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SECRETARY-DESIGNATE OF EDUCATION

SUSANA MARTINEZ  
Governor

July 16, 2012

**TO:** Special Education Directors  
Charter School Administrators  
Regional Education Cooperative Directors

**FROM:** Paul Aguilar, Deputy Secretary, Finance and Operations

**RE: BEST PRACTICES: TRANSITION PLANNING FOR STUDENTS  
ENROLLED IN RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT CENTERS IN OR OUT OF  
STATE**

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Often times the transition of students from school districts to residential treatment centers and back to school districts can be time consuming and complicated. In an effort to provide the smoothest transition for the students and the other applicable parties, the New Mexico Public Education Department in conjunction with the Autism Oversight Team (AOT) have developed a Transition Planning Process Map and forms to assist with planning for a successful transition. Although these forms were developed in conjunction with the AOT, they can be modified to meet the needs of all students, their families and school district personnel

The New Mexico Administrative Code at Subsection H of 6.31.2.11 provides specific procedures regarding when an IEP must be in effect for the transfer of students with disabilities who transfer from school districts in the same state and those who transfer from another state. The State rule also provides a procedure for the transmittal of records in order to facilitate the transition of the student. While these procedures do not specifically address students who are transitioning from a residential treatment center (RTC) to a school district, the procedures described in that rule may be used as a template for when an IEP must be in effect for such students. In addition, the agreements referenced in 6.31.2.9(B)(3) NMAC between the resident school district and a private RTC may also be a place where both parties to the agreement can address transition issues.

It is recommended that transition planning from the RTC back to the school district begin at least 90 days prior to the discharge from the RTC. During that time, since the student is still enrolled

in the RTC, the RTC will be contacting you to begin the school district's engagement in the transition process. The school district's participation is essential to ensure that the students with disabilities receive a Free Appropriate Public Education upon their reenrollment in the district.

Additional multi-agency training will be provided on this process in the fall 2012. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact \_\_\_\_\_.

HA:dk

Enclosures (2)

cc: Hanna Skandera, Secretary-Designate of Education  
Amy Lane, Special Education Director  
Dean Hopper, Assistant Director, School and Family Support  
District Superintendents  
District Nurses  
District Counselors