

SOUTH SHORE EDUCATIONAL COLLABORATIVE

www.ssec.org

ANNUAL REPORT TO THE COLLABORATIVE BOARD of DIRECTORS

2015 - 2016

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SOUTH SHORE EDUCATIONAL COLLABORATIVE BOARD MEMBERS

2015 - 2016

Henry W. Perrin, Ed.D.	Executive Director
Frank Hackett, Ed.D. Superintendent	Braintree Public Schools
Barbara Cataldo Superintendent, Chairperson	Cohasset Public Schools
Dorothy Galo, Ph.D. Superintendent	Hingham Public Schools
Kathleen Tyrell, Ed.D. Superintendent	Hull Public Schools
Jeffrey Granatino Superintendent	Marshfield Public Schools
Matthew A. Keegan Superintendent, Vice Chairperson	Norwell Public Schools
Richard DeCristofaro, Ed.D. Superintendent	Quincy Public Schools
Thomas Anderson Superintendent	Randolph Public Schools
John McCarthy Superintendent	Scituate Public Schools
Kenneth Salim, Ed.D. Superintendent	Weymouth Public Schools

STAFF OF THE SOUTH SHORE EDUCATIONAL COLLABORATIVE
2015 – 2016

Henry W. Perrin, Ed.D.	Executive Director
Richard L. Reino	Business Administrator
Arthur Sullivan	Treasurer
Cynthia J. Lindberg	Executive Secretary
Catherine A. Cole	Accounts Payable
Diane Baiardi	Accounts Receivable
Laura J. Polleys (July – November)	Payroll
Meghan Ritchie (November – June)	Payroll
Patricia Mason	Community Program Director
Gina Manzo	Program Secretary
Mary Scott	Mini School Program Director
Karen Thomsen	Program Secretary
Timothy Handorf	Clinical Director
Amy Norton	South Shore High School Director
Theresa Gazzola	Program Secretary (July - April)
Tara Sepeck	Program Secretary (May – June)
Jennie Williams	Quest Program Coordinator
Lisa Penzo-Johnson	Program Secretary
Anne Rowland	Careers Program Coordinator
Abigail Mann	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 Henry Perrin, 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 2015-2016 school year.

The SSEC primary location is 75 Abington Street in Hingham, MA. During the 2015-2016 school year, SSEC classrooms were located at Hull, Weymouth, Randolph and 40 Pond Park in Hingham. The Randolph High School location has worked well for the Mini School classroom and additional classrooms were offered to provide space for the high school age students who attend school at the 40 Pond Park building. A goal has been to maintain the newer, larger building for students who will benefit from that location and place as many students as possible in public school settings. The public school setting offers students the opportunity for inclusion and interaction with typical peers. Having both options provides the ability to meet the individual needs of more students.

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 in 2013, specially designed classrooms, physical and occupational therapy area, bathrooms, and a therapeutic pool 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 and gymnasium.

In accordance with the new 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. The Collaborative Agreement with Department of Elementary and Secondary Education was approved and accepted by the member districts and DESE.

The 2011-2016 strategic plan has been utilized as a planning guide for student programs, personnel and facilities. The initial steps for preparing a strategic plan for 2017-2022 have been taken and will be completed during the school year. The leadership team of SSEC considers the goals and objectives that are included in the plan while building the budget and making decisions on all collaborative initiatives.

1. 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, 2015-June, 2016.

The core values of safety, respect, relationships and growth are always considered as decisions are made for SSEC. The mission statement is 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.

2. 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 2016 are listed in this report following the Table of Contents.

The following member school districts/ committees have appointed the superintendent to serve on the SSEC Board of Directors for fiscal year 2016:

Braintree	Frank Hackett, Ed.D
Cohasset	Barbara Cataldo
Hingham	Dorothy Galo, Ph.D.
Hull	Kathleen Tyrell, Ed.D.
Marshfield	Jeffrey Granatino
Norwell	Matthew Keegan
Quincy	Richard DeCristofaro, Ed.D.
Randolph	Thomas Anderson
Scituate	John McCarthy
Weymouth	Kenneth Salim, Ed.D.

