

SOUTH SHORE EDUCATIONAL COLLABORATIVE

www.ssec.org

ANNUAL REPORT TO THE COLLABORATIVE BOARD of DIRECTORS 2019 - 2020

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SOUTH SHORE EDUCATIONAL COLLABORATIVE BOARD MEMBERS

2019 - 2020

Richard L. Reino,	Executive Director
Frank Hackett, Ed.D. Superintendent	Braintree Public Schools
Patrick Sullivan, Ed.D. Superintendent	Cohasset Public Schools
Paul Austin, Ph.D. Superintendent, Chairperson	Hingham Public Schools
Michael Devine/Judith Kuehn Superintendent, Vice Chairperson	Hull Public Schools
Jeffrey Granatino Superintendent	Marshfield Public Schools
Mary Gormley Superintendent	Milton Public Schools
Matthew A. Keegan Superintendent	Norwell Public Schools
Richard DeCristofaro, Ed.D. Superintendent	Quincy Public Schools
Thea Stovell Superintendent	Randolph Public Schools
Ron Griffin Superintendent	Scituate Public Schools
Jennifer Curtis Whipple, Ed.D. Superintendent	Weymouth Public Schools

STAFF OF THE SOUTH SHORE EDUCATIONAL COLLABORATIVE

2019 – 2020

Richard L. Reino	Executive Director
Arthur Sullivan	Treasurer
Cynthia J. Lindberg	Executive Secretary
Catherine A. Cole	Accounts Payable
Stacy Lemieux	Accounts Receivable
Diane Baiardi	Business Office Assistant
Kathleen Flaherty	Payroll
Patricia Mason, Ph.D.	Director of Student Services
Jon Reynard	Community School Program Director
Gina Pardo	Program Secretary
Maureen Gattine	Mini School Program Director
Karen Thomsen	Program Secretary
Timothy Handorf	Clinical Director
Cheryl Jacques	South Shore High School Director
Tara Sepeck	Program Secretary
Jennie Williams	Quest Program Coordinator
Lisa Penzo-Johnson	Program Secretary
Anne Rowland	Careers Program Coordinator
Abigail Glynn	Program Secretary
Dawn Flaherty, OTR/L	Director of Ancillary Services
Anne Rowland	STARTS Program Coordinator

1. Letter of Introduction

This annual report is submitted by Richard Reino, Executive Director and the administrators of the schools and programs that comprise the South Shore Educational Collaborative (SSEC) to describe significant challenges, events and accomplishments that occurred during the 2019-2020 school year.

The SSEC primary location is 75 Abington Street in Hingham, MA. In addition, during the 19-20 school-year we continued to occupy classrooms located in Hull and Randolph Public Schools until March 16, 2020 at which time all schools in the state were ordered to shut down due to the COVID – 19 pandemic. For the remainder of the 19-20 school year we remained totally remote. While going remote was challenging since we had to implement this model on the fly I am pleased to report that we were able to provide all grid services to our students. Prior to March 16th the additional Randolph and Hull locations allowed us to expand our student census. Our Hull location accommodated over 70 Autistic students and our Randolph location an additional 40 medically fragile students. Thank you to both the Randolph and Hull public schools for their continued support of our program.

Prior to the pandemic our most pressing challenge was to find more classroom space for our Quest program. Before the pandemic the Quest program had a long wait list. Once the pandemic has ended I am quite certain that adding classroom space for the Quest program will once again be one of our more pressing challenges. But as of now going forward our most pressing challenge it is to continue in person learning and remain financially solvent. Towards that end a review of the FY21 budget is in order. The initial FY21 budget was approved by the SSEC Board on April 3, 2020. Three weeks after the forced shutdown of all public schools in the state due to the COVID – 19 pandemic. At that time there was some hope that schools could reopen sometime later in the school year but as we all know that did not happen. We remained remote through June. Because of all that occurred during this period including economic upheaval, high unemployment, civil unrest, shortages of the most basic cleaning supplies & P.P.E., and of course uncertainty regarding the reopening of school this past fall the FY21 budget needed to be amended. As a result, on June 5th the Board rescinded the tuition increases for both member and non-member districts for FY21. All proposed personnel additions (12.43 additional FTE positions) were also rescinded. So as you can see from these FY21 budget adjustments remaining financially solvent will prove to be challenging.

What should help is that during the spring and early summer we entered negotiations with the American Federation of Teachers Federation seeking a wage freeze for the 20-21 school year. These negotiations were successful in freezing cost of living increases as well as step increases for all Federation staff for FY21. This includes all Federation staff (Teachers and Para's). I also froze all non-union salaries as well for FY21.

All of our programs had begun to see an increase in enrollment prior to the pandemic. The Community School for students with complex physical, medical and educational needs has seen an increase in enrollment for several years. Since the move into the newer building with specially designed classrooms, physical and occupational therapy area, bathrooms, and a

therapeutic pool (closed since March 2020) we have greatly enhanced the learning opportunities and environment for the students who attend the Community School. The Quest School, South Shore High School and Careers High School are also located at this building and have access to improved technology infrastructure, classroom space, culinary center, greenhouse (also closed since March 2020) and gymnasium. Since the pandemic our total enrollment has decreased approximately 10%, primarily in the Community and Mini School programs.

In accordance with the law governing collaboratives, the administration of SSEC has been working to meet the requirements of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). The submission of detailed student and staff data for DESE to analyze instructional practices is an ongoing process that administrative staff at SSEC has been completing in a timely manner as required. Starting with the 2018-2019 school-year SSEC added the position of Director of Student Services. Serving in this position is Patricia Mason. Under her leadership we have been able to better coordinate, enhance and increase professional development for our staff as well as monitor and utilize student achievement data to track their achievement. She has also enhanced our curriculum to more closely align with the state frameworks.

Our strategic plan which was developed in 2017 continues to guide us in our planning. The long-term goals of sustainability, data collection, program development, organizational development, and benefits continue to be addressed as we move forward. In 2020 we continued to contribute to our OPEB Trust fund and added significant resources to professional development and our curriculum. We also continued to offer a varied benefits package to our employees

In spite of the pandemic our cumulative surplus remained relatively stable, 7.49% down from 7.73% in FY19. Had it not been for the fact that our unanticipated COVID related expenses totaled over \$300,000 we would have most certainly increased our cumulative surplus. The fact that we were in a solid financial position when the pandemic hit enabled us to make the necessary purchases and still enable us to provide all of the required grid services to students. Two major components of the \$300,000 expenditure were the purchase of the necessary PPE to open in person for the 20-21 school year and to purchase the necessary computer devices for our students. We are now one to one in terms of the student to device ratio.

Just prior to the pandemic we were in the planning stages of offering an after school academic service for school phobics as well as for students who may need remedial assistance. The original idea was to have this service be in person. Now however with our successful experience in remote learning we intend to offer this in a customized hybrid model. This will now become a formal part of our FY22 budget plan.

Starting in September of 2018 we added a full time school resource officer. This position is now filled by Officer Terrance Low from the Hingham Police Department who has proven to be an invaluable addition to our program. Given all that has transpired in recent months, all have benefitted from this police presence. Students and staff get to interact with a uniformed police officer on a more informal level. SSEC staff has also participated in A.L.I.C.E. emergency response training. The entire collaborative has been subject to a risk assessment review by Joe Hendry from the A.L.I.C.E. training institute. This assessment contained several recommendations

to improve our readiness in the event of an emergency. We have implemented most of these recommendations in FY20.

2. General Information

The South Shore Educational Collaborative (SSEC) principal address is 75 Abington Street Hingham, MA 02043. The executive director and administrators for SSEC are available at this location. The telephone number is 781-749-7518. This annual report provides a summary of the schools, services and programs for the academic and fiscal year July, 2019-June, 2020.

The core values of safety, respect, relationships and growth are always considered as decisions are made for SSEC. The mission statement states that the SSEC is responsive to the emerging needs of communities by providing innovative, fiscally sound, high quality educational programs and services for individuals with special needs. The vision of SSEC is to continue to provide excellence in educational services with state of the art technology in a safe and respectful therapeutic environment.

3. Governance and Leadership

The SSEC is governed by a board of directors comprised of the superintendents from member districts. Each school and program has a director or coordinator who reports to the executive director. The program directors are responsible for daily operations. The board members and SSEC administrators for fiscal year 20 are listed in this report following the Table of Contents.

The following member school districts/ committees have appointed their superintendents to serve on the SSEC Board of Directors for fiscal year 2020:

Braintree	Frank Hackett, Ed.D
Cohasset	Patrick Sullivan, Ed.D
Hingham	Paul Austin, Ph.D
Hull	Judy Kuehn
Marshfield	Jeffrey Granatino
Milton	Mary Gormley
Norwell	Matthew Keegan
Quincy	Richard DeCristofaro, Ed.D.
Randolph	Thea Stovell
Scituate	Ronald Griffin
Weymouth	Jennifer Whipple, Ed.D.

4. Programs and Services Provided

The SSEC school and program information presented later in this report will clearly define the goals and outcomes of the programs while presenting a clear profile of the students served in each school. Each school and program operated by the SSEC provides a specialized educational setting for students who could not make adequate progress in their school district after many interventions. The SSEC school and program reports are provided by the director/coordinator of

that program. The student referrals from sending school districts have complex learning challenges. The primary profiles of student needs are in the disciplines of social/emotional, physical/medical and autism spectrum. The districts have made great efforts to meet the educational needs of the students at their home schools before referring to SSEC.

5. Cost Effectiveness of Programs and Services

Each year brings program and financial challenges as difficult decisions need to be made. In 2016, a decision was made to reduce staff in some programs due to a decline in enrollment and to balance expenses with revenue in order to present a balanced budget. I am pleased to report that since that time our financial position has stabilized due to a combination of cost cutting measures and increased enrollment. FY20 saw us realize a positive operating balance for the fourth year in a row in spite of the pandemic.

With the enactment of Chapter 43 of the Acts of 2012- *An Act Relative to Improving Accountability and Oversight of Education Collaboratives*, one of the areas to be included in the annual report is the cost effectiveness of the programs and services.

The schools, programs and services offered at SSEC are specialized and focused to meet the needs of students with intense, complex learning profiles that include physical, medical, emotional cognitive and learning challenges. By the time a student is referred to SSEC, the public school has initiated interventions that have not been able to demonstrate that adequate progress can be accomplished. The SSEC mission states that the collaborative will provide innovative, fiscally sound high quality educational programs and services. Due to the level of specialized educational services required, the tuitions and fees must be reviewed annually to keep cost increases to a minimum. Each year, the Board of Directors and SSEC administrators review the budget and compare tuitions with collaboratives and private schools before approving annual costs. Negotiated salary increases, health insurance, utilities and lease expenses are required financial obligations that had an impact on the annual budget of \$23,082,917.49 for FY20

Since most of the revenue and expenses are related to the schools and programs at SSEC, this report will include cost comparisons with some of the schools where students apply and/or attend before enrollment at SSEC. During 2019-2020, SSEC leased one building at 75 Abington Street in Hingham and classroom space in Randolph and Hull. The classroom rentals in public schools are the most cost effective to the SSEC and also for the districts. The students from the district where a classroom is rented will save significantly on transportation and the families are pleased to have the students in their home town. However, the needs of the students who attend the Community School, Quest School, South Shore High School and Careers High School require a location with a different setting than a traditional school. The physical, medical and emotional needs of the students require a substantially separate location with the ongoing goal of considering the return to a traditional school whenever feasible. The SSEC schools are licensed by DESE and are able to compete with more costly private schools. We are located geographically where all member districts have access with a minimum transportation expense. This is a significant cost effective measure. The town of Hull is the furthest away, but leased 11 classrooms to SSEC in 2019-2020 allowing for minimum transportation costs for Hull students enrolled in the program. Situations

where students travel long distances to attend a private school may cost a school district \$25,000 or more when a monitor is required.

As requested, the following comparisons by program will demonstrate cost effectiveness to districts when a student is placed at SSEC rather than the competing private school.

SSEC Community School- FY 20 tuition- \$70,549 (includes summer)
 Private School-Perkins Watertown FY 20 tuition- \$119,889
 Private School- BC Campus School FY 20 tuition- \$93,172
Savings per student \$22,623 to \$49,340

SSEC Mini School- FY 19 tuition- \$70,549 (includes summer)
 Private School- Boston Higashi FY19 tuition- \$78,736
 Private School- May Institute FY 19 tuition- \$119,064
Savings per student \$8,187 to \$48,515

SSEC Quest School FY 20 tuition- \$112,378 (includes summer)
 Private School- Brandon FY 20 tuition- \$60,308
 Private School- Walker FY 20 tuition- \$91,671
Savings per student \$20,707 to \$52,070

SSEC SSH and Careers FY 20 tuition- \$51,402 (includes summer)
 Private School- Brandon FY 20 tuition- \$60,308
 Private School- Walker FY 20 tuition- \$91,671
Savings per student \$8,906 to \$40,269

The potential savings on tuitions to districts demonstrates the cost effectiveness of placing a student at SSEC rather than a private school. The private schools selected for comparison with the SSEC schools are the schools where students of similar profiles have been referred or accepted in the past.

The SSEC has sponsored advanced energy purchasing through an RFP bid process for natural gas and electricity. Several south shore towns have participated in this joint purchasing program. The data collected by the consultant who coordinates the purchasing program on behalf of SSEC member districts and other municipalities provides a significant savings. The consulting company used again this year was Titan Energy. The electricity and gas bids result in a significant savings to the participants when comparing the open market price to the **24** month bid price of the contracts. Savings for each participant are listed below.

Electric	Savings	Gas	Savings
Plymouth Public Schools	\$75,812.10	Plymouth Public Schools	\$201,868.68
Town of Plymouth	\$64,547.34	Town of Plymouth	\$114,259.86
Cohasset PS	\$63,048.96	Cohasset PS	\$125,902.92
Cohasset Town	\$97,814.34	Cohasset Town	\$20,101.38
Scituate	\$56,181.06	Scituate	\$153,820.68
North River Collaborative	<u>\$1,035.84</u>	North River Collaborative	\$35,929.14

		Hull	\$60,595.08
		SSEC	<u>\$1,462.50</u>
Total electric Savings	\$358,439.64	Total gas savings	\$713,940.24

The DESE approved administrator licensure program with SSEC and Boston University has been discontinued due to lack of enrollment.

6. Progress toward achieving the purpose and objectives

The SSEC continues to strive toward achieving the purpose and objectives as stated in the approved agreement. The schools and programs that comprise SSEC include students who are low incidence in the member districts. The merging of the Language Enhancement program with the Mini School is an example of responding to needs of the districts. Another example is the after school academic service that was being developed prior to the pandemic. As stated previously in this document we are continuing to develop this opportunity for sending districts and their students.

The schools offer academic and therapeutic services in a safe environment at staff to student ratios where students are able to achieve success in a setting near their community. The educational services are provided with state of the art technology in a respectful environment. During FY20 we continued the process of standardizing our data collection methods across all programs. Towards that end all programs continue to input data in the Risk Eraser software package. All staff have participated in training programs to help facilitate consistent and standardized data input. In addition, due to the new Medicaid reporting requirements we have customized our student information software, School Brains to seamlessly interface with the new requirements thereby eliminating the need for duplicate entry. Both of these initiatives are ongoing and will be refined further as we proceed into FY21. The need for accurate Medicaid reporting will allow districts to submit proper Medicaid reimbursement requests to the federal government. SSEC has always kept student data for all students. Our initiative with employing Risk Eraser will not only standardize the process but will help us to consistently analyze that data. Once that data is gathered and analyzed; this will help us in formulating individual student learning plans. Students will then able to learn at their own pace with instruction that is presented at a level that is challenging, yet attainable.

Cost effectiveness and value for high quality programs and services is considered with all program development. The programs, schools and services at SSEC strive to reduce the need for placements at private day and residential schools. The dedicated, SSEC personnel strive to build trusting relationships and confidence with public school representatives, parents and students to form a team that will provide a safe, respectful environment for educational, emotional and social success for all students.

Professional development has also been offered in a cost effective manner for educators to participate in English Language Learner preparation such as the W.I.D.A., Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) courses and more in FY20. DESE approval was offered to SSEC to provide the required Sheltered English Immersion classes. SSEC has provided the classes at SSEC and has sponsored courses in Norwell, Hingham, Barnstable and North River Collaborative at a savings to

the towns and the collaboratives. Wilson Language and Reading certification continued to be available this year. In addition, we have also offered training to our staff as well as to other districts in the following: Math, Panorama and Stem Scopes Science, Reach Reading, IEP and WIAT III training. Some of these opportunities were curtailed due to the pandemic.

SSEC also provides a Crisis Prevention Instructor (CPI) for districts to provide the mandated training. This course is provided to districts for a significantly lower rate than if staff had to attend corporate sponsored trainings. All of the SSEC direct care employees participate in Non-Aggressive Psychological and Physical Intervention (NAPPI now called WELLE). The SSEC has personnel approved to conduct the training at SSEC which is also a significant savings. Some of these opportunities were also curtailed due to the pandemic.

The 2019-2020 school year was my second as Executive Director. To say the least it was challenging due to the pandemic. However, as challenging as it was I believe it was successful both financially and programmatically. The credit for which should go to the dedicated front line and administrative staff that I have been blessed to have inherited. Without them none of this would be possible. The work that goes on here on a daily basis is truly remarkable. I am honored and humbled to be part of this amazing group of people.

The Board of Directors support of the strategic plan has allowed the SSEC to accomplish many goals. The development of the five year plan for 2017-2022 has been completed and now serves as the guide for future development of SSEC. The directors' reports that follow provide specific detail and data related to the programs and schools of SSEC for the 2019-2020 school year. They present information that provides pertinent information and outcomes relevant to their respective programs.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the Board of Directors, Cinde Lindberg, Executive Secretary, Patricia Mason, Director of Student Services, our program directors, coordinators and all personnel for their ongoing support and dedication to the students and families of SSEC.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard L. Reino". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Richard L. Reino
Executive Director

South Shore Educational Collaborative
75 Abington Street
Hingham, MA 02043

**Director of Student Services
Annual Report
2019-2020**

The focus of the second year of this position was on curriculum expansion and skill development in the areas of reading instruction and benchmarking assessment. These are detailed below. SSEC began addressing issues of inclusivity, equity and diversity by running the SEED (Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity) workshop led by Alpha Sanford, M.Ed., CAGS from Randolph Public Schools. This was interrupted partially though due to COVID-19. Assessment continues to be targeted with professional development focusing in on the WIAT III and the evaluation of iReady (benchmarking). Reading instruction targeted the Wilson introductory, Wilson level 1 Certification and Wilson advanced for small group instruction. Three math content institutes were offered across elementary, middle and high school (high school was canceled due to COVID-19). In addition, unexpected target areas developed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting need to redesign instruction, content, assessment and student/staff training needs on technology.

Targeted Areas (expected)

Curriculum

Content	Title	Grades	Implementation	Next Steps	Equity, Inclusivity, Diversity Review
Math	MATHia – Hybrid (Carnegie)	6-12+	QUEST, Careers, South Shore High	Continue Implementation	Targeted Review FY22
Math	Business Math – McGraw Hill (Hybrid)	9-12+	South Shore High & Careers	Continue Implementation	Targeted Review FY22
Social Studies/ELA/ Science	Benchmark Curriculum	K-8	QUEST, Community, Mini	Fully integrated, update content as needed.	Targeted review FY21
Social Studies:	McGraw Hill trial (Hybrid)	8-12	Quest, SSH, Careers	Purchase curriculum & implement FY21	Targeted Review FY21
Science/ELA	Panorama Science - Hybrid (National Geographic: Cengage)	K-6	QUEST, Community, Mini	Continue Implementation	Targeted Review FY22
Science	Stemscopes (Accelerated Learning)	K-12	QUEST, Mini, AIM, SSH, Careers	Continue implementation	Targeted Review FY23

Final Evidenced Based Reading Programs Established for SSEC

Name	Grade(s)	Implementation	Next Steps	Equity, Inclusivity, Diversity Review
Reach Reading (Hybrid): (National Geographic: Cengage)	Prek-6	QUEST	Continue to support	FY22
Wilson Foundations	Prek-1	QUEST, Community, Mini	Additional Training: FY22	FY23
Wilson	2-12+	QUEST, Community, Mini, Careers, SSH	Finalize training; Continue to support	FY23
Spire Reading	K-12	QUEST	Established – continue to support	FY23
SIPPS : Systematic Instruction in phonological awareness, phonics & sight words (Benchmark)	K-12	QUEST	Established – Continue to support	FY21

Professional & Curriculum Development:

Math: Math co-teaching opportunities were offered in the fall but were not completed in the spring due to COVID-19. This will be made-up in some capacity in the FY 21 school year. The elementary and middle school math content professional development was provided in the fall focusing in on updated instructional practices, differentiation and universal design. The high school content was canceled due to COVID-19. Math instruction continues to be a target area for overall improvement. All math content trainings were open to member and non-member district staff.

Science: Stemsopes was partially expanded this year to include 8th and 9th grades. It is fully implemented in the Mini school across all grades and has been successful in addressing the diverse learning needs of the population. The hybrid content and hands on learning labs is a

Reading Instruction: The Wilson reading program has been chosen as one of the evidenced based practices used at SSEC. The Wilson introductory course ran in the summer of 2019 and the Wilson Level 1 Certification began in the fall. When SSEC closed in the spring and moved to remote learning, some participants continued their level one certification process. Others deferred to the fall of 2020. Each participant continues to have the opportunity to complete the

level 1 certification through the end of the school year of 2021. The Wilson advanced reading (small groups) was canceled in March due to COVID-19. It is anticipated that this will be rescheduled in the future. Wilson has been implemented slowly across all SSEC programs as individual staff is trained. All Wilson trainings were open to member and non-member staff.

Benchmark & Screening Assessments

Benchmark Assessment – iReady: iReady was evaluated for the entire year up to the school closure and switch to remote learning on March 13th, 2020. A small pilot group across programs was used to look at both the benchmarking component and the intervention system. Based on the information gathered, it was decided that the iReady was a better match across all SSEC programs for both the benchmarking and the intervention plans. Full implementation is scheduled for the fall of 2020 across all SSEC programs.

IXL: IXL is used for discrete skill development across ELA, Math, Science, and social studies grades k-12+ in all programs (to varying degrees as appropriate). IXL provided skills practices with formative data to monitor progress. On Demand training was used for the free trial occurring during the March-August remote & hybrid learning programming. It will continue to be used in the same manner for the FY21 school year across all learning models and programs as appropriate.

