to DMH/DD/SAS on a quarterly basis. The following data elements will be tracked:

- Child's name and date of birth
- Admission and discharge dates
- Type of educational placement prior to admission
- EC status at admission and discharge
- Dates records from previous school were requested and received
- Reading and Math scores from standardized tests at admission and discharge
- Type of educational placement at discharge

The review and approval process through DHHS and DPI required that this report be completed by early November, 2015. Therefore, as of the time of the writing of this report, the data base has not been implemented for a long enough period of time to collect and report data. First quarter information will be available in January, 2016.

Cost of Services/Efficiencies: The ten (10) contracts executed in SFY15 were for a contract period of six months or less. We are in the first twelve (12) month funding cycle. Ensuring that teacher ratios and EC requirements are met has been 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. On-site visits, budget and programmatic discussions at PRTF collaborative meetings and contract monitoring during SFY16 will assist in determining the cost of providing education services and recommendations for efficiencies.

**Attachment**  
**Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities**

## **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.**