3. 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 the 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.

4. Cost Effectiveness of Programs and Services

Each year brings program and financial challenges as difficult decisions need to be made. The 2015-2016 year required the decision to reduce staff in some programs due to a decline in enrollment or to balance expenses with revenue in order to present a balanced budget for 2016-2017. The referrals

and enrollments in the schools and programs began to increase allowing some employees to be reinstated.

With the recent 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 \$20,248,631. for fy 2016.

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 2015-2016, SSEC leased two buildings (75 Abington Street and 40 Pond Park in Hingham) and classroom space in Weymouth, Hingham, 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 school buildings 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 10 classrooms to SSEC in 2015-2016 allowing for minimum transportation costs for students enrolled. 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 16 tuition- \$65,562. (includes summer)

Private School- Perkins Watertown fy 16 tuition- \$110,437.

Private School- BC Campus School fy 16 tuition- \$79,088.

Possible savings per student (116 students) w/o transportation = \$13,526. - \$44,875.

SSEC Mini School- fy 16 tuition- \$58,456. (includes summer)

Private School- Boston Higashi fy16 tuition- \$72,529.

Private School- May Institute fy 16 tuition- \$92,391.

Possible savings per student (61students) w/o transportation = \$14,073. - \$33,935.

SSEC Quest School fy 16 tuition- \$48,442. (includes summer)

Private School- Brandon fy 16 tuition- \$55,554.

Private School- Granite Academy fy 16 tuition- \$61,136.

Possible savings per student (60 students) w/o transportation = \$7,112. - \$12,694.

SSEC SSH and Careers fy 16 tuition- \$45,626. (includes summer)

Private School- Compass fy 16 tuition- \$55,382.

Private School- Home for Little Wanderers S.E. fy 16 tuition- \$67,300.

Possible savings per student (86 students) w/o transp. factor = \$9,755. up to \$21,674.

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 purchase program. The data collected by the consultant who coordinates the purchasing program on behalf of SSEC member districts and other municipalities indicates a significant savings. The consulting company used this year was Titan Energy. The electricity bid results in a significant savings to the participants when comparing old price to the 24 month term of the contracts.

The savings based on the comparison for electricity purchase: North River Collaborative-\$1,328., Scituate Public Schools-\$72,027., Cohasset Public Schools-\$80,832., Town of Cohasset-\$125,403., Plymouth Public Schools- \$97,195., Town of Plymouth-\$82,753. for a total of \$459,538. savings for electricity.

The natural gas bid also provides a significant savings during the 36 month term of the contracts.

The savings based on the Natural Gas purchase when comparing the old price to the new:

North River- \$46,063., Scituate P.S.- \$197,206., Cohasset P.S.-\$161,414., Cohasset Town-\$25,771., Plymouth P.S.- \$258,806., Plymouth Town-\$146,487., Hull P.S.-\$77,686., SSEC-\$1875. for a total of \$915,308. Savings for natural gas.

In summary, a combined savings of \$1,374,846. for gas and electric over the term of the contract.

An administrator licensure program with SSEC and Boston University has been approved by DESE. The program accepts qualified candidates from the south shore to participate in graduate level courses at a reduced tuition rate at the SSEC school building. The reduced tuition saves each candidate approximately \$8,000. by the end of the program. This program supports the local school districts to develop future administrators. Three cohorts of educators have participated in the program to date.

For many years, the SSEC has operated a day program for adults with cognitive, physical and medical needs. Many of the adults in the program graduated from the Community School. Others were placed in the program through the Department of Developmental Services. A concern of the board and administration at SSEC was that the collaborative regulations that were approved in 2012 would not allow adult programs to continue to be operated by collaboratives. However, the oversight regulations of 2012 did allow the adult programs to continue under collaborative management. Even though the SSEC could continue the adult program, a decision was made to pursue other management options for the program. The executive director of SSEC met with the CEO of a private, local organization where the mission is to assist adults with disabilities, Road to Responsibility (RTR). Discussion and planning began for transferring the management of the Community Adult Program (CAP) to RTR. Effective July, 2014, RTR assumed management responsibilities of the CAP and cost shared at 50% all lease and maintenance expenses at 40 Pond Park. This releases any financial liability to the districts for adult services that may not receive adequate funding and gets SSEC one step closer to being in one leased building rather than two. A goal is to get all programs into one location for cost effectiveness. The lease at 40 Pond Park ends on October 31, 2016. RTR has completed negotiations to lease the building. When RTR leases 40 Pond Park, SSEC will rent additional classroom space in public schools as needed. The ideal is to have all classrooms in the new building and lease classrooms in public schools at reduced rate.