Dyslexia Screening: SSEC participated in the stakeholders group looking at the needs and considerations for Dyslexia screening. SSEC has adopted the Shaywitz Dyslexia Screener for grades K-3. Trainings will be conducted in the fall followed by implementation. The family and district liaison will be notified of the results and if appropriate, a team meeting will be held to discuss any additional needs for testing and possible supports. The Shaywitz is being expanded to include other grades. When this is available, SSEC will acquire the expanded screening.

Summary of Evidenced Based Benchmarking & Screening Tools

Content	Title	Grades	Implementation	Next Steps	Equity, Inclusivity, Diversity Review
ELA & Math	iReady (includes ELA & Math intervention plans)	K-12+	Trial group (all programs)	Purchase subscription for FY21 Schedule broader trainings	FY23
IXL	ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies	K-12+	Trial during remote learning	Purchase subscription for FY21 Use on Demand trainings	FY23

Content	Title	Grades	Implementation	Next Steps	Equity, Inclusivity, Diversity Review
Dyslexia Screening	Shaywitz	K-3	Evaluated	Implement in FY21	FY22

Assessment – WIATIII: The WIAT III training continued to ensure staff members were prepared to begin assessing students. Training was conducted in small groups and repeated across time for reinforcement and clarification. The focus was on teacher participation but therapists were also included. Implementation of the model began in the fall of 2019.

SSEC Professional Activities

SEED (Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity): This training uses targeted discussions to facilitate personal insights and reflection to impact inclusivity, equity and diversity within the school culture and the content. It is a social justice training to begin the process with SSEC leaders in making systemic changes. This training was interrupted due to COVID-19 and will be rescheduled in the future.

Educational Neuroscience Series: SSEC ran the first of a series of workshops on educational neuroscience. The first entitled: “How we perceive, feel, act, learn and think: The developing brain” was presented across multiple workshops open to both member and non-member districts. The continuation of this series will occur in the future.

IEP Boot Camp: This four day training went through all aspects of writing a sound IEP that addresses disability impact and links measurable goals to monitor student outcomes. This training was open to member and non-member districts and was completed in the fall of 2019.

IEP Training for Districts: SSEC conducted extensive training on IEP development for Randolph public Schools. This was interrupted in March due to COVID-19.

Bridgewater State University Children’s Physical & Developmental Center: SSEC conducted training for the Children’s Physical & Developmental Center on Universal Access: Personal Voice, Agency and Action for students with complex disabilities. Focus was on inclusivity and equity.

Urban Project: SSEC conducted training on progress monitoring for Massachusetts Urban districts. Details of effective progress monitoring, decision making and linking data to well written goals was reviewed.

MCEC/Stonehill Weekly Remote Learning Training: SSEC provided an overview of considerations and adaptations for students who use AAC devices and supports while engaging in remote learning.

Target Areas: Unexpected (COVID-19)

COVID-19 impacted education across the country for most of this year. Effective March 13th, 2020, SSEC along with most other schools in Massachusetts stopped in-person face to face education and moved to a remote learning model. Students were sent home on 3/13 with packets and some basic assistive technology including chromebooks. Staff were able to access the building at predetermined times to acquire necessary materials and furniture to teach at home throughout the remote learning period. The following outlines the program development, content and supports provided to students attending SSEC during this time period.

Technology

SSEC provided additional chromebooks and laptops to individual students and staff throughout the remote learning time. Tablets were available for students with more complex needs who had greater difficulty with online learning as well as touchscreen chromebooks/laptops. SSEC committed to providing 1:1 devices and continues to work towards this.

Assistive Technology

Students were able to take home their AAC devices and low tech systems including visual supports. Additional switches and visuals were provided throughout the remote learning period. Difficulty in using the AAC device and engaging in online learning was very problematic. Some students who had access to larger screen TVs were able to screencast the chromebook through the TV for a larger picture. This was helpful. Potential solutions in the future include; teaching families how to cast the various devices, using a smartphone to cast to a blank wall, providing cheap LCD projectors and purchasing document cameras.

Remote Learning Team: A remote learning team was developed and worked in collaboration with leadership to support the remote learning model. The team assisted in managing the SSEC website, remote access for families, students and staff as well as acquiring supports (apps/software) as needed. They provided ongoing training in small groups, recorded (asynchronous) and individualized. This support was essential during this time period and will be for the next school year.

Main Learning Platform

Google Classroom was and is used as the main digital learning platform for all programs. Google Meets is used for the video conferencing portion with all classwork posted and completed through the classroom portion and related extensions. Some program staff and students were very familiar with this platform already and others required extensive training. **Training** (students, staff, families) was provided in small groups with 1:1 consultation as needed. Asynchronous videos were also available to refer to for students, staff and families.

Content

Content was provided in a hybrid method. Some content was already digital (social studies, science, math, some ELA) combined with physical materials that were mailed home, dropped off or picked-up at the school.

IXL: IXL was used across all content areas and provided formative assessment data on individual student progress. IXL is currently used as one measure to look at any potential regression and to assess rate of progress and recoupment where appropriate.

Accommodations: Accommodations were provided through the use of technology, assistive devices, low tech supports and adjustments to learning. All accommodations were tracked and if not available, documentation of adjustments were recorded.

Assessment

Assessment was conducted through a number of measures based on general education content and IEP goals. It included overall attendance and participation. During the remote learning time, assessment measures were broader based on the level and type of participation from the student. Measures included but were not limited to;

- Logging on
- Minutes the student stayed logged in
- Participation (answering or asking a question/making a comment through speech, using the chat feature, using an AAC device/low tech communication board, accessing a poll or mini assessment etc.
- Student work samples (electronic or physical)
- Observation (therapies, social skills groups)
- Notes from specific individualized sessions
- Work samples (physical & digital)
- Demonstration/observation

Digital Assessment Library

A digital assessment library subscription was purchased to assist in facilitating evaluations in a safe and effective manner. The DALS will be used for most evaluations moving forward beyond the pandemic. Assessments are conducted using iPads, minimal physical materials and recorded using the assessment forms which are then inputted into Q-Global. Interactions with students are done with a screen using PPE in-between the student and assessor. For students who need prompting and other supports, a second person is on the student's side providing that support as needed at a closer distance using additional PPE such as gloves and face shield in addition to the face mask. All materials are cleaned and disinfected after.

Report Cards/Progress Reports

Progress reports were provided for all students noting data from prior to the transition to remote learning and data that was available during the remote learning period. For students who did not participate in any way, progress reports noted such. If part of a goal could not be addressed as is (ex. Community based instruction), this was noted or alternatives such as community referenced instruction within the home was accessed. All types of data were considered when reporting on progress.

Report Cards reflected grading prior to the transition to remote learning for the third term or second trimester. During remote learning for those students who participated on some level they received a P (pass) or incomplete or comments on specific standards (elementary school). Some students did produce consistent and sufficient work to receive typical grades. Students were

given the opportunity to make-up work for credit during the ESY program. Extensive flexibility and supports were given to all students in addressing their academic, therapeutic and additional educational needs.

English Learners & Overall Access

Transcripts and outlines were provided for synchronous and asynchronous work. This was provided in a medium that would work easily with Google translate as well as text to speech software. This provided ongoing support to families who were able to understand how to support their child's learning much better. SSEC has a low incidence of students who are categorized as English learners but has more parents who benefit from translation. No students require direct support from the SEI coordinator.

Translation Services

Families have access to translation services through Google Translate, formal documentation translation by a professional translator as well as phone translation to support communication.

Student Learning Plans

Student learning plans were completed and updated three times during the remote learning period as well as the hybrid ESY programming. Plans were distributed to each family and district. A copy of the plans were placed in the student's record. SSEC offered immediate services beginning 3/16/2020 and expanded quickly to full service delivery within two weeks. Full service delivery included all grid services offered through a combination of synchronous, asynchronous and physical work.

Lesson Planning for Synchronous & Asynchronous Learning

Teachers and therapists were required to fill out lesson plans for both synchronous and asynchronous learning. The plans addressed unit level content, differentiation, accommodations available and substitutions for those that were not; specific standards addressed assessment and IEP goals with student initials on them and how data would be collected. The asynchronous plans were more basic and included an overview of the activity and a place to outline expectations for participation.

Communication

Communication was essential from the point on the shift to remote learning. Families were reached out to on a regular basis through phone calls, emails and surveys. All communications were documented in School Brains. Level and frequency of communication with families was based on need, expressed desire and engagement of the student. Collaborative documents were used internally to make sure all team members were aware of communication with families and students.

Counseling & Psychiatric Services

SSEC provided additional counseling services to students during the remote learning period. Psychiatric services including medication management were offered to all students, families and staff at no charge. This service was extended through ESY-2020. All of these services were accessed regularly.

Bullying, Title IX Protections & Disability Discrimination

Communication with families and staff noted the bullying, Title IX & disability discrimination protections were still in effect during the remote learning time. At the time of this report, no issues were reported.

Proactive PPE Training & Pandemic Policy Development

The leadership and nursing team worked proactively to prepare for a hybrid ESY and full in-person for Fall 2020. Most trainings were conducted using Google Classroom with some in-person competency demonstrations. Trainings and policies included;

1. PPE
2. Cleaning & Disinfecting
3. Symptom Checker Reporting
4. Current CDC/DPH/DESE Guidelines

The nursing team shared SSEC policies and procedures with other Collaboratives and districts to help build local capacity in supporting a safe return to school.

Curriculum & Program Development links to SSEC Strategic Planning & the Way Forward Themes & State MTRSS

The Way Forward Theme 3: Innovation & Evidenced Based Practices SSEC Strategic Plan: Long Term Strategic Goals; (2) Data Collection & (3) Program Development & MTSS Chapter 4E – District Standards and Indicators - Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

After Hours High School for students who are school avoidant: SSEC was asked to explore alternative after school programming for high school students. program development was in the conversation phase when all schools when to remote learning. Although this has delayed any type of formal program development, the knowledge and experience gained from remote learning will play a role in how this alternative programming is developed in the near future. In the spring of 2021, this will be re-evaluated based on district needs and the current status of the pandemic response. SSEC is considering a hybrid model of service delivery for the alternative high school programming.

Current Programming: SSEC will use the knowledge & skills gained through remote learning to expand how we support all students throughout the year. Through the use of flexible learning models (face to face, hybrid, remote), the needs of more students will be addressed effectively and allow for greater responsiveness in real time.

The **Educational Neuroscience** professional development targeted evidence based practices based on what we currently know in the field. It included a background in development, basic psychological understandings & principles as well as strategies to maximize learning, memory and skill development. This is the first in a series of training to be delivered over the next few years.

IEP Boot Camp professional development addressed skills & practices to improve the written IEP, the targets addressing disability impact and measurable goals/outcomes. All programs attended the IEP Boot Camp and were expected to integrate these practices into the development of IEPs. The Director of Students Services was available to read rough drafts and assist in making this uniform transition across programs.

Data Collection through Educata, Goal Seeker and Google Suite: Data collection across programs continues to improve in consistency and quality. This includes the establishment of an early warning system implemented by two of the programs to function as a proactive approach to student supports and interventions. The data collection implemented supports all learning models.

Dyslexia Screening: The Shaywitz Dyslexia Screener was fully researched and determined to be the best tool to begin screening in the fall of 2020. If students are screened in, the WIAT III/IV, Woodcock Reading Mastery Test III, CTOPP2 and the GORT5 will be used to provide a more comprehensive assessment of reading needs. Based on the results, the student will be matched with the appropriate evidenced based reading program(s) to target specific skills.

Establishment of full complement of evidenced based reading programs with a focus on phonics. Phonemic awareness is a central component to reading development and plays a key role in addressing potential reading based disabilities. SSEC has acquired an array of evidenced based reading programs, established professional development to ensure fidelity in implementation. The choices in interventions allow for increased viability in matching the correct instructional method(s) to the individual student's needs.

The Way Forward Theme 1: Deeper Learning for All & Theme 2: Holistic Support & Enrichment; MTRSS Chapter 3A: Core Components – Core Curriculum and School-wide Non-Academic Supports

Social Studies/History Content: SSEC has established a layered and holistic approach to curriculum to address social studies/history content across a variety of narratives and perspectives. The McGraw-Hill, Benchmark Curriculum and Panorama (social studies & science) provide a broad series of perspectives and historical narratives that shape student learning & discussions through understanding, critical analysis, storytelling and debate.

Assessment of Content for Equity: The curriculum chosen and acquired all provides a variety of narratives across varied backgrounds and provides culturally and linguistically diverse narratives. Beginning in the 2020-2021 school year, two or more curriculum components will be targeted for an equity assessment. SSEC will use the Culturally Responsive Curriculum Scorecard by the Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools to assess the content. A committee made up of representatives from each program will participate including those who may not be using the current content. The results will be summarized and become a part of the annual report and action plan to improve the inclusivity, equity and diversity of the content taught at the Collaborative.

Equity Audit: SSEC began addressing issues of Equity through the SEED workshop which was interrupted by the pandemic. SSEC will begin by addressing issues of equity by conducting an equity audit in the 2020-2021 school year. The audit looks broadly at SSEC structures, content and ways in which we define and act upon equity, inclusivity and diversity. SSEC will use the tool developed by the Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium, Inc. The equity audit will address;

Criteria for an equitable school

Criteria for an equitable classroom

Teacher Behaviors that Encourage Student Persistence

This will be completely by a committee of staff across programs. An action plan will be developed with clear goals. Specific data will be taken and analyzed to monitor progress and outcomes.

MTSS: Chapter 4E – District Standards and Indicators - Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

Benchmarking ELA & Math

IReady was trialed this year across programs. It was determined to be appropriate for benchmarking ELA & Math for most students across all programs (some exception in the Community School). It offered greater flexibility in assessments and provided interventions plans as needed. Training for full implementation began in ESY 2020 for full implementation in the fall of 2020.

IXL will also be used as a formative assessment for most students across ELA, Social Studies/History, Science and Math for most students (some exceptions in Community) across all programs. Data will be collected using the program to monitor incremental progress across concepts and correlated with content instruction and other data sources in the classroom.

Summary:

SSEC continues to make effective progress across identified objectives and unexpected needs as a result of COVID-19. SSEC staff was exceptionally responsive to the needs of students and families during these difficult times and provided high quality varied modalities of instruction covering full service delivery. The staff dedicated an enormous amount of time to communication and follow-up to maintain relationships, provide for social-emotional needs and to support active participation in learning opportunities. This is in addition to completing training on technology, writing and implementing IEPs and planning for the hybrid ESY program. SSEC staff was proactive and remain proactive in managing, implementing and updating services throughout these difficult times. The administrative staff worked hard behind the scenes making sure all aspects of SSEC remained running in good order. Finally our nursing staff worked well beyond their weekly hours and through breaks to make sure our health and COVID-19 policies were ready on day one. It started off as any other year but ended in a robust and sustained team effort pulling in positive energy, moments of frustration, a bit of humor and true dedication to the students at SSEC.

ANCILLARY SERVICES ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020

STAFF AND STUDENT POPULATION:

Occupational/Physical/Speech Therapy Services-

During the 2019-2020 school year, The South Shore Educational Collaborative employed a full-time Therapy and Assistive Technology services supervisor, a full time therapy services coordinator, ten physical therapists (eight full time, two part-time) , three full-time physical therapy assistants, fourteen occupational therapists (thirteen full time, one part-time), one full-time certified occupational therapy assistant, and sixteen speech-language pathologists (fifteen full time, one part-time) . Therapists have conducted evaluations, and provided direct and consultative services for students in five Collaborative programs, three member school districts, and one non-member school district. Therapists have worked with students who have disabilities that include: intellectual impairment, communication impairment, physical impairment, sensory impairment (vision, hearing, deaf-blind), emotional impairment, neurological impairment, autism, specific learning disabilities, developmental delay, and other health impairments.

Assistive Technology Services-

The South Shore Educational Collaborative Center for Assistive Technology (CAT) provided assistive technology evaluation, training, consultation, and follow-up services for students in five Collaborative programs, and upon request in SSEC member and non-member school districts. During the 2019-2020 school year, the South Shore Educational Collaborative Center for Assistive Technology Team (CAT Team) consisted of a coordinator, two assistive technology specialists, and a speech/language pathologist. A network manager consulted on an as needed basis. The CAT Team worked together three and half hours each week from September until June to conduct assistive technology evaluations and follow-up services for school districts. In addition, each CAT Team member was assigned to provide on-going consultation to SSEC programs and to school districts who requested this service.

SSEC Therapy and Assistive Technology Service Outcomes for 2019-2020 School Year:

Outcome # 1:

Students will receive therapy services responsive to need in the least restrictive environment to support school participation.

Evaluation Design:

This outcome was measured by tracking the number of students and type of service provided through:

- Information Sharing (Least restrictive type of service where therapist may educate team about student's disability and provide information to adjust school activity demands or context.)
- Accommodations/Modifications (Activity and environmental changes may be made to support student participation.)

- Consultation (Therapist develops and train team in use appropriate strategies and collaborates with teacher/team to support student participation/learning.)
- Direct therapy service in context (Therapy services are provided within the context of classroom/school activities with peers and designed to facilitate participation.)
- Direct therapy services in and out of context (Therapy session frequency is divided between services provided within the context of the classroom/learning activities with peers and out of context and separate from classroom/learning activities.)
- Direct therapy service out of context (Therapy services are provided individually or in small groups separate from classroom/school activities with peers.)

Analysis/Discussion:

The data collected during the 2019-2020 school year reflects the types of conditions/environment therapy services were delivered. Information sharing typically occurred during initial eligibility meetings, incidentally in the school setting or in the context of Response to Intervention. During the pandemic school closure period from March 16 through the close of school in June, 2020, occupational therapists, physical therapists, and speech language pathologists provided remote live synchronous and asynchronous therapeutic services for SSEC students through Google Classroom.

Figure 1

Type of Therapy Service:	Occupational Therapy	Physical Therapy	Speech/Language Therapy
Information Sharing	.36%	.44%	1.82%
Accommodations/Modifications	1.07%	0	.61%
Consultation	10.75%	10.04 %	9.42%
*Direct therapy service in context	6.09%	.87%	3.04%
*Direct therapy service in and out of context	67.03%	82.1%	67.48%
*Direct therapy service out of context	14.69%	6.55%	17.63%

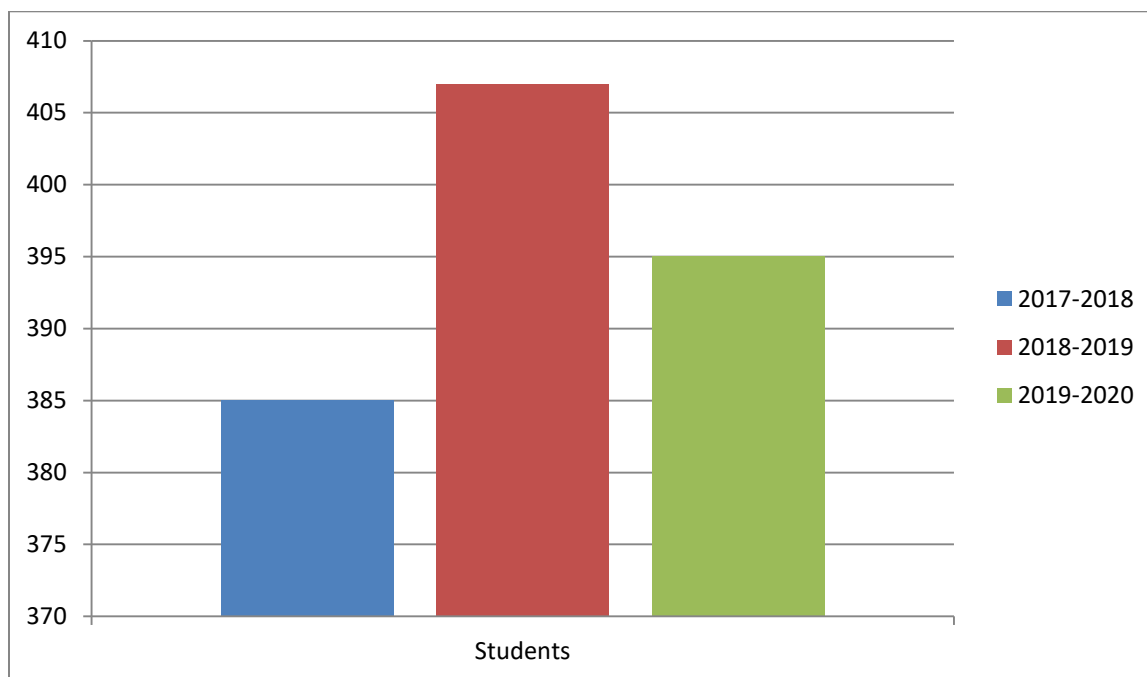
*All direct services were provided in conjunction with consultation, accommodations/modifications, and/or information sharing. Consultation services were also provided in conjunction with accommodations/modifications, and/or information sharing.

Outcome #2

Given Assistive Technology consultation, and availability of assistive technology tools/techniques, students will participate in classroom instruction to the greatest extent possible. This outcome will be measured by the number of students using assistive technology to participate in classroom activities.

Figure 2

Students per Trimester period:



Analysis/Discussion:

Despite the school closure due to the Covid-19 pandemic during the spring of 2019-2020 school year, there was only a small decrease in the number of students who received consultation and used assistive technology tools in the classroom to access the curriculum when compared to the previous year. During the spring school closure, The CAT Team provided ongoing consultation to support student access to remote learning and therapies via live synchronous and asynchronous activities.

The majority of consultation services occurred within the weekly blocks of contracted time for SSEC programs and school districts.

