



Angélica Infante-Green
Commissioner

State of Rhode Island
DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY
EDUCATION
Shepard Building
255 Westminster Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-3400

May 6, 2022

Dear Colleagues:

RE: Revised enrollment protocols to better serve the students in DCYF care

It has recently come to the attention of the Rhode Island Department of Education (“RIDE”) that there may be some practices in place that are making it difficult for students in the care and custody of the Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth, and Families (“DCYF”) who are placed by the Rhode Island Family Court in one of the two programs that fall under DCYF – the Alternative Education Program at the Thomas C. Slater Training School for Youth (“RITS”) and the school at Ocean Tides - Narragansett Campus (“Ocean Tides”) – to return to their home school district upon discharge. Specifically, RIDE has been made aware that, in some instances, students have been required to re-register with their home school district following their discharge; required to provide residency, immunization, and other documents as a precondition for readmission; and additionally face numerous other administrative barriers, all of which work to delay students’ ability to re-enter their home school district. In investigating this situation further, RIDE has discovered practices within the State’s enrollment system that have unintentionally contributed to these delays, which I believe are inconsistent with the intent of the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 as well as the Elementary & Secondary Education Act of 1965 as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (“ESSA”) of 2015 to support students in the care and custody of DCYF and to minimize disruptions in their education.

As such, I have asked the RIDE team to revise current protocols as indicated below to better serve the students in DCYF care. I would appreciate your attention to these revised procedures to ensure students exiting the RITS and/or Ocean Tides are promptly enrolled back in their home school district without delay.

Having determined that some of the noted challenges and delays result from the practice of dis-enrolling students from their home school district upon the student’s enrollment in the RITS and/or Ocean Tides, **the RIDE Enrollment Census will now require students placed at the RITS and/or Ocean Tides to remain enrolled in their home school district similar to “out placed” students from the home school district, effective for the 2022-2023 school year.**

Through various federal and state law, it is well established that local education agencies (“LEAs”) have an affirmative responsibility to remain connected with

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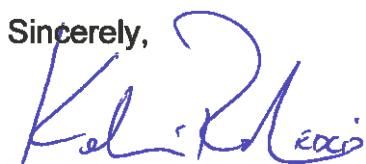
students while they are “out placed” from their home school district and in the care of DCYF. Keeping with this established precedent, LEAs will therefore continue to receive the allocated state aid for students placed at the RITS and/or Ocean Tides. In turn, it is expected that local LEA officials will remain active with students placed at the RITS and/or Ocean Tides. This expected involvement includes, but is not limited to: communicating with RITS and/or Ocean Tides educators and counselors regarding the student’s program of study; communicating with RITS and/or Ocean Tides educators regarding various issues affecting the student’s education while out placed; sharing educational progress, attendance, and other information of importance; discussing and recording courses taken and credits earned; participating in Individualized Education Program (“IEP”) and other meetings; and attending transition meetings as the student prepares to exit the RITS and/or Ocean Tides and return to his or her home school district.

Our hope is that by removing the administrative barriers of student enrollment and state aid, as well as clarifying the LEA’s responsibility for educational programming while students are out placed and upon their return to their home school district, will afford these students the full opportunity to participate in the public education that they are entitled.

If you have questions on the enrollment system, please feel free to contact Scott Gausland at Scott.Gausland@ride.ri.gov. The revised enrollment protocol will be reviewed with the LEA Data Managers later this spring. If you have questions on the application of federal or state law related to this matter, please feel free to contact the RIDE Legal Office at RIDELegal@ride.ri.gov.

Thank you for your continued support of our students.

Sincerely,



Angélica Infante-Green
Commissioner of Education

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