5. Progress toward achieving the purpose and objectives

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has approved the agreement with SSEC and all member districts have signed to accept the agreement.

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. 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. Data is kept to measure students' progress. Students are 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 included 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 personnel strive to build trusting relationships and confidence with the public school representatives, parents and students to form a team that will provide a safe, respectful environment for educational and social success for all students.

The licensure program for school administrators enrolled the second cohort of graduate students. The licensure program was approved by DESE and is a partnership with Boston University. Professional development has also been offered in a cost effective manner for educators to participate in English Language Learner preparation such as the WIDA and Sheltered English

Immersion (SEI) courses. DESE approval was offered to SSEC to provide the required Sheltered English Immersion classes. SSEC has provided the classes at SSEC and has sponsored a course in Norwell at a savings to the town. Wilson Language and Reading certification was also available this year. SSEC provides a Crisis Prevention Instructor (CPI) for districts to provide the mandated training. This course is provided at 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). The SSEC has personnel approved to conduct the training at SSEC which is a significant savings.

The 2015-2016 school year has been challenging and exciting. 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 is in process and will serve 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 2015-2016 school year. The program directors and coordinators present the information that provides pertinent information and outcomes relevant to their respective programs.

Respectfully submitted,

Henry W. Perrin, Ed.D.
Executive Director

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ANCILLARY SERVICES ANNUAL REPORT 2015-2016

STAFF AND STUDENT POPULATION:

Occupational/Physical/Speech Therapy Services-

During the 2015-2016 school year, The South Shore Educational Collaborative employed a full-time Therapy and Assistive Technology services supervisor, a full time therapy services coordinator, nine physical therapists (seven full time, two part-time) , five full-time physical therapy assistants, thirteen occupational therapists (eleven full time, two part-time), and four full-time certified occupational therapy assistants, eighteen speech-language pathologists (sixteen full time, two part-time) . Therapists have conducted evaluations, and provided direct and consultative services for students in five Collaborative programs, and three member school districts.

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 2015-2016 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 a 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 2015-2016 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 2015-2016 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.

Figure 1

Type of Therapy Service:	Occupational Therapy	Physical Therapy	Speech/Language Therapy
Information Sharing	4.22%	4.27%	3.47%
Accommodations/Modifications	12.66%	.86%	8.89%
*Consultation	4.47%	6.41%	3.03%
*Direct therapy service in context	18.61.%	30.77%	13.23%
*Direct therapy service in and out of context	41.93%	38.46%	39.27%
*Direct therapy service out of context	18.11%	19.23%	32.11%