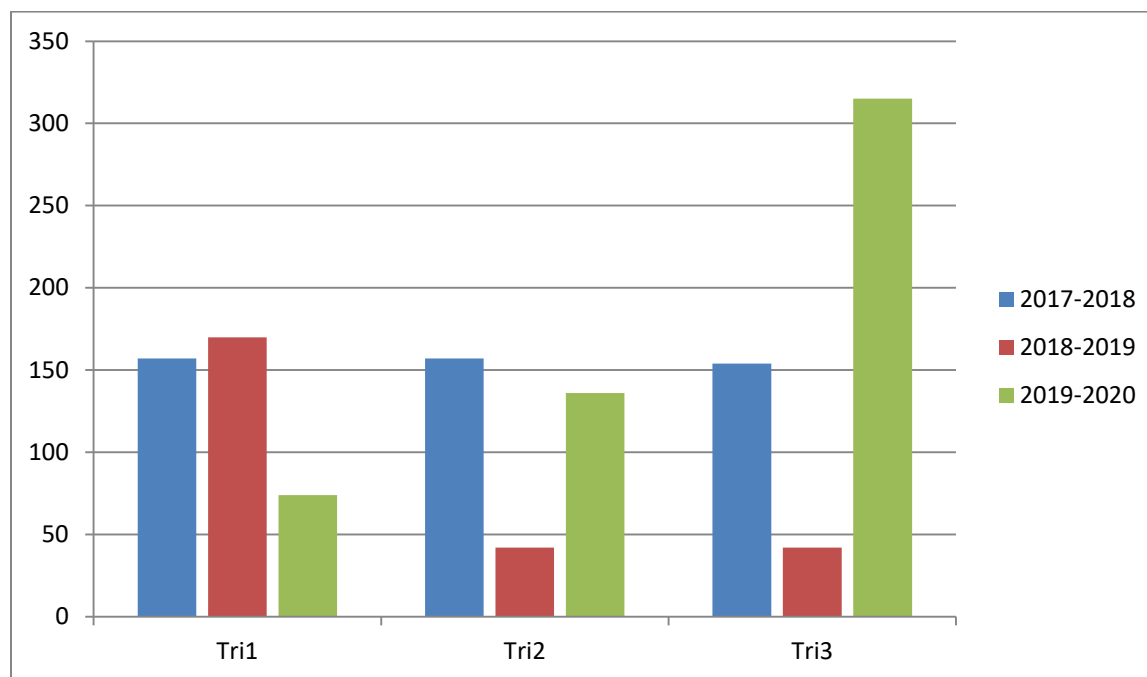
Outcome #3

Educators and parents will receive training so that they can incorporate Assistive Technology tools/techniques to promote student achievement in identified areas of need.

This outcome will be measured by the number of educators and parents who have received training from the CAT Team.

Figure 3

Educators and Parents per Trimester Period



Analysis/Discussion:

- The CAT Team provided training for educators and parents in the use of Assistive Technology tools/techniques through workshops and trainings conducted in public schools and the South Shore Educational Collaborative. The majority of trainings attended by educators and parents were conducted during the last trimester. Due to the school closure from March 16, 2020 until the close of school in June, 2020 there was a significant need for Google Classroom training to support student participation in remote learning. Training was provided to staff and parents through a variety of virtual strategies that included Google Meet, Google Classroom, SSEC website resources, Assistive Technology Team dedicated office hours, and weekly Remote Learning Tech tips via email.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Occupational therapists, physical therapists, and speech language pathologists who work in SSEC programs received training and utilized a comprehensive documentation tool to develop therapy intervention plans for students, track student attendance and service delivery, record therapy session notes, collect data on student IEP goals/benchmarks for

monitoring student progress and therapy outcomes. In addition, the new documentation tool provides a HIPAA/FERPA compliant format for School-based Medicaid billing documentation.

- All SSEC occupational therapists, physical therapists, and speech language pathologists met monthly to discuss topics related to school-based therapy service delivery and intervention planning and implementation of School-based Medicaid Program guidelines.
- The SSEC CAT Team participated in monthly SSEC Technology Planning meetings to address implementation of the SSEC Technology Plan and other technology needs in SSEC programs.
- Throughout the 2019-2020 school year, members of the SSEC CAT Team collaborated closely with speech language pathologists and parents to coordinate AAC device trials for students and purchase of communication devices if deemed appropriate.
- The SSEC Center for Assistive Technology coordinated bulk Assistive Technology software, app and device purchases at reduced costs for SSEC programs.
- The SSEC Center for Assistive Technology and Community School Therapists has facilitated trainings provided by vendors of a variety of augmentative and alternative communication devices, adaptive equipment, and educational software. In turn, these companies have loaned devices for trial use at no cost.
- The SSEC CAT Team frequently coordinated loan arrangements for specific assistive technology tools and devices from vendors for trial use. Opportunities for trial use has been greatly beneficial for determining the most appropriate assistive technology software, tool or device prior to purchase.
- During the pandemic school closure period from March 16 through the close of school in June, 2020, occupational therapists, physical therapists, and speech language pathologists provided remote live synchronous and asynchronous therapeutic services for all SSEC students. Therapists also scheduled specific office hours for consultation, instructional phone calls and/or virtual meetings with parents. Therapists continued to assist in the coordination of repairs, adaptations, and ordering of new adaptive equipment through email and phone communication with the families and vendors. They virtually attended appointments at the vendor offices or within the student's home to support the student and their family. Trials for new speech devices were completed to ensure the students have access to the most appropriate communication device. The assistive technology team and therapists wrote funding letters and letters of medical necessity for any necessary equipment. Additionally, SSEC loaned out student equipment to promote access to each student's remote learning needs. SSEC also partnered with an equipment agency to provide seating, positioning, and mobility equipment to families that were unable to attain the needed equipment through insurance or the school. The equipment was

delivered to the student's home and set-up was completed through consultation with the therapists.

- A Remote Learning Support Team was formed at the start of pandemic school closure period that included SSEC CAT Team members, Director and Coordinator of Therapy Services, and SSEC Instructional Technology Specialist. The SSEC Remote Learning Support Team was responsible for coordinating access to online learning resources on the SSEC website and provided Google Classroom/ Google Tools online training for SSEC staff, students and families from March through June of 2020.

SUMMARY OF ANCILLARY SERVICES:

During the 2019-2020 school year, requests for occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech therapy, and assistive technology services were fulfilled for Collaborative programs and member school districts. Occupational therapy services were provided for 279 students. Physical therapy services were provided for 229 students. Speech/Language services were provided for 329 students.

Our main objective is to evaluate the need for and if necessary, provide supportive services so that students can access the school environment, participate in classroom learning and learn life skills. We also aim to provide awareness about assistive technology, and to link children and adults with disabilities to technology systems that will increase opportunities in education, daily living, and employment.

Careers High School - Annual Report

2019 – 2020 School Year

Anne Rowland, Psy.D., Program Coordinator

CHS Program Description

The Careers High School is designed for high school students with severe emotional challenges who respond best when engaged in competency-based curriculum and projects. CHS is therapeutic, collaborative, flexible, and focuses on helping students earn their high school diploma from their sending school districts. Most of the students who succeed in CHS have a history of poor experiences with schools in general and are reactive to traditional educational approaches. These students respond to the ‘family feel’ of CHS, the individualized educational approaches including independent studies, credit-recovery, and the strong emphasis on preparation for transition to post-secondary experiences, especially opportunities to move from pre-vocational projects to entry-level jobs. Through increasing skills in social pragmatics and emotional regulation, greater time is then available to spend focused on academic and vocational endeavors, credit acquisition and employability.

Capacity

Careers High School moved from a programmatic capacity of 37 to 40 students in 2015-16. Since then, while the age range of the student population typically is from 13 through 18 years, older students have remained enrolled if the educational Team determines it meets the students’ needs. During the 2018-19 school year, one 21 year old was enrolled, and CHS filed 48- month Age Span Requests for Waivers for five classrooms, which were granted by DESE, due to the wide age span of students within a relatively small high school. In 2019-20, however, our age range was smaller and no waiver requests were required.

Careers High School assists students in modifying decision-making behaviors, improving academic skills, and managing the emotional interference that prevents them from being successful in a less-restrictive setting. When a student has met the emotional and behavioral goals of the IEP to the extent that s/he can return to a less restrictive setting, the Team ensures this happens. If the behavioral or emotional issues are too severe for success in a less restrictive environment, then a student could remain in placement at CHS until graduation.

There are five academic classrooms and one Greenhouse Lab in the Careers High School wing of the 75 Abington Street campus. Classrooms are staffed by certified special education teachers with the support of paraprofessionals. Four of the classrooms emulate the more traditional comprehensive high school model in the sense that the students move from content class to content class. While class size is dependent upon population need, it generally ranges between six and nine students.

The fifth classroom is the Transition Classroom that is partially self-contained for the core academic classes except math. It too is staffed by a special education teacher and a paraprofessional, and can accommodate up to 12 students. The student population identified for this classroom tends to have greater difficulty with change and may have diagnoses that include

Autism Spectrum Disorder (DSM-V), anxiety disorders and nonverbal learning disabilities. These are also typically the younger students enrolled in CHS (five 8th graders joined the Transitions Classroom throughout 2018-19, but none in 2019-20 due to COVID-19 school closures). Students are encouraged to take one or more classes in the other four classrooms as their comfort level and skills increase.

Staffing

All staff, including the Administrative Assistant, Transition Specialist & Assistant Transition Specialist, Speech and Language Pathologist, Reading Specialist, Occupational Therapist and two clinicians work together with the teaching staff as a comprehensive, collaborative team committed to working with CHS students in navigating specific difficulties to then result in their successful completion of high school. This may be accomplished in any number of ways, such as within the classroom, in dyads, in the Greenhouse Lab, through individual or group therapy situations, or social skills group, e.g. These sessions may be scheduled or on an as-needed basis. The clinical team works closely with classroom teachers, students' families, and outside collaterals. Together, all staff members work on developing and implementing an effective program to help each student increase good-decision making skills and progress towards their post-graduation goals.

Careers High School and SSHS share the Speech and Language Pathologist (Ellen Bernier), who coordinates and runs groups focused on social pragmatic skills. The Transitional Specialist (Bobby Nelson) and Assistant Transition Specialist (Drew Himberg), who are also shared with SSHS, are critical to facilitating most aspects of the students' goals and plans upon achieving their diplomas. Mary Anne Kahler, the Reading Specialist, met routinely with three CHS students throughout the year, and Tracey Brennen, OT, also provided direct service to students and consultation to staff remotely.

Transition

Originally, Careers High School developed a Transitions Program based on Jobs for American Graduate work standards. This program embedded these standards into the discipline system. Students' schedules have them participating in on and/or off site transitional-vocational projects during their school day. These include work study experiences, community service activities, paid positions in competitive employment situations, hands-on pre-vocational projects during school, and dual enrollment in college courses.

Students learned basic employment expectations, vocabulary and experience that translate directly to the work world. In addition, basic "soft" employment skills are built into the program to reinforce real world expectations. One of the Strategic Planning goals from administration for SSEC is to sharpen the focus of the pre-vocational offerings so as to increase employability skills. As this transpired, Bobby Nelson designed tracking sheets and gathered data about the use of the various opportunities. Bobby develops and coordinates the vocational program, including monitoring the students' progress in competency level as measured by each Workplace Softskills Rubric.

The Transitional Specialists also assist students in exploring college and other post-secondary education and training, such as (P)SAT's, ACT's, Accuplacer test, college applications, college campus visits, and meetings with admissions officers to make the transition to college more

manageable and successful. Resume development, mock job interviews, online applications, and support in the pre- and post- phone calls are part of the efforts with students, as well as assisting students' connections to other job/vocational agencies, such as MRC. The Transition Specialist also completes and writes Transition/Vocation Evaluations as part of the IEP 3 year re-evaluation process.

Year in Summary

Student Population

Careers High School students have serious mental health, emotional and behavioral issues. The clinical team takes the leadership role in helping students maintain stability so they are able to access the curriculum and earn credits towards graduation. The therapeutic success of our students is ultimately gauged by successful credit acquisition toward graduation, or return to the district, whichever comes first.

The 2019-20 academic year was memorable for the pandemic, including school closings from March through June due to COVID-19. During this three month period, SSEC pivoted to a remote model of learning. This presented many new challenges for staff and students; with guidance and support from administration, and their own efforts and extra hours of work, the CHS teachers and staff were able to successfully deliver curriculum and services for the students. CHS began the year with a census of 34 students and one STARTS student. Enrollment fluctuated throughout the year (Table 1), with a significant drop in census in June after graduating five students, and three others leaving (return to district, residential, and to SSHS). Of note, CHS enrolled three students while remote in the spring. During the year, CHS had five referrals of school avoidant students, more than previous years. It is anticipated this number will increase, given the significant increase in anxiety and depression during the pandemic within the school-aged population at large. Some of these students find comfort in "hiding" through remote learning within their districts that are not offering in person learning, and CHS is already seeing these referrals in Fall 2020 since SSEC is fully in person.

Table 1

CHS STUDENT ENROLLMENT 2018-2019

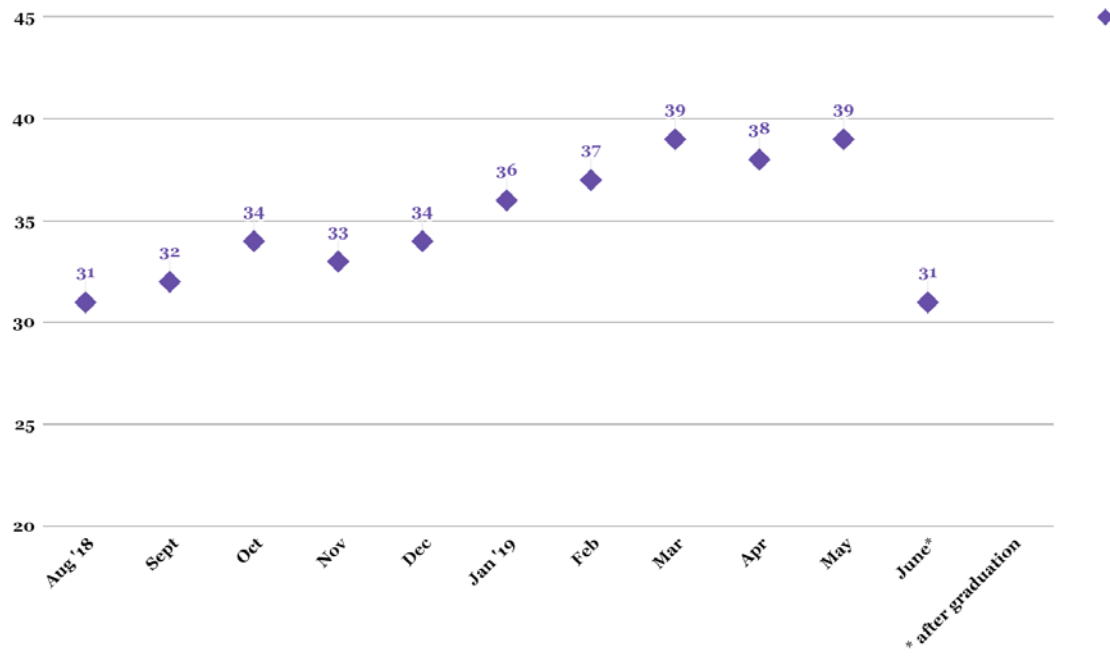


Table 2

Student Vocational Hours				
<u>Area</u>	<u>'15-'16</u>	<u>'16-'17</u>	<u>'17-'18</u>	<u>'18-'19</u>
<i>On-Site</i>				
Greenhouse	1973	1934	n/a	1460
Kitchen	1889	1138	1774	864
Audio Visual	1083	941	398	641
Copy Center	1013	1426	1327	1255
Basketball Referee	716	627	705	835
Quest Intern (Art)	n/a	23	4	n/a
Quest Intern (Para)	n/a	57	50	n/a
Community Classroom	n/a	n/a	20	24
AIM Classroom	n/a	n/a	1.5	n/a
Janitorial	n/a	n/a	n/a	36
<i>Off-Site</i>				
Boston Bowl	85.5	58	75	14
Bolt Depot	n/a	n/a	52	24
Old Navy	n/a	n/a	26	59

Table 2 lists the vocational experiences offered (at 75 Abington Street and in the surrounding towns), with the number of hours spent by students in that area by year. Hours for 2019-20 were not included since the school year was truncated. Hiring an Assistant Transition Specialist in 2018 (who has a 7D license) sustained off-site opportunities (Old Navy, Boston Bowl, and Bolt Depot) and on-site opportunities (Community classrooms and janitorial services).

Careers High School students comprise the majority of students who routinely go off-site, primarily because CHS is conducive due to its ability to be flexible with academics, credit recovery, and the pace of work flow.

In terms of employability, again CHS students were able to move into entry-level jobs (Shaws, Papa Ginos, e.g.) at various points during the year, and CHS issued work permits for five students (four fewer than last year, likely due to the pandemic). CHS held a graduation ceremony in the SSEC parking lot in June, complete with caps, gowns, decorations, music, speeches and diplomas! The five graduates had similar post graduation plans: three planned to attend Massasoit Community College, and two planned to attend Job Corps. Four of the five had employment at the time of graduation.

CHS Achievements

The 2019-20 academic year at Careers High School consisted of a continued increase in: integration of students with SSH (with coordination of scheduling between two key staff, Bettyann Foley and Carolyn Ray), vocational development, DESE requirements, and more in-depth data collection and analysis. Throughout its second year, the Greenhouse Lab flourished, incorporating students from Quest, SSH, and Community. The Greenhouse Lab staff also provided watering services throughout all programs, sold worm tea, collaborated with the Copy Center to produce a monthly newsletter, and harvested the produce from their purpose built raised beds.

CHS also provided a student internship through janitorial services, utilized work study IDs, expanded Calm Classroom, transitioned and enrolled AIM classroom students, had its first Level 3+ student (increased responsibilities and independence), created a Data Team that produced progress measures for classrooms and counseling sessions, and developed the Center Hallway Psychoeducation Whiteboard for the SSEC Community. And, the Senior Financial Literacy Seminar included SSHS and CHS students meeting monthly with representatives from South Shore Bank. They covered various topics including Savings/Checking plans, Health and Nutrition, Transportation and Insurance, Community Service and Post-Secondary Education.

Plans for Future

Continue to expand and increase student vocational offerings and opportunities when/where possible in the community.

Classroom data to reflect progress toward readiness to return to their sending districts/less restrictive setting.

Initiating and supporting students' unsupervised travel and work, especially to Bolt Depot.

Improve data collections and aggregation, specifically around IEP goals.

Support students in skill re-acquisition, especially if/where regression has occurred due to remote learning.

Unfortunately, SSEC programs have had to return to their previously 'siloed' positions due to the need to socially distance, losing progress that had been made previously in this area. When COVID related restrictions are lifted, continued integration of CHS and SSH, specifically staff overlap, course integration, and standardization of training will begin again.

2020 Community School Annual Report

Description of School, Student Population & Staff

The South Shore Educational Collaborative's **Community School Program** is a day school that provides educational services to students with severe and multiple disabilities. These students may also present with complex medical needs and/or behavioral challenges. During the 2019-2020 School Year, the Community School had classroom space at 75 Abington Street in Hingham as well as in a secluded section of Randolph High School. The Hingham location served students from preschool through transition age while the Randolph High School space was reserved for High School through transition age students. Classroom cohorts are developed by taking student age and academic, social and functional skill sets into consideration. These variables frequently lead to classrooms that have students at either end of the forty-eight month age span. The Community School has 1:2 staff to student ratio due to the extensive needs of the student population. On occasion, as determined by the team process, a student may have 1:1 staffing assigned.

Community School Classrooms at 75 Abington Street

Early Childhood:	Three classrooms for students grades preschool through two.
Elementary:	Two classrooms for students grades two through six.
Middle School:	Two classrooms for students grades six through nine.
High School:	Three classrooms for students grades nine through 12+.
AIM:	Four classrooms for students grades one through 12+.

Community School Classrooms at Randolph High School

High School/Transition:	Four classrooms for students grades nine through 12+.
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Program Overview:

The Community School uses a standards based curriculum which is linked to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. This curriculum is adapted to meet the diverse needs of each student with a focus on functional academics geared toward individualized developmental needs. Thematic interdisciplinary units are utilized along with standards based math and reading instructional programs to allow the students to access the general education curriculum while working on skills related to academics, communication, activities of daily living, social/emotional development, self-regulation, adaptive behavior, vocation/pre-vocation and leisure/recreation. A large majority of Community School students enter the general education curriculum through access and entry points and participate in MCAS Alternate Assessment according to grade level. A small portion of Community AIM students access the curriculum at or close to grade level and participate in on-demand MCAS testing with individualized accommodations.

The Community School uses a number of specialized curricula to support student learning. Individualized accommodations and modifications are applied based on student needs with the extensive use of assistive technology to improve access. Content is modified based on student need and presented utilizing a variety of methodologies to ensure access. Some of the formalized curricula include;

1. Equals Math (access points to grade level along with extensive online materials)
2. Ablenet STEM program (differentiated into three levels with additional online adapted books)
3. ALL(Accessible Literacy Learning) reading program (adapted reading program for students using picture symbols or combinations of pictures and words).
4. Reading A-Z (online program)
5. Panorama
6. Unique Learning Systems differentiated fully adapted integrated units
7. News 2 You adapted readers
8. Social Thinking
9. Zones of Regulation

In addition to these structured programs, the teachers adapt curriculum and materials while supplementing with a variety of thematic integrated activities to enhance student learning and support more effective progress.

Evidenced Based Methodologies: To meet the individualized needs of our students, the Community school utilizes a variety of methodologies. The principles of Applied Behavioral Analysis are used and integrated based on the individualized needs of each student. Teaching methodologies focus on structured learning programs that capitalize on repetition and consistency and are followed by opportunities to generalize and apply skills in natural settings. The principles of ABA are embedded into the routines and instruction across our classrooms. Essential learning skills are integrated into all aspects of the day including manding skills, imitation, turn-taking and joint attention. These skills are worked on through varying degrees of complexity and are central to the learning process.

Task Analysis: A task analysis is often used for instructional purposes to break down specific skills and to target acquisition in a more precise manner. This allows for IEP goals and broader content to be taught in a systematic and consistent manner across trainers while detailing individualized step sequences, reinforcement strategies and correction procedures.

Behavioral supports and interventions include such practices as; antecedent based intervention, varied reinforcement procedures, functional communication training, replacement skills training, modeling, formalized prompting hierarchy, naturalistic intervention, exercise and visual supports.

Social skills training integrates many of the methodologies discussed here in addition to specific social groups using the Social Thinking content, social stories, social scripts and self-management supports such as the zones of regulation.

Technology-aided Instruction and Intervention: This includes the extensive advanced speech generating devices (SGD) to support the augmentative communication needs of the students. The Picture Exchange System (PECS) is used with specific students through both low tech and high tech supports.

Aided Language Stimulation is provided by the staff when they are communicating with a student. The staff will model use of the communication system with the student to facilitate greater understanding of the operational aspects of the system as well as language use. This supports natural language use and language immersion.

Technology: Technology is utilized throughout the program in a variety of ways. It is embedded in a manner that supports students in accessing content and developing increased independence and participation while also acting as a motivator or reinforcer. Advanced communication devices along with some of the latest technology that is student or Collaborative owned is utilized to support our students and allows them to have greater access to educational materials, and environments. These devices frequently make more clear and detailed communication possible. This allows for more robust communication opportunities and helps students to participate more fully and effectively while also building social skills. These devices also promote the generalization of skills to a larger number of potential communication partners. The Community School embraces the principles of universal design through curriculum and environmental accommodations that are available to all students in addition to their individualized supports, accommodations and methodologies. This allows students to have consistent access to their school environment and curriculum. Examples of such supports include but are not limited to; varied seating and seating supports (sensory input), multimedia instruction, varied low and high tech technology and assistive technology, broad based sensory supports available to all students, flexible overlapping curriculum, movement, sensory and cognitive breaks, sound dampening ceiling panels, sensory sensitive lighting, consistent tangible symbol sets used in common areas, language accessible environment and materials and additional common augmentative and alternative communication supports available at all times.