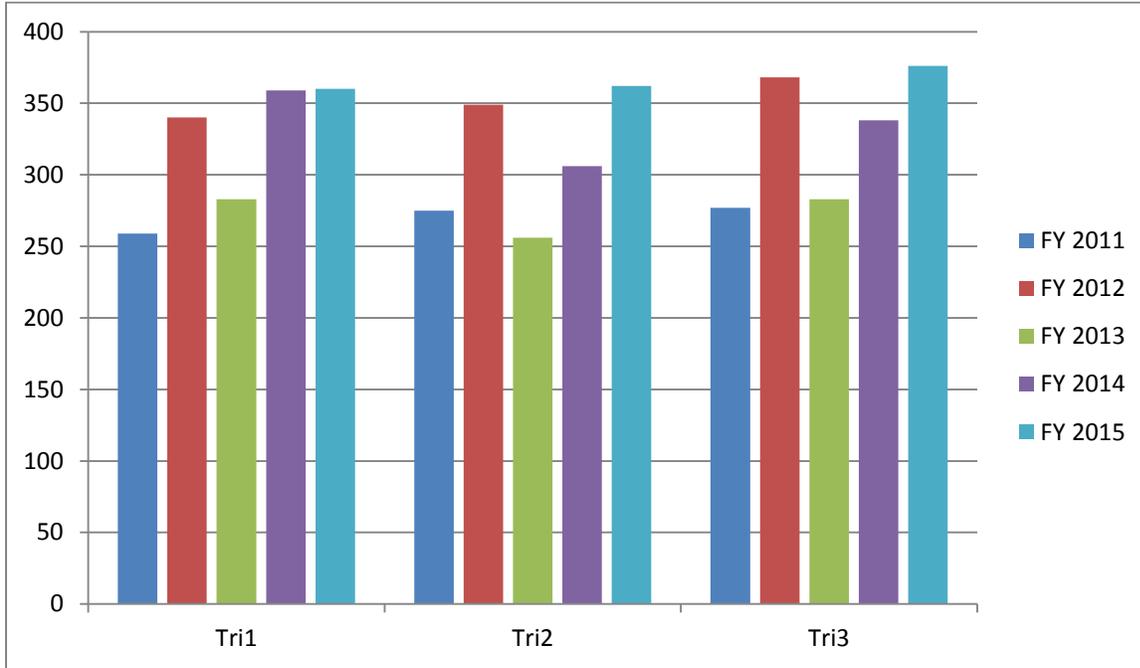
*All direct services were provided in conjunction with consultation, accommodations/modifications, and/or information sharing. Consultation services were also provided in conjunction with accommodations/modifications, and/or information sharing.

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:

During the 2015-2016 school year, there was an increase in the number of students who received consultation and used assistive technology tools in the classroom to access the curriculum each trimester when compared to the 2014-2015 school year.

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

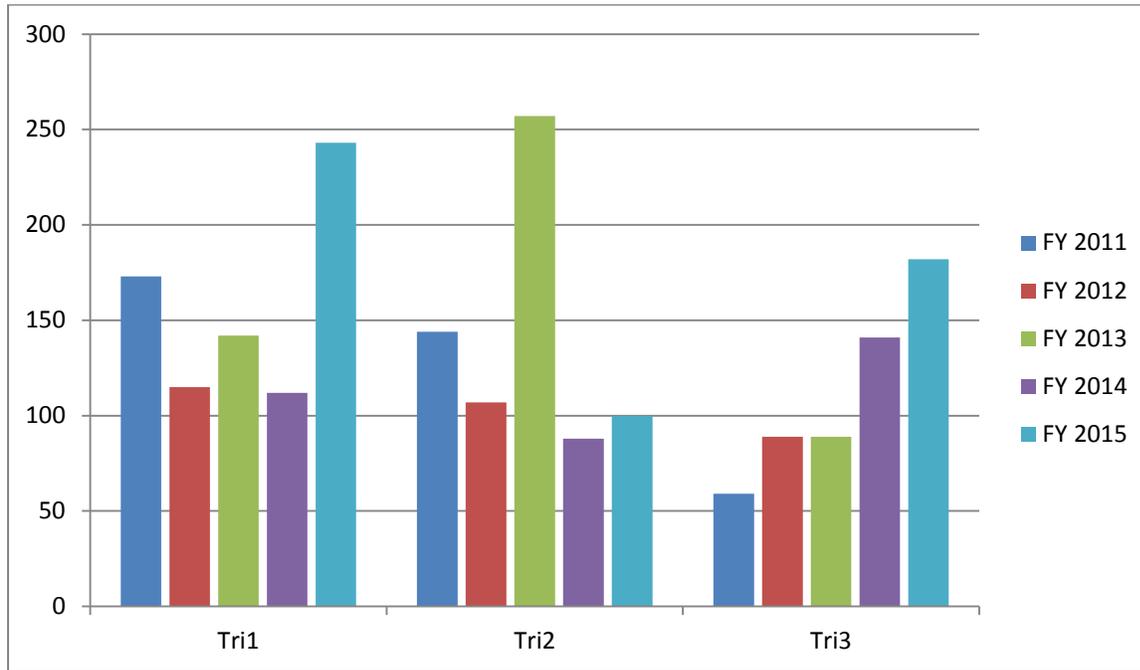
Outcome #3

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:

- During the 2015-2016 school year, 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 SSEC programs. The majority of workshops and trainings occurred early in the school year between September and December. The CAT Team conducted and/ or coordinated workshops and trainings in conjunction with vendors on topics that included Alternative and Augmentative Communication devices and applications (such as Nova Chat, Chatfusion, Accent, Tobii, Proloquo2go), Clicker literacy software, iPad Apps, Google Docs, and Read Write Google Apps and Extensions.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- 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 2015-2016 school year, members of the SSEC CAT Team collaborated closely with speech language pathologists and parents to assist with steps for student trials 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.
- An SSEC CAT Team member and an SSEC South Shore High School teacher applied for and were awarded a \$33,000 Access and Opportunity Grant from the Massachusetts Attorney General's office for a 3D Printing lab and training program that will be implemented during the 2016-2017 school year.
- The SSEC Center for Assistive Technology has coordinated mobile device sharing systems for SSEC Programs using web-based applications.
- The SSEC Center for Assistive Technology and Community School Therapists have 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.

SUMMARY OF ANCILLARY SERVICES:

During the 2015-2016 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 301 students. Physical therapy services were provided for 263 students. Speech/Language services were provided for 415 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

2015 – 2016 School Year

Anne Rowland, Psy.D., Program Coordinator

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. The program 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 Careers HS had poor experience with schools in general and are reactive to traditional educational approaches. These students respond to the ‘family feel’ of the program, the individualized educational approaches including 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

In 2015-16, Careers High School moved from a capacity of 37 to 40 students in grades eight through 12. The age range of the student population typically is from 13 through 18 years, although older students may remain enrolled if the educational TEAM determines it meets the students’ needs. This year, for example, we had a 19, 20 and 21 year old enrolled. The 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 were too severe for success in a less restrictive environment, a student would remain in placement until high school graduation.

There are five academic classrooms in the Careers HS wing of the 75 Abington Street campus. Each class is taught by a special needs teacher with the support of a paraprofessional. Four of the classrooms emulate the traditional comprehensive high schools 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. It too is staffed by a special education teacher and a paraprofessional, and can accommodate up to 12 students. The student population 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. During the last three months of this past school year, five 8th graders gradually joined the Transitions classroom. Students are encouraged to take one or more classes in our other four classrooms as their comfort level and skills increase. This year, CHS was the physical home of a Mini School student who needed his own classroom with a teacher and 1:1 paraprofessional. Efforts to integrate him with CHS students increased gradually through the school year as his comfort level and skills increased. By June he was in one academic classroom, one greenhouse class and two kitchen periods with CHS students. The intent is to continue this plan throughout the 2016-17 school year as the student progresses toward graduation in June, 2017.

Staffing

All staff, comprised of our Administrative Assistant, Transition Specialist, Speech and Language Specialist, and two clinicians work together as a comprehensive, collaborative team committed to working with our students in navigating specific difficulties to then result in their successful completion of the program. This may be accomplished in any number of ways, such as within the classroom, in dyads, in the greenhouse, through individual and group therapy situations, etc. 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-graduate goals.

Careers High School shares the Speech and Language Specialist (Ellen Bernier) with SSHS, who coordinates and runs groups focused on social pragmatic skills. The Transitional Specialist (Bobby Nelson, who is also shared with SSHS) and the transitional paraprofessional (Frank Cammissa) are critical to the developing transitions center for all SSEC students.

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 or off site transitional-vocational projects during their school day. These include work study experiences, community service activities, paid positions in competitive employment situations, and dual enrollment in college courses.