Community Based & Community Referenced Instruction Content (altered during Covid-19):

All students given parental/guardian permission are eligible to participate in community based instruction programming and opportunities. Beginning in preschool, students attend regular field trips related to the curriculum and student learning goals with a focus on generalization of learned skills and acquisition of novel skills related to safety, communication, socialization and overall independence. Community based instruction is expanded throughout each grade with increased focus on functional life skills. Examples include;

1. Weekly shopping for the school & school store
2. Leisure based opportunities
3. Multiple vocational and vocational related opportunities
4. Academic/content themed outings

In addition, community referenced activities are practiced within the school based environment to reinforce the skills needed for planned community outings.

Program staff & services include: special education teachers, teachers of students with visual impairments, deafblind, orientation & mobility services, direct assistive technology services, paraprofessionals, speech, physical & occupational therapists, nursing, social workers, adaptive physical education teacher, music therapist and BCBA and behaviorists level staff. We also offer yoga, therapeutic swimming, therapeutic riding, access sailing and access sports.

The program offers additional services including; onsite wheelchair/equipment repair and ordering, splinting and other equipment needs including free trials prior to purchase for equipment which would be considered school based. We also have an established lending program with AAC vendors to trial various communication devices with the students at the Collaborative prior to purchase or official insurance based trials.

School Year Program: Students attend 180 school days from August/September to June. Program hours are 9:00am to 3:30pm. The 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month are early dismissals at 12:00pm. This provides time for professional development programs.

Extended School Year Program: This program runs six weeks from July through August. Students attend Monday through Thursday from 9:00am to 2:45pm. This is offered to both current students attending the Community School and on occasion is accessed by those who attend different programs throughout the regular school year. Students are engaged in thematically based academic, therapeutic and leisure activities which change weekly over the course of the six week session. Special electives are offered throughout the summer. Vocational activities and both community referenced and community based instruction continue throughout the ESY program. The majority of professional and paraprofessional staff elect to work the extended school year program. This is supplemented by many returning summer staff that includes college students studying in a related field (education, nursing, occupational/physical/speech therapy etc.).

AIM (Achieve, Inspire, Motivate): The AIM program is a hybrid program model between the South Shore Educational Collaborative's Community School and Quest Programs. This model was introduced at the start of the 2015-2016 school year and has now grown from a single classroom to four classrooms serving students from both the Community School and the Quest School. The AIM program focuses on higher level academic content for students who would typically attend the Community School and more individualized modifications for the students who would typically attend the Quest school. AIM seeks to serve students who need a higher level of support within the classroom setting. Students in these classrooms receive increased individualized attention for social, emotional, and academic needs. Students benefit from the diverse experience provided to them with access to social groups and a focus on their social learning through the social thinking curriculum. There is an integrated social skills curriculum as well as strong positive behavioral supports. Social skills focus on the recognition of feelings that occur throughout the day and the affects these have on their academics and social relationships. Each classroom utilizes the Social Thinking Curriculum to help students identify how our social interactions impact the way others think and feel, and how we, ourselves, interpret the world and social situations around us. Students learn a variety of skills which include sharing space effectively with others, learning to work as part of a team, and developing relationships with family, friends, and classmates. The curriculum focuses on various strategies and coping skills to

help manage emotions throughout the school day in order to better access academics and social situations. Counseling based on individualized student needs is also offered. Students at the High School level participate in many volunteer vocational job opportunities either at school and in the community. Opportunities to collaborate on a social, vocational and academic level with students from the Careers and South Shore High Programs continue to grow and be explored on an individual student basis.

Home Based Services: The Community school provides consult and direct home supports for students deemed eligible through their individualized educational planning process. These services include but are not limited to;

1. Direct behavioral supports including individual ABA services.
2. Intensive Toilet Training (Preschool through 21 years)
3. Parent training
4. Transition supports which may focus on;
 - a. Safety in the home and community
 - b. Independent living skills in the home
 - c. Behavioral supports & functional communication training
 - d. Social skills supports
5. Vision services
6. Orientation & Mobility services
7. Direct home programming on a case by case basis

2019-2020 Program Outcomes:

The 2019-2020 School Year presented unprecedented challenges for both students and staff related to the Covid-19 School closure that resulted in remote learning from March 16th, 2020 through the end of the academic school year and through the 2020 Extended School Year Program. The Community School staff accepted this challenge and went above and beyond to implement the required remote learning model. The on-demand training and learning related to remote learning for students, families and staff was beyond expectations and allowed for the best to be made of a difficult situation. The overall collaboration and team approach made this as successful as could be expected.

Although the Covid-19 closure presented many challenges and is the predominant memory from the past school year, it is important to focus on the positives that occurred before and during this time.

1. Professional Development
 - a. SSEC and Community School provided opportunities for additional professional development for professionals and paraprofessionals across areas of interest and need including legal issues, mandated reporting, schoolwide safety procedures and behavioral interventions.
2. AIM- Collaboration across programs

- a. Successfully collaborated and developed a transition plan that facilitated the first Community AIM student's transition from the Community AIM program to the Careers Program.
- b. Student recycling project raised funds that were donated to student identified causes and supported social skills and awareness as well as communication development.
- 3. The Student Council planned and implemented a kindness week.
 - a. Recognized and honored staff and peers .
 - b. Created a weekly student spotlight.
 - c. Staff recognition program as voted by students.
- 4. Increased family and parent communication through email, phone and meeting platforms.
- 5. 5th Annual Fundraiser bringing both families and community members together in support of program needs.
- 6. Family night at a local restaurant with a percentage of sales going to the Community Program.
- 7. During the Covid-19 school closure that necessitated remote learning, Community School staff continued to support their students with their traditional high standards within the given parameters.
 - a. Teaching and therapeutic staff developed remote programming that best met student needs.
 - b. Assistive Technology staff supported remote needs by developing and training staff under enormous time constraints and demand.
 - c. A large variety of technology and equipment was loaned to families to support remote learning needs. This equipment was offered for parent pick-up and in some cases personally delivered.
 - d. Additional physical supports and manipulatives were prepared and distributed to students and families.
 - e. Remote learning gave many families insight into student programming and fostered the generalization of skills to the home environment as well as improved parent/team collaboration.
 - f. In-person learning opportunities were planned and offered for the 2020 ESY program and provided valuable information related to school re-opening.

MINI SCHOOL PROGRAM ANNUAL REPORT

Maureen M. Gattine, MS., BCBA, LABA
Program Director
School Year 2019-2020

Established in the early 1970's as part of an initiative of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to start "mini-schools" for special needs students throughout the state, the Mini School program has served students on the autism spectrum, joining the South Shore Educational Collaborative in 1987. During the 2019-2020 school year, the Mini School Program provided educational services to 76 students (September, 2019) to 73 students (June, 2020) while budgeted for 65 in classrooms located in Hull at the Jacobs Elementary School, Memorial Middle School, Hull High School and in Randolph at Randolph High School. This school year a new classroom was started at the Jacobs Elementary School in Hull. This room was designed to accommodate the overflow of student referrals we received for younger children with diagnosis of ASD. The classroom opened with six students, a new teacher and 3 para professionals. Public school settings provide Mini School students the opportunity to interact with the general education population both in mainstreaming classes for some students and throughout the school environment. We had twelve students who were mainstreamed successfully in 1-2 classes that would include music, technology, art, gym and math and one student mainstreamed in electives and academics with support of a paraprofessional.

SSEC Mini School students require a multi-disciplinary team teaching approach with a high staff/student ratio. Each student's daily programming focuses on teaching skills he/she needs in order to be as independent as possible. Students receive the following services from specialists as needed: Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Assistive Technology and Adapted Physical Education. We also continued instruction in teaching Drums Alive with the four instructors that we have. Drums Alive is an all inclusive, comprehensive, multi-generational, culturally diverse Brain and Body program for all ages and abilities that empower participants to achieve healthy lives through research based fitness and wellness applications. This evidence based program encompasses music, rhythm, psychological, educational, emotional, physical and social skills. Every classroom at the Mini School is participating in this one time per week. The Mini School hours are 8:30 AM – 4:00 PM, Monday through Thursday and 8:30 AM – 2:45 PM on Friday, totaling 36.25 hours per week of direct instruction. The program follows the public school calendar of the town in which each class resides. Summer programming runs for six weeks, Monday through Thursday, 8:30 AM – 2:45 PM. Staff trainings and professional development are held on Thursday's during the school year, following early dismissal, once to twice a month. At the beginning of the school year, all staff received training in NAPPI (Non-Abusive Psychological and Physical Intervention) to de-escalate behavioral issues both before and when they occur in a safe, humane and effective manner. Staff also received training in DESE physical restraint regulations. They also received annual trainings in policies, procedures, health care, emergency drills, child abuse and neglect and bullying intervention and prevention, MCAS standard and alternate testing and First Aide/CPR training. Other specific trainings and professional development covered topics such as

Legal Issues, Google Classroom, Behaviors and Actions of the Workplace, Education and Neuroscience and miscellaneous remote learning trainings. All ten Mini School teachers as well as the Asst. Program Director and Program Director attended a 4 day IEP Bootcamp taught by Carol Kosnitsky. Shannon Sullivan, Mini School Clinician continued to maintain her certification from MARC (Bridgewater State College) as a trainer for Anti-Bullying/Cyber Bullying Intervention and Prevention. Our Nurses, Sue Kelly and Sarah Remington continue to be a Trainer in CPR and First Aid. The Mini School continues to use Panorama Science by National Geographic with both print and online copies of texts. It is science based content that engages students to learn more about the world around them. The Mini School also continues to use Stem Science through Hull Public Schools. It is being used for the K-8 high functioning classrooms. It is aligned with the curriculum frameworks and is an online 21st century curriculum that guides students in rich scientific discourse through modeling, questioning, and interactive activities. The Mini School has also invested in Benchmark Curriculum to help support the History and Social Science curriculum. This is for emerging, early and fluent readers. Other online curriculum resources that the Mini School uses across the classrooms are Flocabulary, an online, fun engaging and musical way to learn vocabulary across the content area.

On March 13, 2020 Massachusetts declared a state of emergency and considered a federal disaster thus forcing all public and day schools to remain closed based on Governor Baker's orders. SSEC devised individualized remote learning plans during this time for each student. We provided services based on the students service delivery grid of their IEP. Services included synchronous instruction using GoogleMeets and asynchronous learning that was delivered through Google Classroom, paper packets and/or email. We worked with the families and adjusted as needed to be able to provide the best services as possible to a population that potentially could struggle with remote learning. During the summer we were able to implement in person services on a modified schedule and then supplemented with synchronous and asynchronous lesson plans. All staff participated in a variety of training that consisted of Covid-19, PPE, Cleaning and Disinfectant training prior to being in person. During the full remote phase we had Team staff meetings and training regularly to meet the needs of all our students and training for the variety of technology that was used.

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Delineation of Mini School Staff

Position	FTE
Program Director	1.0
Assistant Program Director	1.0
Parent Home Consultant	.77
Teachers	10..0
Clinician	1.0
Behavior Specialist	1.0
Occupational Therapists (2)	1.43
OT Assistants (1)	1.0
Physical Therapist	.07
Speech Therapists	2.5
Adaptive PE Teacher	1.0
Nurses	1.38
Paraprofessionals	24.0
Substitute Paraprofessionals	4.0
Total:	50.15

Traditionally, the Mini School has served students on the autism spectrum who present with developmental delays from ages 5 -22 years old. Over the years the Mini School has expanded to serve students on the autism spectrum in grades K-8 who function at or close to their grade level, but do not possess the socialization and self-regulation skills necessary to be educated in their home districts.

Mini School curriculum emphasizes language based programming, positive behavior management techniques, social skills training and acquisition of functional life skills. Instructional methods include prompt hierarchies, systematic instruction, task analysis, incidental teaching and discrete trial training. Emphasis is also placed on the acquisition of academic skills: reading, English Language Arts, mathematics, social studies and science. Students learn at their developmental level following the Curriculum Frameworks. Students are assessed for MCAS each year by either standardized testing or by portfolio assessment at their chronological grade level according to the state model. The three Mini School high school classrooms and one middle school classroom focuses on transitional skills to include vocational training, functional academics, life skills, social skills and communication. The students at the high school have vocational opportunities within the classroom, school environment and the community.

Students with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder display challenges in many areas which impact their ability to access the general curriculum. These challenges include delays in the ability to communicate effectively, develop social skills, interpret sensory input, and understand and control their emotions. Although about 40% of students with the diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder have average or above average intellectual abilities, the remaining exhibit cognitive deficits and will need some level of support throughout their lives. At the Jacobs Elementary School, the Mini School uses an extra classroom space for de-escalation. In using the Zones of Regulation the room is designed to help students that enter the Yellow Zone (starting or feeling like losing control) and Red Zone (lost control, dangerous behaviors). Since using this intervention we have seen a decrease in maladaptive behaviors and an increase of students using tools to help regulate their behavior and return to the classroom which is the Green Zone (ready to learn). The Mini School uses a computer system, *Educata* for purposes of data collection, analyzing and interpreting, as well as fulfilling the reporting requirements of DESE for physical intervention and behavior support strategies.

During the 2019-2020 school year, nineteen Mini School students were scheduled to participate in standard MCAS in grades 3-8 with accommodations. Due to Covid-19, MCAS was waived and the students did not participate in the testing schedule. The Mini School uses Computer Based Testing for grades 3-8. The Middle School students all have chrome books that they used throughout the school year. Seventeen Mini School students participated in MCAS testing by alternate assessment. Students with a significant cognitive disability are eligible to participate in MCAS-Alt in all content areas. Completed portfolios were done, but again due to Covid-19 they were waived by DESE. The student portfolios are being stored in the student record.

During the 2019-2020 school year, the youngest Mini School students (grades K-5) attended school in five classrooms at the Jacobs Elementary School in Hull. At this school, students are given the opportunity to eat in the cafeteria, attend school functions, use the library

and gymnasium, and be included in computer, gym, music and some academic classes with support from Mini School staff. Mini School teachers use many strategies and accommodations to help our young students develop the prerequisite skills needed to learn. In order to be able to sit and attend, sensory input and schedules are provided throughout the school day. Positive reinforcement programs, visual schedules, timers, topic boards and social stories help organize the students' day, as well as remind them of classroom expectations. Mathematics is taught using Touch Math (a program geared towards visual learners) as well as the Saxon Math program. English Language Arts is taught through a guided reading program, Edmark Reading Program, and Read Naturally Live as well as instruction in phonics and spelling programs.

Two middle school classrooms are located at the Memorial Middle school in Hull. Students at this age continue their academic learning as well as beginning instruction in pre-vocational and functional life skills. Students went to the cafeteria by choice on a daily basis as well as the gymnasium for adapted physical education classes. Some students were mainstreamed for gym, science, mathematics, social studies and music classes. We also have a group that attended a weekly fitness class at the YMCA up to March 13th. At the end of the school year we had 2 students in eighth grade that moved to Careers High School Program, one that moved to South Shore High School and two students that returned to their home district for High School.

Planning for transition to adulthood is a major component of the curriculum for our high school students. During the 2019-2020 school year, we had two classrooms located at Hull High School and one classroom at Randolph High School. Emphasis is placed on helping students prepare for adulthood with a focus on transitioning. Students receive educational, speech and occupational therapy services which are directed toward building independence in social pragmatics, leisure activities, recreation and exercise, vocational skills, personal hygiene, self-advocacy, finances and daily chores. Vocational opportunities were offered both in the school and community settings. Students worked with job coaches at Papa Gino's, Community Center, Senior Elder Services, Holly Hill Farm, Salt Water Diner as well as Well Spring. We also started a new job with the Meals on Wheels program through Cohasset and Randolph elder affairs. Students at Hull High School operated a school store. Community and social experiences are an integral part of the high school curriculum. Students go to the Hanover YMCA two afternoons a week and use the fitness rooms in the school. Our Randolph students attend the YMCA in Stoughton once a week and focus on activities of daily living within a kitchen as well as fitness and health. Community based experiences to stores, restaurants, bowling, etc. happen on a weekly basis. As of March 13th, due to Covid-19 vocational jobs and community outings were unable to happen and we supplemented with synchronous and asynchronous vocational and life skills training. We had four Mini School students turn 22 during the 2019-2020 school year. Mini School staff work closely with parents and adult service providers to ensure a smooth transition from school to adult programming. Students transitioned to adult agencies such as day habilitation centers to Brockton Arc. and Lifetime Opportunities Unlimited. Two students that turned 22 in June are still waiting for their placement to reopen during Covid-19.

By using best practices in the field of autism, the Mini School strives to provide all of its students with a free and appropriate public education so that each student is able to reach his or her full potential.

Maureen M. Gattine, MS, BCBA, LABA

Program Director

Mini School – South Shore Educational Collaborative

QUEST PROGRAM ANNUAL REPORT FY 2020

Quest Mission Statement

The mission of the **Quest Program** is to provide a safe and respectful learning environment where relationships between staff and students can be nurtured and developed and where students can learn new skills for continued growth.

Description of Program, Student Population and Staff:

The Quest Program is a public day school located at 75 Abington Street in Hingham, MA designed to serve special needs students in grades K-8 with social, emotional and behavioral challenges. The program/school provides a highly structured, safe environment that ensures consistency and support needed to help these students succeed.

Our **student population** continues to grow and diversify. The majority of our students' primary disability is Emotional. We are also serving students with significant learning disabilities as well as students on the autism spectrum. Quest students have a variety of mental health diagnoses. A significant portion of the student population carries attention deficit hyperactivity disorder as a primary or secondary diagnosis. Anxiety disorders (post-traumatic stress disorder, generalized anxiety disorder, school phobia, and obsessive compulsive disorder) as well as mood disorders (bipolar disorder, depression and disruptive mood dysregulation disorder) comprise other prevalent disorders. These disorders, along with diagnosed specific learning disabilities, make learning a challenge for the majority of our students. During the 2015-2016 school year, we expanded the program to also provide programming for students with more severe special needs who have concurrent social skills and mental health challenges. Providing programming for this very specialized population has allowed the program to expand and support an additional 10 to 15 students each year. Many students referred to the Quest Program struggle to attend school on a daily basis. Once in school, the inability to remain focused combined with mood lability and/or weak social skills make academic progress a daily struggle for many of our students. It is only with comprehensive academic, behavioral, and therapeutic support that our students are able to make progress toward their IEP goals. The program integrates an evidenced based multisensory academic curriculum which has been aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Where needed, students are also provided with a functional, remedial curriculum in 1:1 and/or small group settings.

The Quest Program continued to have 11 classrooms during the 2019-2020 school year. Eight classrooms are traditional Quest classrooms and three of the classrooms continue to be a joint venture with the SSEC Community School. These classrooms, given the name AIM (Achieve, Inspire, Motivate), are designed to meet the needs of students that required the therapeutic and behavioral support of the Quest Program but required modifications to the academic programming and social skills instruction typical of a Quest classroom. In these areas, the students require programming more similar to what was available at the Community School. In conjunction with the Community School, the three AIM classrooms served 30 students (13 enrolled in the Quest Program) over the course of the school year. The classrooms are led by a

Special Education teacher with the support of 3 or more paraprofessionals in each classroom. A full time licensed social worker works with all students in these three AIM classrooms to provide counseling and social skills instruction. This social worker is a part of the Quest clinical team and is supervised by a licensed social worker working in the Quest Program. Further support was provided by Occupational Therapists and Speech Language Pathologists from the Community School as well as Reading Teachers from the Quest Program. The classrooms accessed both the Quest Art and Gym teachers and the APE teacher from the Community School. Behavioral support was provided by both programs as needed. Students in the AIM room were able to participate in electives and field trips with the Quest Program while also taking part in trips and outings with the Community School. Students were also able to access the therapy pool, sailing and horseback riding programs through the Community School. Staff continue to learn the best ways to work together to serve this diverse group of learners. These classrooms are truly a part of both the Community and Quest Programs. Most importantly, SSEC continues to be able to meet the needs of 30 students with challenging and unique needs. Without the continued growth of the AIM classrooms, it is likely these students would have had to travel farther from home to attend school daily. The AIM classrooms provide a model for collaboration and flexible programming designed to meet the changing needs of our students and sending districts. Given the success of this classroom, AIM expanded to include a fourth classroom serving high school students for the 2018-2019 school year. These students were able to join in activities and services with the other AIM classes and access instruction and programming appropriate for their age and developmental level.

The SSEC Quest Program continues to be supervised by a Program Director, Jennie Williams, who serves as the academic administrator of the program. Rosanna Warrick is the full time Program Coordinator responsible for supervising the behavior team, managing the milieu, supervising paraprofessionals, data collection and running the program in the absence of the director as well as other duties as needed. Tim Handorf continued to be an important part of the Quest Program as the Clinical Director.

Reflective of our expanding program and increasing student needs, there were some increases made this school year regarding **program staff and service**. For the 2019-2020 school year our staff included: 11 full time certified special needs teachers, a full time PE/Health teacher shared with 2 programs, a full time Art teacher shared with 3 programs, 20 classroom aides, 1 full time and 2 part time reading teachers, 5 full time school based clinicians expanded to 6 full time clinicians as the census grew during the year, 1 clinical psychology intern, 2 social work interns, 1 full time and 3 part time occupational therapists, 1 full time and 2 part time speech and language therapists, a part time physical therapist, a full time administrative assistant and a part time assistive technology teacher. Quest also continued to access the services of a music therapist on a part time basis. The behavioral needs of the students were served by a behavioral team supervised by a Program Coordinator and comprised of 4 full time behavioral aides. A part time behavior specialist position was added at the start of the year and a full time milieu clinician position was added in February to meet the clinical needs of a growing student census. Two full time school nurses, a clinical director, a food service director and 3 food service aides are shared with the other school programs in the building. Quest also shared one part time board certified child and adolescent psychiatrist with the other SSEC programs.

Program hours from September to June are 8:30am to 2:50pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Every Wednesday, students are dismissed at 12:50pm. This provides time for professional development and staff meetings. During the summer, Quest provides a 6-week extended school year program for those students whose IEP includes a longer school year to prevent substantial regression of previously learned skills. Students enrolled in the Quest AIM classrooms follow the Community Program schedule and calendar. Their program hours from September to June are 9:00am to 3:30pm daily. Two Mondays each month, students are dismissed at 12:00pm. Quest AIM students also have a 6-week extended school year program which runs Monday through Thursday, 9 am to 2:45 pm daily.

Program Development for the 2019-2020 School Year

The 2019-2020 school year began like any other year and through March 13, 2020 the program operated similarly to years past. Although the year will mostly be remembered for the challenges associated with the school closure and pivot to remote learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a lot of good work was done July to March which is included below. A portion of the report is then dedicated to reporting on the Quest Program's switch to remote learning and the many changes and developments that occurred during that time.

The Quest Program continued to implement and expand upon the initiatives begun during previous years as well implement new curriculum initiatives. The Quest Program maintained the expansion of the AIM classrooms as described above. We welcomed a new doctoral psychology intern and two social work interns. Stability in staffing and in programming allowed us to build on the positive changes implemented in previous years. We have continued to offer Health, PE, art, music and instruction in assistive technology which has allowed us to create a more well-rounded education for Quest students. This also allows Quest classroom teachers consistent planning and consultation time. This time served two very important purposes. It has provided teachers with time to plan and prepare lessons as well as allowed teachers the necessary time to consult with therapists and other related services providers. Quest staff members have commented that this time to collaborate has allowed both teachers and specialists the space and time to talk about students and focus lessons and interventions on individual student needs.

Data Collection

In our ongoing effort to demonstrate efficacy in our program and to be compliant with DESE regulations, we have continued to devote considerable resources to data collection. More specifically, we continued to utilize the services of consultant Marc Hauser and his Educata system to track student behavior and we began to use the Goal Seeker program as well. The Educata system allows the staff to track a wide variety of data and the program also helps to manage reporting requirements with regard to time out of class and physical intervention. Providing this data has allowed all disciplines (educators, therapists and behavioral staff) to tailor and to focus their approaches and interventions with our students. Goal Seeker was added as a way to more efficiently track IEP goals in the classroom. Each classroom started with one student entered in Goal Seeker to allow staff the opportunity to learn the program. This has also helped the paraprofessionals become more involved in goal development as they are frequently

responsible for data collection. Their input has helped the professional staff write goals that capture a student's area of need in a manner that can be efficiently tracked in the classroom throughout the IEP period. Staff are consistently using data collection measures in place when writing IEPs and gathering baseline data on proposed goals. Staff are also using this data during pod meetings and when developing and updating individual and classroom wide behavior support plans. In addition, at our IEP meetings we have been able to present collected data in a visually and readily understandable format for parents and district colleagues.

During the 2019-2020 school year, the Quest Program continued to have a Data Team, which consisted of staff from all disciplines, including a teacher, paraprofessionals, speech language pathologist, behaviorist and a clinician. This team was led by the Program Coordinator and met three times per month to review trends in the program data and solve any issues related to data collection in the Goal Seeker or the Educata system. The Data Team also worked with Dr. Hauser to develop an Early Warning System to monitor individual students who were frequently out of class. The Data Team analyzed data for trends with regard to triggers, time of day and other contributing factors. This information would then be shared with the student's teacher and other staff to inform behavioral interventions aimed at reducing the student's time out of class. Adopting more stringent data collection measures has enabled us to keep pace with the current emphasis in the Massachusetts Professional Development Initiative. Increasing efficiency in data collection as well as improving our ability to utilize collected data continues to be a point of emphasis in the Quest Program especially as we now work with students in varying modalities of instruction.

Classroom Pods

At the core of service delivery in the Quest Program is the "pod" model. Each of the 11 classrooms has a "pod" or comprehensive team of staff that work together to provide the services enumerated in each child's IEP. Each pod consists of the teacher, the classroom aides, a clinician, a behavioral aide, and any other staff (occupational therapist, speech and language therapist, intern) that work with the students in the classroom. Pods meet weekly to discuss any individual or classroom issues that arise. This can include training on a newly signed IEP, drafting an individual behavior plan, addressing classroom management issues, drafting IEP's, planning social skills groups, and sharing information gained through case management. Pod members also share information with our consulting psychiatrist prior to a student's appointment, through structured online communication forms. Now in its tenth year, the pod model has evolved to incorporate the data collection completed by the Data Team and the pod members. This has allowed for focused and data driven conversations about goals and interventions.

The pod model not only makes communication between staff easier, it also makes the communication more meaningful. This model provides the opportunity for all staff working with a particular student to share their perspective. Each staff member has a different relationship with each student and each discipline has different services to provide. When all the disciplines work together, the pod is better able to understand the complex needs of our students and provide integrated interventions. At the Quest Program, we have come to understand that what makes the program successful is everyone working collaboratively. This collaboration and the

cohesiveness of the Quest classroom pods was one of the foundations of the success of the remote learning model used from March to June of the school year.

Behavioral System

Our behavior management system continues to be driven by Ross Greene's Collaborative Problem Solving approach to behavioral intervention. At Quest, we agree with Dr. Greene that "kids do well if they can". Staff works with students to understand their behavior so we can teach the skills needed for change. Our space for behavioral interventions includes 4 settling rooms, 2 quiet study rooms, a sensory room, a comfort room, an office shared by the Program Coordinator, Behavior Specialist and Milieu Clinician and an office for the behavioral aides. The behavioral space in our school building was designed to be safe and away from a main hallway. This has allowed students and staff the privacy and space needed to help students settle and be ready to return to class.

Given the school closure in March 2020, behavioral data reported is from July 2019-March 2020 and comparisons are based on the same time frame from the previous school year. Behavioral data collected throughout the year generated very positive trends. Quest students continued to take advantage of the available sensory strategies, Quiet Study and spaces for self-time outs in order to help them remain in class using these rooms more than 6,040 times during the course of the year (3,572 sensory/motor breaks and 2,468 self-time outs). Students were able to take a teacher directed break within their classroom 2,186 times and required teacher directed time out of class 2,188 times during the July 2019 to March 2020 period. In comparison to the data from July 2018 to March 2019, Quest students used more breaks with an increase from 8,183 to 10,416 in total. Interestingly, over both years, motor/sensory breaks were the most frequent type of break, accounting for 35% of breaks in 18-19 and 34% of breaks in 19-20. Teacher directed time out of class accounted for 21% of breaks over both years. A positive trend in 19-20 was the increase in self time outs or student directed breaks from class. In 18-19, students took 1,179 self-directed breaks which accounted for 14% of all breaks. Last year, they took 2,468 self-directed breaks, which was 24% of all breaks. These numbers indicate that 58% of all breaks were students proactively taking space or a motor/sensory break. While staff do prompt and encourage students to use these breaks this trend, when considered with the restraint data, speaks to the significance of positive behavior supports. It is also important to note that a part time behaviorist and an additional clinician were added to the milieu last year.

The Quest Program also continued to benefit from the training and implementation of NAPPI, Inc which changed their name to WELLE over the course of the 2019-2020 school year. NAPPI had stood for Non-Aggressive Psychological and Physical Intervention while WELLE is not an acronym. The primary reason the collaborative utilizes WELLE is that their program's physical interventions are safer for students and staff. This program also provides significant staff training in de-escalation and psychological intervention. The implementation of WELLE, along with minimal turnover of the program's behavioral staff, has continued to help us be judicious with the use of physical restraint in the Quest Program. We had a 51% reduction in the instances of physical intervention when compared to July 2018 to March 2019. Instances reduced from 344 to 177. Similar to past years, a small percentage of students accounts for all of the physical intervention. From July 2019-March 2020, 29 students of 85 served required a physical intervention while 9 students accounted for 63% of the holds. This was consistent with the July

2018-March 2020 time frame when 30 students required a hold and 10 students accounted for 82% of holds. As we continue to work on building positive behavior supports and reducing instances of physical intervention it is important to remember that, though it is a last resort, these interventions allow staff and students to remain safe at school. There are students who would not be able to remain at a public day school without this intervention as they learn the emotional regulation strategies they need to remain safe in school and the community.

The Data Team consistently met and provided feedback on program wide interventions as well as individual plans for the students frequently requiring physical intervention. Interventions utilized included increasing staffing ratios, completing FBAs and implementing behavior plans, consultations with our consulting psychiatrist and behaviorist for the school year. Reducing the need for physical restraint continues to be an important goal of the Quest Program even as we expand the program and service students increasing numbers of students with some of the most challenging behaviors.

Social Skills and Emotional Regulation Curriculum

As a program, we adopted the Social Thinking® Curriculum in 2010 and the language and concepts of the curriculum continue to be used program wide. The Social Thinking Curriculum was developed by Michelle Garcia Winner, a Speech and Language Pathologist, through her work with school age students on the autism spectrum. This curriculum, which is both evidence based and practice informed, is a social cognitive approach to social skills instruction designed to teach perspective taking and social thinking skills to students with a variety of social challenges. The goal is to help students better understand how their words and actions impact the thoughts and feelings of others around them making them better able to share space effectively with others. All Quest students have at least one direct instruction group based on this curriculum each week. Staff continued to receive regular training on Social Thinking both in the program and at conferences led by M.G. Winner and her staff. The Quest Speech and Language pathologist continues to incorporate Social Thinking measures into formal and informal assessments of students, better allowing us to assess this important aspect of communication often missed in standardized assessment tools. The SLP also completed a week long in depth training in Social Thinking in the fall of 2018 furthering her skills in assessment and intervention using Social Thinking. The behavioral staff continues to use Social Behavior Maps to guide processing of behavioral incidents with students. Throughout the program, students are learning to match the size of their reaction to the size of the problem. In addition, weekly planning time is built into the schedule to allow time for the clinicians, speech and language pathologist, occupational therapist, and classroom staff to plan cohesive group lessons. This time has allowed staff to create a bank of lessons that have been used successfully. Social Thinking group lessons are also discussed in pod meetings and both teaching and behavioral staff continue to participate in classroom groups. Social Thinking is not only taught during classroom groups, it is being taught and reinforced by all staff throughout the school day. Clinicians in the middle school classrooms have also begun to utilize other cognitive therapy approaches, including Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT), Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) and mindfulness strategies in conjunction with Social Thinking. All staff were trained in the Calm Classroom mindfulness program in March 2019. These strategies were piloted in the Quest and AIM classrooms throughout the end of the year of the 18-19 school year and continued to be

implemented in the fall of 2019. All of these evidence based approaches teach students to be mindful of the cognitive processes driving their social interactions and emotional experiences.

Responsive Classroom

In July 2015, the Quest teachers, clinicians and SLP participated in a week long training in the Responsive Classroom method. The Responsive Classroom website describes this as an approach to ‘teaching (which) emphasizes academic, social, and emotional growth in a strong school community. This approach stresses that how children learn is as important as what they learn, and that academic success is inextricably tied to building social-emotional competencies. This approach provides K-8 educators with practical training and resources to help create safe and joyful classrooms and schools where children can thrive.’ All of the Quest classrooms continue to incorporate the Responsive Classroom methods. There is a morning message posted in each class and, at 9 AM daily, each class holds a Morning Meeting. The clinicians and SLP frequently co-lead these meetings and use the activity to reinforce previously taught Social Thinking lessons. In addition, teachers are using the Responsive Classroom methods and rubric to evaluate their own practices. Teachers are incorporating academic choice and a wider variety of behavioral interventions. The Responsive Classroom method has dovetailed well with Social Thinking and Collaborative Problem Solving providing even more cohesiveness and consistency across the Quest classrooms. The structure and routine provided by morning meetings and Social Thinking groups proved invaluable when the Quest Program pivoted to remote learning. The components of both of these, along with the Responsive Classroom closing circle, allowed teachers to use a similar structure, format and language to start and end the school day while providing instruction in a new modality.

Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

As required by law SSEC created a bully prevention and intervention plan. The following key components required by law were implemented:

1. A professional development plan was established for all staff
2. A K-8 curriculum on bullying was adopted for all of our students
3. Staff who witness or had knowledge of any bullying incident were required to report it
4. Investigation and disciplinary policies were instituted for the act of bullying
5. When criminal charges were appropriate, law enforcement was notified
6. Resources and information was made available to students, parents and guardians including curricula, the dynamics of bullying, online safety, and cyber-bullying. This topic is covered in the classrooms during Health classes and Social Thinking Groups.

In addition to meeting the requirements of the bullying prevention law, staff continues to work with students to identify both potential targets and potential bullies. We address this issue in health class, social skills groups, in individual therapy sessions, and in IEP goals to ensure that Quest is a safe and respectful environment for all students. Staff continues to receive annual training through the Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center (MARC) at Bridgewater State University and the curriculum developed by MARC is incorporated into health classes as appropriate.

Student Activities & Learning

Quest teachers continued to present lessons that integrated functional, remedial and academic curriculum which has been aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and integrated with the Common Core. We were also able to provide students a weekly art class with a certified art teacher and all of our classes had access to a music therapist weekly. A certified PE teacher leads all health and gym classes.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, we held an Annual Open House in September for parents and families to visit the school and meet the SSEC staff. Quest students participated in an educational field trip to the Franklin Park Zoo in September and Sauchuk Farm during October. In November, we held our annual Thanksgiving Feast, which was attended by over 200 parents and extended families. As usual, the teamwork of the entire staff made this a great success. The entire Quest community takes an active role in either preparation of the food, decorating the gym or helping cleanup afterwards. The staff in the SSEC kitchen assists in preparing the meal and students and staff from South Shore High and Careers also help with serving the meal. The sense of community is carried over to the interactions with the parents and their extended families. Many parents have commented on how welcome they feel at this event and look forward to it each year.

In the winter, we had a brunch and Pajama Day to celebrate the Winter Solstice. Quest students also held a can drive to benefit a local food pantry and the middle school students organized a Spirit Week for the entire program. Additional field trips, Field Day and on site demonstrations were cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting school closure.

This year's graduation of 11 eighth grade students was held virtually. Although it was not the same as an in-person ceremony, we were able to honor our graduates while also including members of the SSEC community as well as the student's family and friends. Students from the Quest and AIM classes participated in the virtual graduation ceremony, many of them sharing their own speeches using the digital format. The digital format did allow families to share their reflections and thanks, which was an unexpected and positive outcome of a virtual ceremony. Despite not being together in person, the progress of the students and the pride of families was evident throughout the event.

Prior to the COVID-19 closure, Quest continued our relationship with Holly Hill Farm, with a farmer from Holly Hill visiting our school several times a month to help our 1st, 2nd, and 3rd graders plant their own garden and learn how to compost. Middle school students also volunteered in the cafeteria, art room and gym over the course of the year. These are just some of the learning opportunities and activities that were available to Quest students.

Curriculum

Instruction in the Quest Program follows the MA Curriculum Frameworks for all subject areas. Given that all classrooms are self-contained and students are coming from more than 20 districts, planning lessons that are appropriately rigorous and differentiated at the same time can be challenging for the teaching staff. To support the teachers in their planning and instruction, the Director of Student Services continued to support teachers in implementing Math, ELA and Science/Technology curriculum that meet the needs of the majority of our students. Middle

school teachers continued to use Carnegie Math as well as the online component Mathia. Elementary school teachers continued to have access to the Panorama science curriculum which has been created by National Geographic. This program has the tools to differentiate for all students, including English Learners, built in. Also provided to the elementary teachers is the REACH for Reading program to teach ELA through science content and is also produced by National Geographic. Middle school teachers also are accessing the Benchmark curriculum for science and social studies. These materials present the content into manageable parts and the texts look like magazines and graphic novels. In addition to these initiatives, several Quest teachers and paras took part in a four day Wilson Reading course. Several of the teachers then continued to complete the necessary steps for their Level 1 Wilson certification. Though this was interrupted by COVID-19, they are continuing to pursue this goal.

Summer Program:

The 2019 Summer Program was very successful, with 73 students enrolled. Students participated in a variety of field trips as well as spending time in the classroom reviewing skills they had learned the previous school year. Students also had therapies and reading instruction to prevent substantial regression of skills.

One classroom, the Bridge classroom, was comprised entirely of students who would be in grade 8 in the fall of 2019. This class was taught by a member of the South Shore High School staff but was a part of the Quest extended school year. In the fall, this class became a part of the high school. The purpose of the class was to ease the transition to high school. The students follow the high school schedule, change classes for some electives and academics and allow grade 8 students access to more mature peer models. This class also allows students who come to SSEC during grade 8 to remain in the same program for grade 9 and cut down on multiple transitions in a short period of time. The Quest Program continues to also have grade 8 students who need the containment and supports of Quest through the end of middle school.

Home and Community Involvement:

This year we continued to place an emphasis on parent involvement. Daily communication logs were sent home and returned with a required parent signature to strengthen the communication between home and school. Classroom pod members also had weekly phone or email contact with parents. This enabled us to share positive accomplishments with parents on a regular basis as well as to quickly address concerns. In addition, families were included in the Thanksgiving feast and graduation as described above as well as annual Open House in the fall. The program behaviorist was also able to complete home/school FBAs and in home consultation for those students whose team determined required the service.

When SSEC made the transition to remote learning in March 2020, parent contact and involvement was of primary importance. Counselors spoke with and emailed parents at least weekly and at times on a daily basis. The milieu clinician was available to support parents in managing behaviors during all remote live sessions and the Program Director and Coordinator emailed parents every week to two weeks to share updates on closure and then re-opening, set expectations for remote learning, arrange for parents to access technology and supplies and provide support to students and families. Teachers emailed parents and utilized the google classroom, related service providers contacted parents to schedule therapy and reading sessions

and many staff had their office phones forwarded to their cell phones so parents could reach school staff throughout the day.

Outreach Initiative

We have continued to have many students referred to the Quest Program presenting with school avoidance/school refusal. These students have caused districts considerable difficulty in terms of helping them access the curriculum. In response to this dilemma, we have pulled together an outreach team to address the presenting and underlying issues associated with school refusal/avoidance and anxiety. In selected cases, using the essential tenets of exposure treatment, we have been quite successful in helping both the student and his/her parent(s) manage their heightened anxiety and gradually take the steps to join the larger school community at Quest. While we are not able to offer this service in all cases, we have deepened our understanding of the issues and developed an effective treatment model to ameliorate this potentially crippling problem. The Quest Program has also continued to provide in-home behavioral services to Quest students to help them generalize the social and self-regulation strategies learned in the Quest Program. These services are included on a student's IEP and provided before or after school hours at the request of the sending school district with parental consent. During remote learning, program counselors, behaviorist and administrators would call students and families prior to live remote sessions to encourage student attendance and participation.

Technology

The Quest Program, in line with the SSEC Strategic Plan, continues to be dedicated to increasing the availability and usability of both assistive and instructional technology for students and staff. Each professional staff member has been given an iPad, Chromebook or laptop to use for instruction, data collection and accessing teach point and working on the DESE teacher evaluation. Students continue to use iPads, laptops and Chromebooks to support their learning. A set of student iPads continue to be shared among the classrooms. A schedule was created and teachers were able to sign out the devices for classroom use. Teachers utilized the devices for interactive lessons and classes also read books on the iPads using Bookshare. All Quest students in grade 3-8 have access to a Chromebook in their classroom throughout the school day. Having 1:1 devices has allowed students to utilize assistive technology, such as Clicker 7 and Read, Write, Google, to help them access the curriculum. Students receive direct instruction from an Assistive Technology teacher weekly in their classrooms to learn how these tools can be used to access their schoolwork. In the spring, students have typically then used their devices to take the next generation MCAS on the device they have been using throughout the school year. Each Quest classroom continues to have an interactive white board with at least two desktop computers and there are laptops available that can be signed out for student and staff use. Teachers continue to have access to an Instructional Technology consultant who was available to provide 1:1 support and training to teachers. Members of the Tech Team also provided training in available technology to interested staff members.

During the COVID-19 closure, SSEC loaned Chromebooks to any student or staff member who needed a device to remain engaged in remote learning. Teachers utilized the google classroom as well as other google extensions, IXL, brainpop and the online portion of the curriculum

programs as they planned their classrooms remotely. The members of the Tech Team were invaluable consultants to staff, students and parents throughout the remote learning period.

Quest School Handbook:

A school handbook was revised before school reopened in the fall of 2019. It was received positively by parents/guardians as well as staff and students. When home and school join efforts to create a safe environment that fosters academic and emotional growth, while providing care and support, each student can be successful. Close communication and clear, consistent guidelines are key to the process and are the prime reasons for the handbook. The handbook is attached to this report.

COVID 19 Closure and Programmatic Adjustments

The 2019-2020 school year changed significantly for the staff and students of the SSEC Quest students and staff. On March 13, 2020 staff were notified of a 2 week closure and they worked quickly to send home 2 weeks of schoolwork and supplies with their students. Those absent on March 13 had materials mailed to them and staff regularly checked in with students. As soon as the closure was extended through May, staff immediately began preparing for remote learning and the entire program transitioned to a remote model. The program schedule was completely redesigned to allow for at least 2 hours of live remote classroom time. Related services were scheduled with parents around classroom time. Students had access to academic instruction, specials and related services via the google classroom every day. Every live session was assigned two staff to allow for proper supervision and data collection. Teachers and therapists also posted videos and assignments on the google classroom and specialists scheduled office hours each week to support parents in utilizing accommodations at home. Office hours and other resources were also posted on the SSEC website. All classrooms began remote live sessions on Monday April 6 with some starting the week before. SSEC loaned technology to any students who needed a device and counselors supported families in accessing the internet if needed. Staff delivered devices and school materials if parents did not have transportation. Counselors also worked with food services to provide food to families struggling to provide breakfast and lunch each day.

While there were glitches and this process was a learning curve for everyone, the program successfully ran remotely through the end of the school year. As needed, materials were sent home for students and AT staff provided technology support for staff and students. Classroom pods met remotely each week and were scheduled so that there was no overlap. This allowed administration and specialists the ability to attend all pods. Clinical meeting, teachers meeting and staff meeting were held weekly as well and SSEC administration met multiple times per week as needed to allow programming to continue during the closure.

With the help of Dr. Hauser, a system to track attendance, participation, parent communication and other IEP data was put into place and used in all classrooms. SSEC administration and AT staff offered ongoing support and training to support the staff and staff were encouraged to attend webinars to strengthen their remote teaching skills. Team meetings were held virtually and IEPs were proposed and implemented. Students and families engaged in live remote learning based on their comfort and the live sessions were supplemented with paper work and other asynchronous digital options as needed. Remote learning plans were developed and

continuously updated throughout this time period. All IEP services were offered to families and students and staff continued to track progress on IEP goals throughout the remote learning period. Progress reports and report cards were issued for all SSEC Quest students in June 2020.