In 2014-15, the on-campus opportunities to learn employability skills included Fundraising, Copy Center, Greenhouse exploration, and Industrial Kitchen. 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. In the 2015-16 school year, one of the goals from administration for CHS was to sharpen the focus of the pre-vocational offerings so as to increase employability skills. As this transpired, Bobby Nelson (with his Assistant, Frank Cammissa), 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. Frank is instrumental in helping students begin to transfer their pre-vocational skills (learned in the Kitchen, Greenhouse and Copy Center, e.g.) to entry level jobs in the community.

The Transitional Specialist also assists students in exploring college and other post-secondary education and training. The Transitional Specialist assists students with 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 and support in the pre- and post- phone calls are part of their efforts with students.

Year in Summary

Of note is that the focus of this annual report, in terms of data collection, has changed from previous years' format in order to highlight the pre-vocational component of CHS and the subsequent employability of the students is being tracked. In many cases, this is the first year the data is being recorded and reported, so comparisons will not be able to be made until next year.

Student Population

Careers HS students have serious mental health, emotional and behavioral issues. Our 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.

The student census was increased to 40 this year, with CHS carrying up to 44 students from September into November. Three students transitioned fully from SSHS to CHS; one transitioned to SSHS. Three CHS students progressed such that they were able to successfully return to their district schools during the school year. CHS enrolled five STARTS students throughout the year; four remained in CHS after their evaluation, and one required a higher level of care. Simultaneously, for the first three months of the year CHS had two fewer paraprofessionals to accompany teachers in the classroom than previous years, until 11/30/15 when (Nora Hixon) was hired. But we did employ a paraprofessional (Sally Rossi-Ormon) to start up and run the Greenhouse. Both hires have proven to be incredibly effective and team players; Sally in particular has shown initiative, creativity, professionalism, talent and independence. The Greenhouse has come alive, and people building-wide have been enjoying the growth, warmth, and beauty that has come from this new pre-vocational offering.

Programmatic Changes

The 2015-16 academic year at Careers High School stands out as unique in its history given the amount of change and resiliency. We experienced transition in leadership, changes in schedules, staffing (including layoff notices due to anticipation of decrease in census at graduation), integration with SSHS, and most of all, vocational development, in the midst of additional DESE requirements, such as completing the first Collaborative CPR, SEI coursework, Educator Evaluations, and much more data collection and analysis.

After 12 years with Corie Fehsenfeld at the helm, Anne Rowland moved up from Assistant to Coordinator of Careers HS. This was a major change for all staff and students, and not atypical, it has taken a full year to adjust. We implemented major schedule changes such that students are placed in courses based primarily on their academic credit needs, with regard to the Instructional Groupings regulations, which has provided opportunities for teaching staff to lead more academic classes. The class times also changed such that students experience an integration of both vocational experiences and academics throughout the day (rather than academics in the morning and electives in the afternoon, as was previously the case). SSHS and CHS began and increased opportunities for students from one program to take a class in the other program. These three significant changes, while initially challenging, proved to be very successful and likened by students and staff.

Below is a list of the 13 vocational experiences offered in 2015-16 (at 75 Abington Street and in the community), listed in descending order of number of hours spent by students in that area:

<u>Area</u>	<u>Hours</u>
<i>In the Building</i>	
Greenhouse	1973
Kitchen	1889
Audio Visual	1083

Copy Center	1013
Basketball Referee	716

In the Community

Weir River Farm	156
Boston Bowl	85.5
Hingham Library	43.5
Panera Bread	33.5
Sacred Heart Church	10.5
Franklin Park Zoo	10
40 Pond Park	10
Conference Rooms	3

Careers HS students comprise the majority of students who go off-site, primarily because CHS is conducive due to its ability to be flexible with academics, credit recovery, and pace of work flow. Of 46 CHS students who utilized these opportunities in this past year, 76% worked in two or more areas, and 30% worked in four or more areas. As students remain longer at CHS, they have more time to try various areas. In terms of employability, twelve CHS students this year were able to move into entry-level jobs (Stop & Shop, Dunkin Donuts, Panera, etc.). Three of the nine CHS graduates had jobs at graduation. The breakdown of the CHS 2016 graduating class of nine students was: five applied to college, one to military, one to Trade School, and two chose employment for now.