In May and June 2020, staff began planning graduation as well the upcoming Extended School Year. Administration and nursing staff began the task of procuring PPE and preparing the building for both staff and students to return. Staff returned to work in the building on July 6 and the following week students returned for in person instruction.

Year in Summary

In total, the Quest Program serviced 85 students this school year. We began the school year with 71 students and ended the year with 75 students. The 85 students that we serviced came from a total of 26 different school districts.

We serviced 10 S.T.A.R.T.S. students, providing them with an extended evaluation. All 10 students remained at the Quest Program for part or all of the remainder of the school year.

During the 2019-2020 school year, 1 student left after ESY as he had graduated from grade 8 the previous spring and 5 transitioned to South Shore High School at the end of ESY as part of the Bridge classroom. Over the course of the year, 2 students returned to their sending districts, 2 students moved to a different day school and 1 student left to be home schooled. In June we graduated 11 grade 8 students. Of the 11 students, 9 students moved to a South Shore Educational Collaborative high school program. Six will attend South Shore High School and three will attend the AIM/Community School. One student will return to their sending district for high school and one required a more restrictive school setting. In total, 3 students were able to return to their sending district from the Quest Program. Quest also transferred two students to the South Shore High School grade 8 Bridge classroom for the start of the 2020-2021 year.

Quest enrollment remained steady over the course of the school year. The enrollment was at capacity by the end of the school year. The census was lower over the summer of 2020 due to COVID-19 and Quest began the 2020-2021 school year with 66 students.

Despite the challenges presented by the school closure and COVID-19, SSEC and the Quest Program continued to provide high quality instruction and services to students in a safe and supportive school setting.

South Shore Educational
Collaborative
Quest Program

School Handbook
2019-2020

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Hingham, MA 02043
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Revised 8/19

Dear Parents/Guardians and Students,

On behalf of the entire Quest staff, we welcome you to a new school year at the South Shore Educational Collaborative Quest Program. By working together, we believe we can make learning a fulfilling and positive experience for everyone involved.

When home and school join efforts to create a safe and respectful environment that fosters academic and emotional growth, while providing care and support, each student can be successful. Close communication and clear, consistent guidelines are key to this process and are the prime reasons for this handbook. It contains information that will be invaluable to you in helping us make the educational experience at Quest worthwhile and rewarding for each student.

*Jennie C. Williams
Program Director/Principal*

*Timothy P. Handorf
Clinical Director*

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SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

It is our belief at Quest that all children want to learn and do their best in school. At times, social, emotional, behavioral and/or learning issues make it difficult for some children to be successful in the larger public school setting. It is necessary then to provide them with a more therapeutic setting in which to learn.

The mission of the Quest Program is to provide a safe and respectful learning environment where relationships between staff and students can be nurtured and developed and where students can learn new skills for continued growth. Following this mission ensures the consistency and support needed for these students to succeed. Our approach to classroom structure, academic instruction, and motivation allows students to maximize their potential despite past difficulties in school or at home. We are committed to treating students with dignity, respect, care, and compassion, while holding them accountable for their actions and reinforcing behavior that demonstrates care and concern for others and promotes social acceptance.

We collaborate with students, parents/guardians, sending school districts and educators to formulate an Individualized Education Program (IEP) that will help students achieve academic and behavioral success. Cooperation between school and home is essential to the success of our program. Working together, school staff and parents/guardians develop an understanding of what motivates their child's behavior and leads to his/her difficulties. With this understanding, school staff and parents/guardians can develop interventions that are most likely to succeed.

At times, some of our students require external controls – such as a physical assist or, as a last resort, a physical restraint – to contain their behaviors and keep everyone safe. Our staff is thoroughly trained in de-escalation and crisis management to maintain the safety of students and staff.

Another important goal of our program is to help students increase self-esteem and develop a positive self-image. We do this by creating an environment in which students can experience success and by providing school-based clinical services which include social skills groups in each classroom. Clinicians also provide individual counseling, parent consultation, case coordination, and crisis intervention. Students develop the skills necessary to be able to learn and to communicate their feelings and needs in appropriate ways.

Our school is committed to providing a safe, structured learning environment where students can make academic, social, emotional and behavioral progress that will enable them to be successful in a less restrictive school setting.

NOTE TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND STUDENTS

This handbook is issued in order that students and parents/guardians may become familiar with the policies and practices of the school. It contains information that should be read and

understood by all those connected with the school. We welcome any questions or concerns anyone might have about the material contained in this Handbook.

Parents/Guardians are vital to the success of the school. All students and school staff rely on parents/guardians to:

- reinforce the learning process at home
- motivate their children to be interested in school and to attend school regularly
- expect the highest level of achievement of which their children are capable, as well as teacher performance which can bring out this level of achievement
- be consistently involved to ensure that their children receive a high quality education

CORE VALUES

The Core Values of the South Shore Educational Collaborative Quest Program serve as the basic premise on which all management and curricular decisions are made and are the standards by which accomplishments are measured. The Core Values are:

- Provide a safe learning environment
- All individuals have the right to be treated with courtesy and respect
- Dedication to teaching and learning
- Build strong relationships to foster continued student growth
- Respect for diversity
- Participatory and collaborative decision-making
- Clearly defined expectations and limits

QUEST PROGRAM STAFF DIRECTORY 2019-2020

PROGRAM DIRECTOR/PRINCIPAL:

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PROGRAM COORDINATOR:

Rosanna Warrick x 1344

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Tim Handorf x 1302

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ART TEACHER

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SPECIALISTS:

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Keri Johnson, Occupational Therapy
Mary Ann Kahler, Reading
Marybeth Orr, Reading
Merry Grip, Reading

DISCRIMINATION/CIVIL RIGHTS

The South Shore Educational Collaborative conducts its programs and operations in conformity with MGL c. 76, s. 75, Title VI, Title IX, Chapter 622, Section 504 or the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, G.L. c.151C, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974.

All members of the school community are expected to show tolerance and respect for differences among people. Each person has a right to be free from discrimination, including verbal

harassment or physical attack, based on gender, gender identity, sex, race, color, national origin, religion, disability, or sexual orientation.

Any student who believes that they have experienced discrimination in any form should report this to an administrator or any school staff. A prompt and thorough investigation into the charges will be conducted. Violation of a person's civil rights will result in disciplinary action, which may include but is not limited to suspension, expulsion and possible legal action for civil rights violations.

SCHOOL REGULATIONS & GENERAL INFORMATION

Attendance:

According to state law, schools must be in session for a minimum of 180 days each school year. Every student must attend school except when absent with parental consent and/or proper documentation (i.e., doctor's note). Excused absences include the following:

- Student illness
- Death in family
- Observance of religious holidays
- Appearance in court
- Temporary relocation due to extreme emergencies
- Medical and dental appointments which *cannot* be scheduled outside school hours
- Inpatient Hospitalization

Parents/Guardians are expected to notify the school if their child will be absent for any reason. Parents may excuse their child from school due to illness 2 times per trimester. Further absences due to illness will be considered unexcused without a doctor's note documenting the student was seen at the doctor's office. The SSEC School Nurse reserves the right to verify the visit and/or speak with the student's doctor. Please note that a student cannot be medically excused from the Quest Program due to anxiety and related symptoms.

Students who have 12 days or more of unexcused absences during any marking period will receive incomplete grades on their report cards. If their missing work is completed within a week of the end of the marking period, the incomplete grades will be replaced by standard grades. If the work has not been completed during this period, the incomplete grades will become failures. If a student has 12 or more unexcused absences during a term, they may lose one or more letter grades per subject at the discretion of the teacher even if all assignments have been completed. In-class instruction and participation remain an important part of every student's education that cannot be made up. Students with excused absences may also receive an incomplete grade but may earn full credit as long as missed assignments are completed within two weeks of the end of the marking period. In the case of a student refusing to attend school, parents/guardians are expected to contact school to report it that morning. Staff is available to provide assistance in getting your child to school. Note: truancy and/or school refusal are considered unexcused absences.

Students are expected to arrive at school *on time*. Tardiness hinders student learning and is disruptive to the learning environment. Parents/Guardians are also expected to plan vacations around the school calendar so their children do not miss valuable instruction time. Extremely

late arrivals (more than ½ the school day) and extremely early dismissals (more than ½ the school day) are considered absences under state attendance regulations.

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education requires schools to notify parents/guardians of a student's unexcused absence within 3 days. In addition, the school will notify parents/guardians if a student misses 2 or more periods of a class over consecutive days. At these times, parents/guardians will be invited to come in for a meeting with school staff. The school is also required to notify parents in writing if a student has accumulated 5 unexcused absences in a school year. When 5 unexcused absences have been accumulated, the principal or a designee must offer to meet with the parents/guardians to develop action steps to help improve the student's attendance at school.

Behavioral Incentive Program:

Quest uses a program-wide behavior management system with the emphasis on rewarding positive academic, behavioral, and social performance. Students have the opportunity to work toward their goals as taken from their Individualized Education Program (IEP). Rewards are available from the school store, which include healthy snack items, toys, gift certificates, school supplies, as well as individually-designed incentives.

Behavioral Standards/Discipline:

Students are expected to act with proper behavior at all times while they are on school grounds, traveling to and from school, and on field trips. Violations or disregard for school rules and regulations will lead to disciplinary action which could result in an in-school suspension, parent/guardian conference, suspension out of school from one to ten days, exclusion from school, or expulsion. If suspended from school, whether in or out of school, students are provided with the opportunity to make up assignments, receive missed services, and continue to make academic progress.

Any student suspended from school will be afforded the opportunity to meet with the principal or a designee to discuss the reason for the suspension prior to the suspension going into effect. Reasonable efforts will be made to include parents/guardians in this meeting if the student is suspended out of school. A letter with this information will be sent to both the parent/guardian and the sending school district. If students in grades Kindergarten to grade 3 are suspended out of school, a written notice of the suspension will also be submitted to the Executive Director. A re-entry meeting including the parent/guardian and designated school staff may be required before the student returns to school.

If a student accumulates 10 days of suspension during a school year, a TEAM meeting must occur to determine if the behavior is a manifestation of the child's disability and whether the current placement is appropriate. If the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of a student's disability, a functional behavioral assessment will be performed and an individual behavioral plan will be drafted. For any student who is suspended for 10 or more consecutive school days, or accumulates 10 days of suspension during a school year, parents/guardians have the right to appeal the most recent suspension with the Executive Director. This appeal must be submitted to the Executive Director in writing and a hearing will be held within 3 days.

The principal may remove a student from school-sponsored events and activities that are not considered regular classroom activities, including field trips and field day, based on a student's misconduct. The principal is not required to notify parents in writing of such a removal and it is not counted as a suspension from school.

The following are considered particularly serious offenses:

- Physical assault, fighting, or other acts of violence on any member of the school community
- Threats of violence, including those made via social media, directed toward the school or any member of the school community
- Use of obscene, abusive, or profane language or gestures
- Hazing
- Harassment/discriminatory remarks or actions regarding but not limited to the following: sex, race, color, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, socioeconomic status
- Sale, distribution, use, or unauthorized possession of:
 - i. Drugs (including over-the-counter or prescription medication)
 - ii. Alcohol
 - iii. Devices or materials of any sort injurious to the well-being of the school community*
- Coming to school under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Possession of weapons of any kind, including knives of any length or shape, firearms, firecrackers, or other explosives*
- Possession of replicas of weapons of any kind*
- Possession and/or use of items inappropriate for school such as, but not limited to:
 - Water pistols
 - Lighters/matches
 - Leather straps/large chains
 - Studded clothing, steel-toed shoes
 - Inhalants
 - Laser pointers or pens
- Theft of school or personal property or receiving such stolen items
- Obtaining money, material goods, or favors by threat of physical harm
- Destruction or damage to school or personal property
- Sounding a false alarm for fire/police, tampering with emergency call box covers, making a bomb threat, or disrupting the normal school routines in any way
- Starting a fire
- Smoking, use, or possession of tobacco products including vape pens and related paraphernalia
- Leaving school building or school property during school hours without permission
- Loitering on school grounds before or after school hours
- Vandalism, including graffiti
- Forgery, or signing a name other than one's own, to any school-related document
- Open or continued defiant behavior toward school staff

- Sexual assault or sexual harassment
- Bullying, including cyber-bullying

*Please note that, per Massachusetts General Law, school personnel are obligated to report in writing any incident involving a student's possession or use of a dangerous weapon on school premises. This report must be submitted to the Executive Director who is then required to provide the report to the Hingham Chief of Police, DCF, and the school district. Such an occurrence may result in a student being referred for further assessment and a counseling program.

Bullying & Cyber-bullying Prevention:

Quest complies with the Massachusetts Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010 Bully Prevention Law. Bullying identification, prevention, and conflict resolution are included in our social skills curriculum. Staff receives professional development in bullying prevention and response. If a student witnesses or experiences bullying by students or school staff, s/he can alert any staff member who will bring the concern to the Program Director or Program Coordinator for investigation. All relevant adults will be informed and a safety plan will be put in place for the target of the bullying. Bullying reports may remain anonymous; retaliation for reporting bullying is not tolerated. Examples of bullying include, but are not limited to:

- A pattern of harassment, whether in person or by mail, phone, texting, or Internet (via online gaming, social media, etc.) targeting a student
- Intentionally damaging a student's property
- Distributing false or private information about a student
- Impersonating an individual online, by phone, or by texting
- Repeatedly excluding or ignoring a peer

The *SSEC/Quest Bullying Prevention & Intervention Plan* is provided to all parents/guardians at intake and is resent annually before the start of each school year.

Communication & Homework Notebook:

Communication & Homework notebooks are sent home daily. Parents/Guardians are expected to review and sign these notebooks daily and help their child remember to return it to school the following day. *Parents/Guardians are asked to use these notebooks to send notes to teachers, including any information about issues outside of school that may impact their child's performance at school.*

Daily return of signed communication notebooks earns students points in our behavior management system.

Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI):

All current and prospective employees, volunteers, and people who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children in this program must sign a request form authorizing receipt by the Collaborative of all available Criminal Offender Record Information from the criminal history systems board. All public school employees and interns are also required to be fingerprinted in Massachusetts.

Destruction of School Property:

If a student damages, defaces, or destroys school property, the student or parent/guardian is expected to make restitution in full. In some cases, a student may make restitution by performing community service at school, the number of hours to be determined by behavioral staff. School property includes not only the physical building and furniture, but also any other items or equipment used by students or staff.

Disruptive Behavior:

Classrooms are for teaching and learning. Any student who is disruptive to the group may be asked to move to a designated area until they are ready to return to class. If a student refuses to leave their classroom, the classroom may be cleared, or they may be assisted to a designated area for safety reasons. Students who are separated from their classroom are continuously monitored by staff.

Dress & Appearance:

Students are expected to dress in a manner that reflects the seriousness and purpose of the school setting. Students are also encouraged to take pride in their appearance and maintain proper hygiene. Any type of attire which attracts undue attention to the wearer and thus causes a disturbance in the school is unacceptable. The following have proven to be disruptive to the educational environment and should not be worn:

- Clothing that is very tight or revealing: including spaghetti straps, halter tops, strapless shirts or dresses; skirts/dresses more than 2" above the knee; shorts with an inseam less than 3"
- Clothing that exposes any cleavage, midriff or undergarments
- Clothing that reflects racist, sexist, violent, obscene, or substance-related slogans and/or symbols
- Gang-related insignia, such as displays of "colors" or signs
- Hats/headwear, except for religious/medical/sensory reasons with principal approval
- Articles of clothing or accessories that may be used as a weapon, such as chains, studs, metal-spiked belts, steel-toed shoes, etc.
- Outside jackets or coats in class unless building conditions necessitate additional clothing

If a student comes to school inappropriately dressed, steps will be taken to address the situation. If necessary, a parent/guardian will be notified and asked to bring in appropriate clothing or to take their child home. In summary, students may not wear any style or type of clothing that is distracting, offensive, or endangers the health, safety, or welfare of the school community.

Edibles:

Gum, candy, or any other food is not allowed in the school building except at times and in areas designated by school staff. Soda, caffeinated beverages, and energy drinks are not permitted during the school day. Students with special needs around food – e.g., students who benefit from oral stimulation – will be allowed access to gum, candy, or food with authorization from school staff.

Emergencies:

In the event of a physical or psychiatric emergency, every effort will be made to contact the parent/guardian of the student in crisis. However, when a parent/guardian cannot be reached, the Emergency Contacts listed on the Student Information Sheet will be contacted and a child may be transported to the nearest hospital by ambulance. Parent signature on the Student Information Sheet authorizes SSEC staff to get emergency medical treatment for a student.

Emergency Contacts:

Students may not attend school unless a Student Information Sheet has been completed. Emergency contacts listed on the Student Information Sheet must be people who can be available in case of an emergency, including picking up your child from school. *Parents/Guardians are reminded to update this information whenever any changes occur to home or cell phone numbers and/or emergency contacts.*

Extracurricular Activities:

Quest does not offer any extracurricular activities. However, students in good standing academically and behaviorally are eligible to participate in their sending school's extracurricular activities, e.g., band, drama, chess club, sports. Permission must be obtained in writing from the sending school principal and the director of the activity. Continued participation in any activity is dependent on the student maintaining appropriate behavior.

Field Trips:

On occasion, curriculum is supplemented by field trips, both educational and recreational. Participation on field trips is a privilege which students earn by meeting academic and behavioral expectations during the school days preceding the field trip. School staff is responsible for informing parents/guardians in writing regarding the details of any school-sponsored field trips. On field trips, students are expected to comply with all school rules and safety expectations. Permission slips signed by parents/guardians must be submitted for each field trip. For some trips, students may be asked to pay for all or part of an admission fee. Financial assistance is available for any student for whom this would pose a hardship.

In accordance with state law, all prospective parent/guardian chaperones and volunteers must sign a form authorizing receipt of all available CORI data from the criminal history systems board.

Field Trip Vehicles:

The Collaborative policy regarding the use of vehicles to transport students is restricted to vehicles approved by the Collaborative. The Collaborative requires drivers to have a 7D license and vehicles to be 7D-registered, except in cases of emergency. When possible, more than one staff member will be in the vehicle when students are being transported.

Hazing:

In accordance with Chapter 536 of the Acts of 1985--an act prohibiting the practice of hazing, whoever is an organizer or participant in the crime of hazing will be suspended from school by the Program Coordinator for five (5) days. A hearing by the Program Director will be held to determine if sufficient facts warrant forwarding the case to the Police Department for

prosecution. Please see the complete copy of Chapter 536 of the Acts of 1985 in the Quest Policy Manual for further information.

Health Services:

A full-time registered nurse is available during the school day. Advice regarding health problems and first aid is available to all students. Any student may visit the health office by requesting permission from a teacher.

Dismissal for health reasons, if deemed advisable, is the decision of the school nurse. No student is allowed to leave school unless picked up by a parent/guardian or responsible adult designated on the Student Information Sheet. ***Student Information sheets are critical. Every student must have an up-to-date sheet on file in order to attend school.***

All students must have a current physical (within the past 12 months) and up-to-date immunization records on file. Written parental permission and a doctor's order are required to administer prescription medication at school. Written parental permission is also required to administer over-the-counter medication. Medications must be transported to school by a parent or another responsible adult the parent designates. ***Delivery of medication to school by a student is a violation of state law. Please note: Medications that are classified as "controlled substances" may not be transported by anyone but the parent/guardian.***

A School Health Manual is kept in the nurse's office with more detailed information on all medical policies.

Homework:

Homework is an important component of a child's total education and provides a necessary link between the school and home. It provides an opportunity for children to extend skills developed in the classroom, helps children to become self-reliant and responsible, and affirms the importance of the parent/guardian role as cooperative partner in the education of their children.

Please note: For some families, struggles at home over homework can become counterproductive. When this is the case, parents/guardians should contact their child's teacher to develop an appropriate plan.

Internet Acceptable Use:

It is the general policy of the South Shore Educational Collaborative that Internet services are to be used in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner. In order to use the Internet, parents/guardians and students must read and sign an Acceptable Use Contract. This is typically done upon admission to the program and updated annually.

Lunch/Breakfast/Snack:

Breakfast and lunch are available to all students at a nominal cost. The meals, which include milk, are provided daily by the SSEC food services staff following the guidelines and standards of the National School Lunch Program. Menus are sent home monthly with students. Any parent/guardian may apply for free or reduced price meals through the National School Lunch Program. Applications may be made at any time during the school year or at any time financial

circumstances change. Students are responsible for bringing their own snacks. Students may bring their own meals, or buy meals only on certain days, according to food preferences.

Nut Precaution in School: Your child is in a school with children who have potentially life-threatening peanut/nut allergies. Although we cannot guarantee that the school is Nut-Free, we do request that your child be respectful of those with allergies and take the following precautions: after eating, wash all surfaces which nut products have come in contact with and wash hands after eating nut products to reduce the transmission of traces of nut products. A specific classroom may be designated Nut-Free at any time by the school nurse or Program Director.

Mandated Reporting:

State law requires school personnel to file a report (51A) with the Department of Children and Families (formerly DSS) when a suspicion arises of abuse or neglect by any adult in a caregiving capacity (parent/guardian, bus driver, school staff, etc.). Every effort will be made to discuss concerns first with the caregiver and to notify parent/guardian before a report is made.

MCAS:

Students are required to participate in MCAS testing. Accommodations will be made in accordance with each student's IEP. Following the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, teachers strive to help students feel prepared and to make the testing experience go as smoothly as possible. Incentives are provided for students who complete testing sessions.

Memorandum of Understanding/School Resource Officer:

A memorandum of understanding is established between the SSEC and the Hingham Police Department regarding the establishment of a protocol for the reporting and coordination of responses to incidents of violence or other illegal activity within SSEC Programs. The SSEC and the Hingham Police Department agree to coordinate their responses to violence or other illegal activity by students and non-students which occur on SSEC premises or at SSEC-sponsored or SSEC-related events. Through collaboration, the two organizations can ensure safe and secure school and community environments designed to maximize effective teaching and learning. A complete copy of this agreement is available upon request to the Executive Director.

The SSEC collaborates with the Hingham Police Department and the Town of Hingham in employing a School Resource Officer. The officer works predominantly at our main site in Hingham but is available to provide supports and educational opportunities at all Collaborative sites. The SRO is on duty from 7:30am to 4pm each day students are present. The SRO is a liaison between the Collaborative and the Hingham Police Department with the primary goal of supporting a safe environment for students and staff. The SRO wears the regulation police uniform and carries a firearm as well as other standard gear as required by the Hingham Police Department. The SRO will be highly visible throughout the main campus. The SRO may provide instruction to the students in a variety of topics such as; justice and public safety issues, substance abuse prevention, citizen's police academy, designated driver program and RADKids. The SRO is also available to support the students and staff through unexpected events and various types of emergencies.

Parent Council:

The SSEC Executive Director has authorized the formation of a Parent Council to serve as a link between the home and the school. All parents are encouraged to join. Parent Councils will hold regular meetings to discuss current issues or programs and activities they may sponsor for students. Councils may also offer speakers on certain topics for parents. Information about the Parent Council may be obtained from the Program Director.

Personal Belongings:

Nonessential items may be brought to school only with prior permission of school staff. If prior permission has not been obtained, items may be taken by the classroom teacher or other school staff and returned at dismissal time. In certain cases, staff may return a confiscated item only to a parent/guardian. The school is not responsible for loss or damage to any item brought in by a student.

Cell Phones: Students are expected to keep cell phones off during the school day. Cell phones will be collected at the start of the school day and returned at the end of the day. Parents/guardians will be called to retrieve the cell phone if the student fails to surrender it.

Electronic Devices: The SSEC Technology & Electronic Communication Device (ECD) Responsible Use Policy outlines student use of technology and electronic communication devices for educational purposes. This policy also applies to student use of ECD's for non-educational purposes. Students may bring devices such as iPods or hand-held gaming devices to school for non-educational purposes. Please note that use of devices for non-educational purposes may occur during selected periods of the day and with staff permission. SSEC reserves the right to monitor all online and ECD activity at any time. Staff reserves the right to restrict the use of devices for non-educational purposes. Students may be asked to use devices owned by SSEC as long as the device meets the student's needs as outlined in their IEP. *Internet access must be blocked when student owned devices are being used for non-educational purposes.*

Money: Students are expected not to carry more than \$10, unless authorized for the purposes of a field trip.

Selling or Exchanging Items: Students are not allowed to sell or trade items with other students in school, on school grounds, or on the ride to and from school.

Physical Contact:

A primary concern for all staff and students is to work and learn in a safe environment. Physical contact between students, including friendly horseplay, is not allowed.

Physical Restraint:

At SSEC, our mission is to provide a safe and respectful learning environment. All staff are trained and certified through NAPPI International (Non-Abusive Psychological & Physical Intervention) and use interventions that have the minimum impact on the student. Staff will always attempt to de-escalate a student so that physical restraint can be avoided. Physical restraint is considered an emergency procedure of last resort and is only used when a student's behavior poses a threat of assault or imminent, serious, physical harm to self or others and the student is not responsive to verbal directives or other less intrusive behavior interventions, or such interventions are deemed inappropriate under the circumstances.

The physical restraint policy is made available to students and parents/ guardians upon admission to the program. A signed acknowledgment and consent is requested at that time.

Policy Manual:

A School Policy Manual is kept in the main office and is available for review. The Policy Manual is updated annually. Parents/guardians are encouraged to bring questions regarding school policies to the attention of the Program Director and to meetings of the Parent Council.

Re-entry after Hospitalization Policy:

To ensure the health and safety of every student re-entering a South Shore Educational Collaborative program following a psychiatrically or medically related hospitalization, the South Shore Educational Collaborative has adopted the following policy:

Any student requiring a psychiatric evaluation, an emergency room visit, or inpatient hospitalization for psychiatric or medical conditions will be re-admitted to South Shore Educational Collaborative programs only after receipt of the discharge summary. This summary is required to ensure that the program has current information, in writing, from the attending physician regarding changes in medication, medication procedures, or adjustment in the dosage for any ongoing medical/psychiatric treatments.

Report Cards/Progress Reports:

Report cards and progress reports will be issued *three* times per year, at the close of each *trimester*. These reports are mailed home to parents/guardians and the sending school system, typically within two weeks after the end of the term.

Restraining/Custody Orders:

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to inform the school of any court action that results in the issuance of a restraining order or has impact on custody matters. The school will extend every effort to comply with court directives. In order to do so, up-to-date copies of these orders must be kept on file in the school office.

Safety Drills:

At no time during the school day should students be more serious than when the safety alarm rings. ***Assume every alarm is an emergency situation and listen carefully to instructions from staff.*** Two types of drills will be practiced throughout the school year to prepare students in the event of an emergency.

Evacuation: Some emergencies may require the evacuation of the building. Directions for evacuating each area are posted in conspicuous places. The following requirements are critical:

- Proper behavior is essential. Remain quiet during exit and re-entry.
- The first student to enter the hallway should hold the exit door for classmates.
- Walk rapidly, do not run, to the nearest exit and leave the building.
- After exiting the building, move away to the area designated by staff.
- Stay together. Teachers must account for all members of the group.
- Classroom teachers will accompany their students and will be responsible for attendance, before and after an evacuation drill.

Lockdown: Some emergencies may require students and staff to remain in classrooms in a lockdown situation. When the alarm sounds and a lockdown is indicated over the public address system, the following must be implemented:

- Students move to the center or rear of the classroom as directed.
- Students in corridors, restrooms, etc. proceed to nearest classroom immediately.
- Remain quiet while lockdown is in progress.
- Do not open classroom doors until the “All Clear” is sounded.

During any emergency situation, attendance must be taken to ensure that all students and staff have been accounted for. Improper behavior during a safety drill may result in disciplinary action.

School Cancellation/Delayed Opening:

Quest follows the Weymouth Public Schools’ closings and delays due to weather.

No School/Delayed Opening announcements are made over local radio and television stations and websites. *If your local school is closed and Weymouth (and therefore Quest) remains open, please check with your transportation company to see if your child will be picked up.*

On rare occasions (for example, if a severe storm develops during the day) school will close earlier than the regular dismissal time. An early closing will be communicated to parents via phone and email.

Please note: In order to notify families of early dismissals, parents/guardians must provide accurate, up-to-date contact numbers.

Search & Seizure:

Desks and lockers are property of the South Shore Educational Collaborative and may be searched at any time. Searches and seizures involving a student’s person or personal property may also be conducted in accordance with generally recognized legal principles. Circumstances which lead to reasonable suspicion to search include: threats against the school or a member of the school community, possession of cigarette rolling papers, possession of large amounts of cash, previous involvement with drugs coupled with behavior indicative of drug usage as determined by staff, an anonymous tip that the student is in possession of a drug or weapon. Random searches may be conducted if staff feels they are warranted. Searches may include the use of a metal detecting wand and/or drug-sniffing canines.

Smoke-Free Schools:

The Educational Reform Law prohibits use of any tobacco products within the school buildings, school facilities, or on school grounds or school buses by any individual including school personnel and parents/guardians.

Social Thinking:

Quest has adopted the Social Thinking Curriculum designed by Michelle Garcia Winner for use in all classroom social skills groups as well as to model and teach social skills program-wide. Parents/Guardians are strongly encouraged to visit Michelle Garcia Winner’s website

www.socialthinking.com to familiarize themselves with social thinking concepts. When these concepts are reinforced at home, the curriculum can be doubly effective.

Special Education Parent Advisory Council:

Every public school system is required by law to have a Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC). This is a group of parents of children with disabilities who are available during the school year to discuss issues of concern regarding special education.

Parents/guardians, teachers, and others are welcome to access this resource by contacting the SEPAC Executive Board in their sending school district.

Copies of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education booklet, *Parent's Guide to Special Education*, can be obtained from the special education liaison.

Student Records:

All student records are kept in a secure area. A Record Access Log is maintained to document staff access to student records. If a parent/guardian wishes to amend his/her child's student record, they must contact his/her home school. With few exceptions, no individuals or organizations but the parent/guardian and school personnel working directly with the student are allowed to have access to information in the student record without the specific, informed, written consent of the parent/guardian. When any part of a student's record is released at the request of the parent, a written release is obtained and maintained in the student record. The portions of the record released, who the information was released to and why the information was released is documented in the Record Access Log.

Quest will, on occasion, post student work. It is assumed that parents/guardians are in support of this practice unless the school is otherwise notified.

Summer School Program:

A summer school program is available to students whose TEAM determines the need for the structure of an extended year program to prevent substantial academic, social, or behavioral regression. Summer school meets Monday through Thursday for a six-week term, during July and August. It provides a balance of academic classes, therapy services, and recreational field trips.

Telephone Use:

While the use of cell phones during the school day is prohibited, parents/guardians may call the school to speak with their child during the school day if necessary. Students may also, if warranted, use school phones with staff permission to speak with their parents/guardians.

Therapy Dogs:

Therapy dogs are available to students with staff supervision during the school day. The dogs are fully-trained and licensed service dogs. The dogs can also assist students in developing calming and sensory strategies that promote better self-regulation. The dogs offer a calming, nonjudgmental presence, can reduce tension and anxiety, and provide opportunities for students to be gentle and nurturing and build mastery. They have also enabled students to overcome their fear of dogs and increase self-esteem.

Transportation: (Cab, Bus, Van):

The sending school district provides curb-to-curb transportation. Students are expected to demonstrate appropriate behavior on their transportation and may be subject to disciplinary measures imposed by the transportation company or by the Quest Program for any infractions (see previous section on Behavioral Standards/Discipline). Students are considered the responsibility of the Collaborative from the time of pick up to the time of drop off. SSEC staff works with drivers and monitors to support the behavioral and medical needs of students while they are being transported. Concerns or changes in transportation should be made by contacting the sending school district.

Violations of transportation regulations may result in suspension from the vehicle and/or disciplinary action at school. If suspended from transportation, students may continue to attend school if transportation can be provided to and from school by parent/guardian or designated adult. Students who are unable to demonstrate safe behavior at dismissal time will not be permitted to board their bus/cab. In this event, a parent/guardian, or designated representative, is expected to pick up their child in a timely manner.

Parents/Guardians are reminded to inform the cab company about any changes in pick-ups or drop-offs (e.g., when a child is kept home due to illness or transported home by a parent/guardian).

Visitors/Building Security:

The following precautionary steps are taken to ensure safety of students and staff:

- Visitors beyond the office must sign the visitor's log upon entering and leaving and wear a visitor's badge.
- No student will be dismissed to a parent/guardian or their designee without a proper picture I.D. unless they are known to staff.
- Parents/guardians picking up their child for early dismissal are asked to sign in at the office and wait at the office for their child to be summoned.
- Parents/guardians are asked not to go to their child's classroom without permission obtained in advance of the visit. Please see the Observation and Visitation Policy for further information.
- Except for student entrance and exit, building doors will remain locked while school is in session.
- During school hours, entrance will be permitted at the main entrance by bell/buzzer after the visitor is identified.
- Public access to the school is restricted to the office. Unauthorized persons may not proceed into the school beyond the office without approval. Please see the Observation and Visitation Policy for further information.
- Individuals not adhering to this school policy will be liable for prosecution for trespassing as covered by law under Chapter 266, Section 120.

South Shore High School Annual Report 2019-2020

Program Description

South Shore High School (SSHS) is a public therapeutic day school within the South Shore Educational Collaborative. SSHS is designed to support students with significant social and emotional challenges in a small, therapeutic environment in order to promote academic, social, and emotional success and well-being. South Shore High School services students in grades 8-12 in a highly structured environment with low student to staff ratios allowing for the ability to provide intensive support and consistency in a safe learning environment.

Student Population

The majority of students referred to SSHS have been identified as having an emotional disability via their Individualized Education Plan (IEP). In addition, SSHS services students with specific learning disabilities, high functioning autism spectrum disorder (ASD), and social pragmatics difficulties. Students are mainly of solidly average cognitive ability, some slightly above and some slightly below. Students tend to be treated for diagnoses that include, but are not limited to, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), anxiety disorders (post-traumatic stress disorder, generalized anxiety disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder) and mood disorders (depression, bipolar disorder, disruptive mood dysregulation disorder). Many students referred to South Shore High School have a history of absenteeism due to multiple psychiatric inpatient hospital stays, short term acute care stays, and school avoidance. Many students have a history of trauma and disrupted home-life and caretaker consistency. Most students receive treatment supports outside of school including individual therapy, family therapy, therapeutic case management, psychiatric/medication management, in home behavioral consultation, and agency involvement (DCF, DMH). SSHS has a strong population of students that also identify as LGBTQ.

Monthly Enrollment

(SSHS students/ Bridge Classroom Students/STARTS Evaluation Students)

Sept. '19	43	+5 Bridge	+1 STARTS
Oct. '19	42	+5 Bridge	+1 STARTS
Nov. '19	41	+5 Bridge	+1 STARTS
Dec. '19	43	+5 Bridge	+2 STARTS
Jan. '20	44	+5 Bridge	+3 STARTS
Feb. '20	47	+6 Bridge	
March '20	47	+6 Bridge	
April '20	47	+6 Bridge	
May '20	47	+6 Bridge	
June '20	47	+6 Bridge	

South Shore High School had between 46 and 53 students enrolled between September and June of the 2019-2020 school year. In addition, SSHS was able to accommodate 3 students for a STARTS extended evaluation. Of the 53 students present through the end of the school year, ***South Shore High School successfully graduated 16 seniors***. All seniors were able to meet the credit and course requirements of their sending districts and meet all MCAS graduation requirements. Due to the pandemic, a celebratory senior class parade was held on their original graduation date and an outdoor graduation ceremony was held on August 3rd, 2020. In addition to the success of graduating seniors, ***SSHS successfully returned two students to their sending district and one student to his regional vocational technical school*** following a successful application and interview process.

Program Staff

During the 2019-2020 school year, South Shore High School operated 9 classrooms lead by a special education teacher and supported by paraprofessionals. New to the 2019-2020 year was the development of our Bridge Classroom, a transition classroom for students primarily in the 8th grade who demonstrated some readiness to gain an introduction to a high school model. Students in the Bridge Classroom remained in a self-contained classroom with access to high school aged peer role models, teaching staff, clinicians, and related service providers to support their successful transition to high school. In addition to teachers and paraprofessionals, SSHS staff included 3.5 clinical social workers, a behavior management specialist, a milieu coordinator a part-time speech and language pathologist, part-time occupational therapist, part-time reading specialist, and two part-time transition specialists. The program is also supported by SSEC program nurses, our program secretary, the SSEC Clinical Director, Tim Handorf and the SSEC contracted psychiatric consultant, Dr. Jeff Turley.

Academic Structure

Students at SSHS are assigned courses designed to meet the graduation requirements from their sending school district. Upon graduation, students receive an official transcript and diploma from their sending school district. Classroom instruction is differentiated to meet the needs of diverse learners in order to ensure the academic success of all students. Class sizes remained at 8 students or less to provide for maximum instructional and social/emotional support. With the exception of our Bridge classroom, the majority of students change classes each period per subject matter. SSHS follows the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. In addition to the standard classes that SSHS offers, SSEC has a contractual arrangement with an online learning platform called Fuel Education. Students are offered the opportunity to take a Fuel Ed course through independent study classes with support from a SSHS teacher that acts as a liaison with Fuel Education to monitor their progress and offer any support if needed. Fuel Ed offers a robust course choice to supplement and enhance student transcripts, to provide students the opportunity to pursue a particular academic interest, and to support college readiness and competitiveness in the college application process. With the support of our transition specialists, students in primarily the 12th and at times 11th grade may take a dual enrollment course at a local community college. SSHS is a PSAT and SAT approved testing site for our students.

Clinical Support and Counseling

For the 2019-2020 school year, SSHS had one part-time and three full-time clinical social workers. In addition, the program has support from a clinical director and psychiatric consultant. SSHS is a trauma informed school. Principles of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), and Collaborative Problem Solving (CPS) are used in the counseling work with students. In addition, SSHS clinicians write all of the social emotional IEP goals, collect data on goals, and report on IEP goal progress four times per year. Clinicians meet twice weekly for advanced case consultation and discussion; once with the clinical director and once in a weekly psychoeducational seminar run by Dr. Jeff Turley, the program's psychiatric consultant. Clinicians provide significant home to school communication to support families and caretakers and act as a liaison to outside treatment providers per parent request and consent. The primary focus of counseling at SSHS is to assist students in countering the problems that have had a negative impact on their academic, social, and emotional success through accurate problem identification and the development of healthy, effective coping strategies.

Transition Services

SSHS has a part-time Transition Specialist and a part time Transition Assistant that meet with all students to develop solid transition plans (TPF) for every student turning 14 or older. The transition staff works with all students to assist them in:

- Self-advocacy (understanding their IEP's, their disability area, their accommodations, their strengths and weaknesses as learners)
- Vocational skills (establishing onsite vocational opportunities, off site internship sites, resume writing, mock interviewing, employment applications, assessment of vocational skills with the Workplace Soft Skills rubric)
- Career/Trade identification (online research tools, O*Net Interest Profiler)
- College identification and readiness (scheduling PSAT and SAT testing, college search engines, college tours, assistance with signing up for and supporting dual enrollment classes at the community college level, attending college fairs)
- Establishing connections with adult support agencies (completing direct referrals to the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, attending meetings with student and MRC case managers, supporting the Pre-ETS pre-employment transition skills program through Tempus Unlimited)
- Establishing community service experiences (both onsite experiences and offsite experiences to meet sending district community service requirements or per student interest)

During the 2019-2020 school year SSHS students attended onsite vocational opportunities in our industrial kitchen, in our Greenhouse, working with younger students in our Quest Program, and working with multi-handicapped students in our Community Program. SSHS students attended off-site internships at Old Navy, Boston Bowl, and Bolt Depot. Students took college level classes at Quincy Community College and Massasoit Community College. Transportation was provided by SSEC for offsite internships and community college classes that took place during school hours. Tempus Unlimited worked with students on site at SSHS once per week.

Transition staff also coordinated tours at local colleges, college fair nights, informational sessions with trade schools, and informational sessions with Job Corps.

Related Services

Speech and language supports are provided for students with identified speech and language needs and social pragmatics needs on their individualized education plan. Most of the students requiring speech and language supports at SSHS are students with identified weaknesses in social skills and social pragmatics. Our speech and language pathologist provides small group sessions to improve students' social-verbal interactions, perspective taking, and conversational skills following the Social Thinking Curriculum developed by Michelle Garcia Winner. All students in our Bridge classroom receive a social skills group co-lead with teaching staff to support carry over of skills and promote improved social interactions.

Occupational Therapy supports are provided for students with identified executive functioning deficits, sensory integration deficits, and sensory regulation needs. The occupational therapist works directly with students on understanding their sensory profile and sensory needs, creating motor break schedules when needed. The occupational therapist meets with students individual and in small groups.

Reading Support is provided for those students with an identified reading disability on their individualized education plan. The SSHS reading specialist meets with students individually to support improved reading skills and improved access to their curriculum.

Data Collection Methods

Staff continued to work with our data consultant, Marc Hauser to collect data, track progress, and use the data to make informed program decisions and individual student interventions. SSHS maintained a data team that met biweekly to review data and ensure that data systems were implemented effectively. The data team used two platforms, Educata and Goal Seeker. The Educata platform was able to collect data throughout each day on any time off learning, a key indicator in determining successful outcomes and a student's ability to return to their sending district. Goal Seeker was utilized to collect individual student data for both IEP goals and clinical counseling goals. Data informed decision making was utilized for programmatic interventions and student interventions and discussed at TEAM meetings and shared with parents.

Program in Review 2019-2020

Leadership: SSHS encountered significant changes in the 2019-2020 school year. The longstanding program director, Amy Norton retired in the summer of 2019 and a new program director assumed her position. In February of 2020 the new program director's tenure ended and on February 24th Cheryl Jacques assumed the role as the program director of South Shore High School and continues to maintain the position as the administrator for SSHS.

Covid-19 School Shutdown: As with all other schools in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the 2019-2020 school year changed significantly on March 13th of 2020 for staff, students and families. SSHS staff worked diligently over the next two weeks to prepare for remote learning. Staff created immediate asynchronous learning materials, met daily to prepare for and execute a remote learning model, determined technology needs, hand delivered Chromebooks to those students in need, and significantly increased parent communication to support families. Families and districts all received detailed Remote Learning Plans with denoted schedules of live classes, asynchronous materials, resources, and supports, as well as the email addresses of all teaching and related service staff. SSHS was able to successfully implement live remote classes via Google Classroom and the Google Meet platform, teacher office hours, virtual and phone sessions for counseling, and live sessions for related services. IEP meetings were held virtually using Google Meet. Seniors were additionally supported via a once per week virtual meeting to discuss their unique situation, ensure they were able to successfully complete their graduation requirements and post-secondary plans, and to plan for celebrations, including their live graduation on August 3rd, 2020. SSEC was committed to the health and well-being of its community. Administrators met several times per week to plan, discuss, and support the success of its programs. SSEC offered the services of Dr. Jeff Turley to any staff member, student, or parents of students that required additional psychiatric consultation or support to manage the stressors related to Covid-19.

Parent Involvement: Parents are encouraged to take an active role in their children's education. Successful outcomes occur most often when parents feel comfortable to share their expertise and unique knowledge of their child, partner in the process, and feel as though they have a trusting, mutually supportive relationship with SSHS. Parents have an understanding that they may request to speak to their child's teacher, clinician, related service provider, or program director whenever needed. An annual Open House occurred in the fall of 2019 and parent teacher conferences occurred in the fall and late winter.

Noteworthy Achievements:

- Despite the Covid-19 pandemic, SSHS successfully graduated 16 seniors
- SSHS seniors were accepted and plan to attend the following colleges: Bridgewater State University, UMass Dartmouth, Curry College, Wheaton College, Mass College of Art, Massasoit College and Dean College
- One graduating senior was accepted into an EMT Certificate program, one accepted to and placed at Job Corps, and one successfully entered the work force.
- SSHS successfully returned three students to their sending school districts.
- SSHS successfully started and maintained the Bridge Program for 8th grade students
- Despite the significant emotional and behavioral presentation of our population, significant staff training in NAPPI (crisis prevention and intervention training) led to limited need for physical intervention (one incident for the entirety of the school year) and minimal use of out of school suspensions
- SSHS maintained a data team and was able to utilize appropriate data to inform sound programmatic and student interventions

- SSHS continued to use the CAD (computer assisted design) program to implement and design 2D and 3D projects. CAD projects contributed to fundraising efforts in order to supplement student activities.
- SSHS students enrolled in an onsite Coding class through a collaboration with Northeastern University
- SSHS students participated in two talent shows, one onsite in the fall and one virtual in the spring

SSHS Goals for the 2020-2021

In addition to the already established highly specialized and accomplished components of the program, South Shore High School will continue to evaluate and seek areas for continued growth and improvement, including the following:

- Continue to be responsive to member and non-member districts to provide comprehensive, highly effective programming for students with social and emotional challenges.
- To increase enrollment in order to support district needs and requests
- Promote culture and climate through an increase in school wide events, the development of a school logo and the development of school colors
- Increase academic standards and rigor through a curriculum review process, class schedule realignment, and work production standards
- Promote increased parent communication and involvement during Covid protocols via the use of weekly parent updates, virtual parent information hours, virtual open house, and virtual parent teacher conferences
- Continue to advance the technology skill set of SSHS staff and students via trainings and consultation
- Continue to improve the efficacy of data collection and intervention

S.T.A.R.T.S.

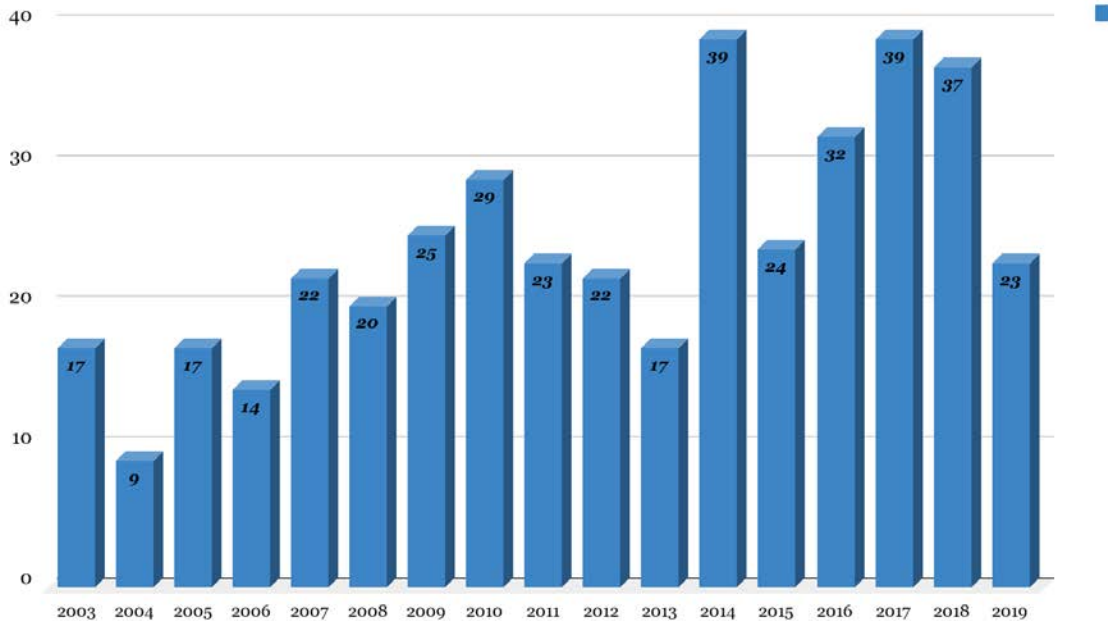
ANNUAL REPORT 2019 - 2020 **Anne Rowland, Psy.D. Program Coordinator**

S.T.A.R.T.S. DESCRIPTION

S.T.A.R.T.S. (Short-Term Assessment and Return to School) is an Alternative Interim Educational Setting (A.I.E.S.) which provides an opportunity for extended evaluations utilizing educational, psychological and psychiatric assessment for students who are having serious difficulties in their school and require evaluation to better understand their challenging behavior and learning styles. It now accommodates students in grades K-12, for up to 40 school days, after which recommendations for future educational, social/emotional and psychiatric supports are made. For high school age students, STARTS students have been assessed while in small classrooms (8-10 students) within the South Shore High School (SSH) and the Careers High School (CHS). Elementary and middle school age students are assessed while in small classrooms (7-8 students) within the Quest Program or AIM classrooms (Quest/Community Program hybrid). Some students have been evaluated while in the Mini School at Hull's Jacob's Elementary School, or in the Community Program in Hingham. STARTS students participate in and have access to all the activities and learning that are provided for all students within each age-appropriate school. For example, opportunities for job interest exploration (Graphic Design, Greenhouse, 3-D Printing, Industrial Kitchen, AV) are available and are incorporated into the assessment. CHS and SSHS also offer two different types of classroom settings (self-contained and integrated), which allows for students with a greater range of needs and disabilities to come to SSEC for a STARTS assessment.

Table 1

STARTS ENROLLMENT 2003- 2019



2019-2020 was the 17th operational year of STARTS. Unique to this academic year was the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent closing of school buildings from March 13 through the end of the school year. Naturally this impacted the referrals for STARTS because this particular type of in person, in school assessment could not be completed. The number of enrollments was only 23 as a result.

As seen in Table 1 above, in year one, 17 students were enrolled; year two, 9 were enrolled; year three, 17 were enrolled; year four, 14 were enrolled; year five, 22 were enrolled; year six, 20 were enrolled; year seven, 25 were enrolled; year eight, 29 were enrolled; year nine, 23 were enrolled; in year ten, 22 were enrolled; in year eleven, 17 were enrolled; in year twelve, 39 were enrolled; in year thirteen, 24 were enrolled; in year fourteen, 32 were enrolled; in year fifteen, 39 were enrolled; in year sixteen, 37 were enrolled; and this past year 23 were enrolled.

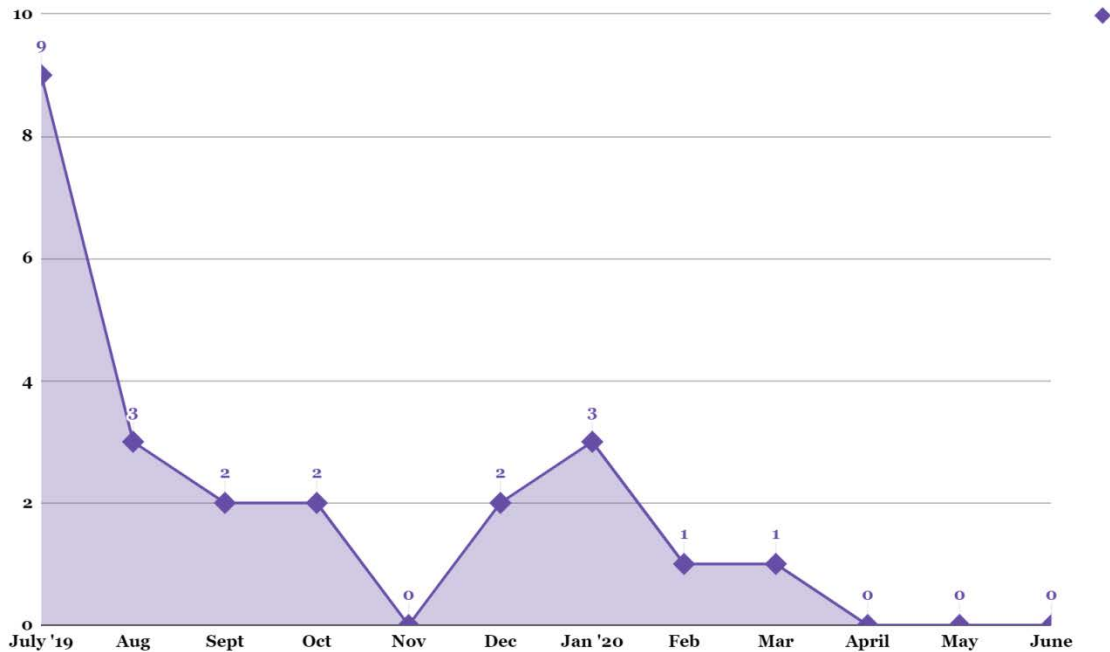
Of the 23 students enrolled in STARTS this year, 17 were males and six were females. As in all past years, there were significantly more males than females. Referrals came either from districts' mainstream classrooms or their alternative classrooms within mainstream buildings. Six evaluations were completed within SSH, eight were completed in Quest, and seven were completed within the CHS. Also during this past year, two evaluations were completed in the AIM/Quest classroom.

This was the fourteenth year that a pre-doctoral psychology intern was placed at SSEC via the South Shore Mental Health (now Aspire Health Alliance) internship program, and the first year that two interns were placed instead of one. This allowed STARTS to continue to assess more elementary age students for evaluation. Within Quest, the intern Elise Cohen completed seven evaluations. And within the two high schools, Danielle Guyette completed ten.

Clinicians Alli Mitchell completed three evaluations, Lauren Brierley completed two, and Eric Steeves and Sarah Pearlman each completed one. This year, there were six clinicians completing STARTS evaluations simultaneously, while there were ten last year. In prior years, typically it would be three or four at most simultaneously.

Table 2

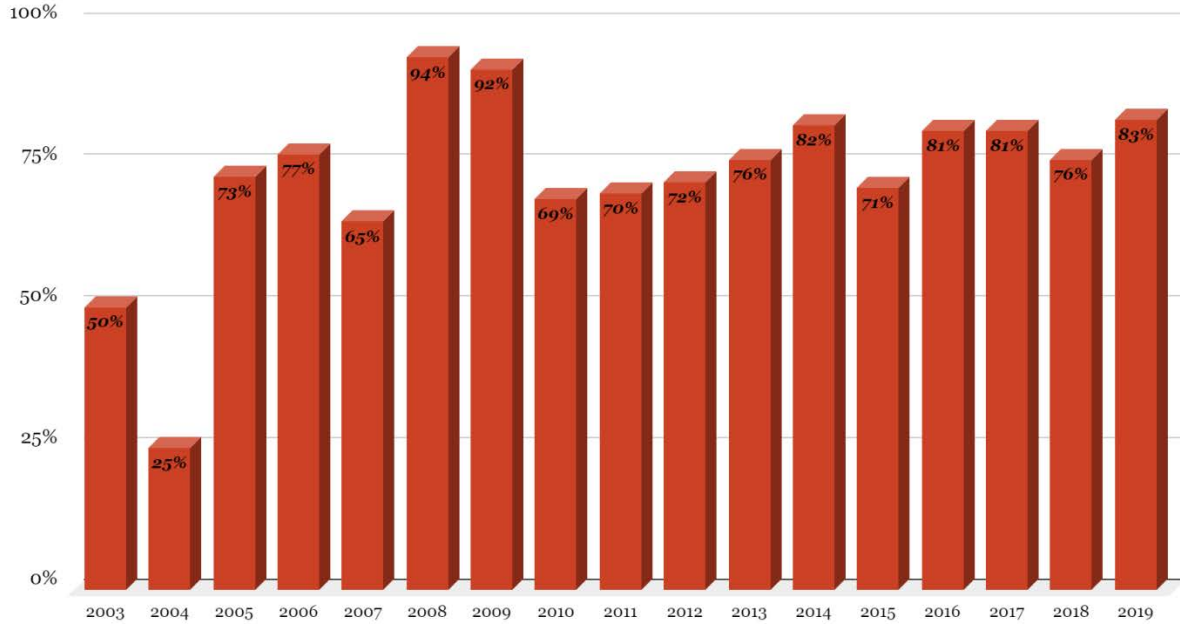
STARTS Number of Students Beginning Assessment by Month 2019-20



This graph shows the number of STARTS students who began each month in order to give a more accurate visual of peak and ebb times of enrollments. There were peaks at the beginning of the school year, and in January.

Table 3

Percentage of Students Remaining in SSEC After STARTS



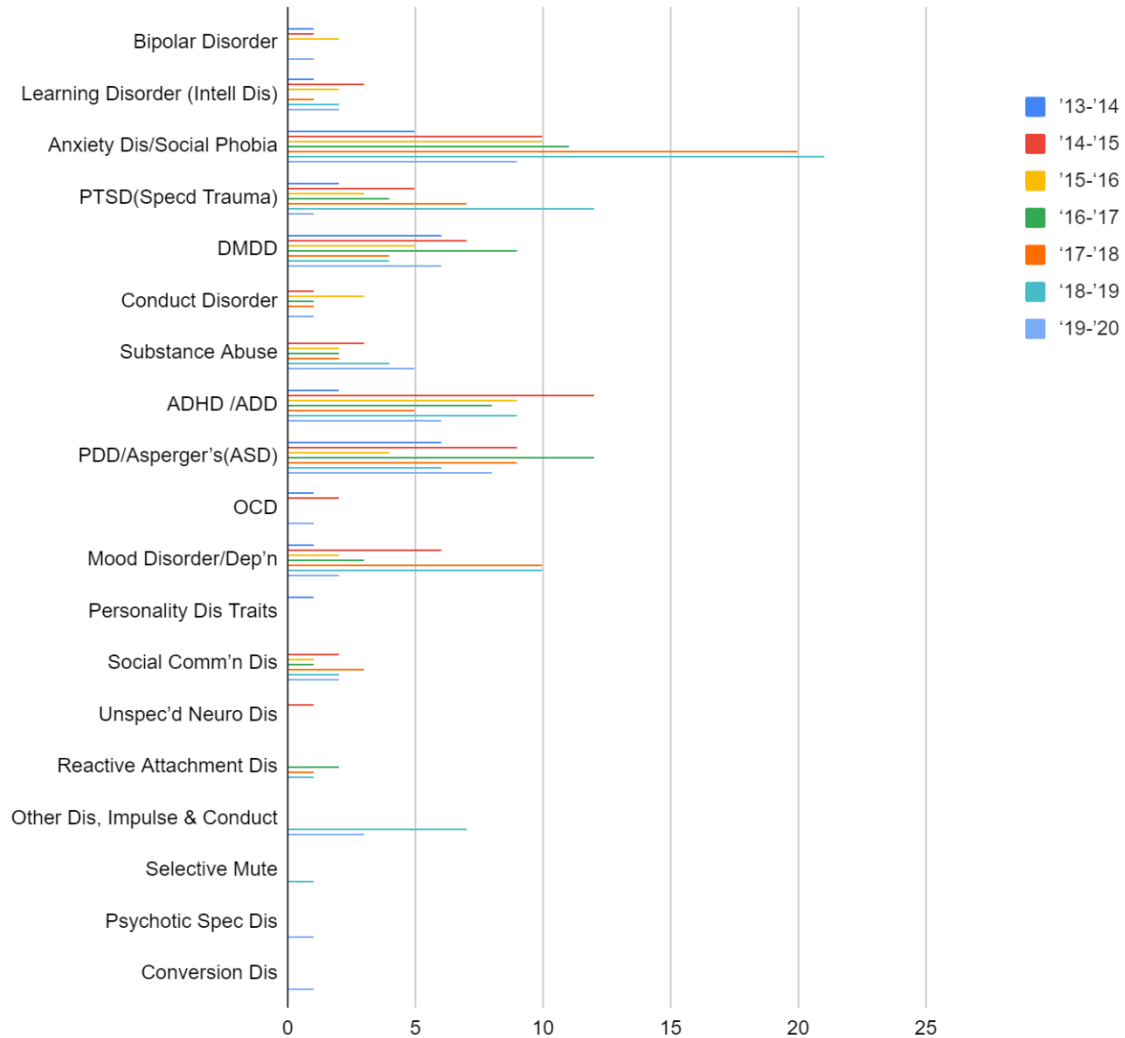
This year, 19 students remained at SSEC. However, upon completion of the STARTS assessment, three of these students returned to their district school after completing the remainder of the school year remotely due to the pandemic. Of the four students who did not remain at SSEC after STARTS, two stopped attending and two required a higher level of care.

Percentages of students remaining at SSEC programs from STARTS (Table 3) went from 50% in year one, 25% in year two, 73% in year three, 77% in year four, 65% in year five, 94% in year six, 92% in year seven, 69% in year eight, 70% in year nine, 72% in year ten, 76% in year eleven, 82% remained in year twelve, 71% remained in year thirteen, 81% remained in years fourteen and fifteen, and 83% remained in SSEC programs after their STARTS evaluation in 2019-20.

Table 4
Primary and Secondary Diagnoses (DSM-V)

Number of Primary and Secondary Diagnoses by Students/Year

Primary and Secondary Diagnoses



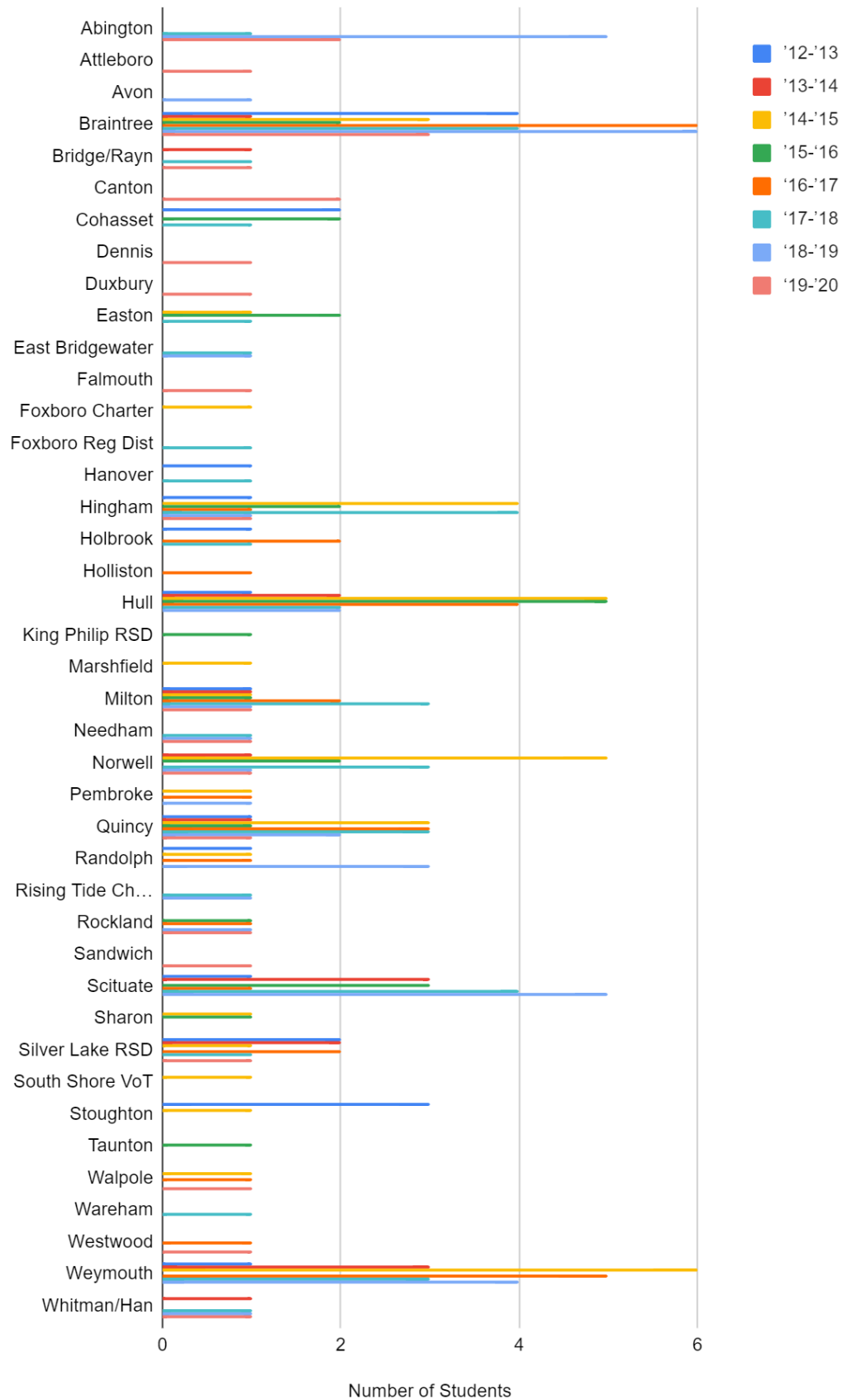
Number of Primary and Secondary Diagnoses by Students/Year							
Primary and Secondary Diagnoses	'13 -'14	'14-'15	'15-'16	'16-'17	'17-'18	'18-'19	'19-'20
Bipolar Disorder	1	1	2	0	0	0	1
Learning Disorder (Intell Dis)	1	3	2	0	1	2	2
Anxiety Dis/Social Phobia	5	10	10	11	20	21	9
PTSD(Spec'd Trauma)	2	5	3	4	7	12	1
DMDD	6	7	5	9	4	4	6
Conduct Disorder	0	1	3	1	1	0	1
Substance Abuse	0	3	2	2	2	4	5
ADHD /ADD	2	12	9	8	5	9	6
PDD/Asperger's(ASD)	6	9	4	12	9	6	8
OCD	1	2	0	0	0	0	1
Mood Disorder/Dep'n	1	6	2	3	10	10	2
Personality Dis Traits	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Social Comm'n Dis	n/a	2	1	1	3	2	2
Unspec'd Neuro Dis	n/a	1	0	0	0	0	0
Reactive Attachment Dis	0	0	0	2	1	1	0
Other Dis, Impulse & Conduct	0	0	0	0	0	7	3
Selective Mute	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Psychotic Spec Dis	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Conversion Dis	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

The primary and secondary diagnoses are listed in the statistics chart (Table 4).

All students presented with multiple diagnoses. Since most STARTS students receive an extensive psychiatric evaluation and diagnosis completed by Dr. Jeff Turley, there is consistency in the procedure. Of note, however, is the APA's publication of the DSM-V, which includes changes in diagnostic categories in 2015-2016. Despite the changes in diagnostic criteria between the DSM-IV and V, just looking at the categories of disorders, one can see there continues to be a high level of disorders related to Anxiety and Mood Disorder/Depression, and Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

Number of Students Enrolled by District/Year

School District



STARTS OUTCOMES

Again this year, STARTS had multiple repeat enrollments (both within this year and from previous years) from multiple districts, indicating a level of satisfaction through meeting these goals for the districts. Enrollments of students from member districts dropped from 68% last year to 30% this year, with the top town again being Braintree (3). Evaluations were completed with students from one district (Dennis) who was new to the STARTS program. Needham was new to enrolling a student in STARTS last year, and enrolled another student for STARTS this year.

In terms of outcome measures, the major goal of STARTS is to maintain a commitment to the referring school districts to: provide quality assessment and useful recommendations to the school and family of students who have academic and psychological challenges; complete timely intakes and placement (“at a moment’s notice”); continue to provide educational services, keeping students up to speed with their academics; and balance the needs of the student and needs of the district.

The opportunity to integrate STARTS students into other SSEC programs enriches the assessment process and final product; the small team setting provides quick, frequent and thorough communication between staff, as well as creativity and flexibility of programming to meet the myriad needs of students and demands of districts. Additionally, immersion in other programs and utilizing multiple clinicians as evaluators enables STARTS to accept a greater range of students, thus more immediately meeting the needs of the districts.

As STARTS referrals continue to become more complex and demanding in terms of both clinical and classroom presentations, collaboration between educators and more clinicians provides the capacity to identify the most effective interventions and support for students, their families, and the districts. As always, the psychiatric evaluations completed by Dr. Jeff Turley are instrumental in providing critical recommendations in addition to comprehensive differential diagnostic assessment.