Other Changes

Designed and implemented anti-bullying surveys and curriculum
 Used Educata to design and implement data collection of student support and Somatic Awareness data measurement tool for clinicians' educator evaluations
 Seniors development of the electronic yearbook
 Seniors design and sale of CHS sweatshirts
 Permitted three student drivers to CHS throughout the year
 Greenhouse colossal plant sale
 More students passing MCAS on first attempt
 Trained two CHS staff NAPPI trainers
 Changed the Copy Center logo

Future

Plan to either increase in- house opportunities or increase transportation availability to accommodate placements in the community.
 Graph the progress on workplace soft-skills competency rubrics.
 Hone in on effectiveness and efficiency of data collection for Transitions and for improved programming, as well as to use in IEP meetings.
 Outcome goals for CHS could include a high number of students graduating or returning to their sending districts, both being indicators of readiness for a least restrictive setting (progress).

Additionally, since CHS focuses on vocational skill building, outcome goals would include a high number of graduates employed or employment ready, as measured on their progress through the workplace soft-skills rubric.

Community School Annual Report 2015-2016

Description of School, Student Population & Staff

The **Community School** is a day school located at 75 Abington Street & 40 Pond Park Road in Hingham, serving students ages 3-21 with multiple disabilities who may also have complex medical needs or behavioral challenges. The program uses a standards based curriculum which is linked to the Federal Common Core and the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. It integrates a functional, developmental and academic curriculum which has been aligned with the Federal Common Core. Students enter the general education curriculum through access and entry points with some at grade level content. Through the use of an explicit curriculum based on thematic interdisciplinary units as well as standards based math and reading instructional programs, the students are able to access the general education curriculum while working on skills related to communication, activities of daily living, academics, social/emotional development, behavioral management, vocational and leisure/recreational. Technology is an integral component within the program. It is embedded throughout all aspects which supports increased independence, partial participation and greater access to the world around. This includes the use of many advanced communication devices along with some of the latest technology available to support our students.

AIM (Achieve, Inspire, Motivate): AIM is a new program combining students from the Community School and the QUEST school. The first AIM classroom began in September 2015 for upper elementary students. 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. There is an integrated social skills curriculum as well as strong behavioral supports. In addition this program offers counseling based on individualized student needs. Additional non-academic activities include; art, music, gym, electives (special activities students may choose from on a weekly basis) and social skills groups.

40 Pond Park Road (final year at his location): currently houses the Community Transitional High School program. There is a strong commitment to community based and community referenced instruction. Students explore various leisure activities, vocational internships; and engage in a variety of skills to practice greater independence in the community, with a strong focus on safety and communication. There is an integrated transitional curriculum which is coordinated across the middle and high school classrooms. Students transitioning into adult services are supported in visits to their new program in ease this significant change in their daily lives. The greenhouse and adaptive book & lending library are located at this facility.

Classrooms:

Early Childhood:	Four classrooms for students grades preschool through 2nd
Elementary:	Four classroom for students grades three through 5 th .
AIM:	One classroom for students grades five through eight.
Middle School:	Two classrooms for students grades six through eight.
High School:	Five classrooms for students grades nine through 12+.

Universal Design:

The program embraces the principles of universal design through curriculum and environmental accommodations available to all students in addition to individualized supports. Through the use of this design, the students have consistent access to the environment as well as access to learning. 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 curriculum which overlaps, movement, sensory and cognitive breaks, sound dampening ceiling panels, sensory sensitive lighting, consistent tangible symbol sets used in every common area, language accessible environment and materials and additional common augmentative and alternative communication supports available at all times.

Evidenced Based Methodology:

Applied behavioral analysis methodology is used and integrated based on the individualized needs of the student. ABA methodology supports discrete trial training followed by opportunities to apply skills in natural settings. ABA is embedded into the routines and instruction. Essential learning skills are integrated into all aspects of the day including imitation, turn-taking and joint attention. These skills are worked on through varying degrees of complexity and are central to the learning process.

Components of TEACCH are used throughout the program again in an integrated fashion as well as more specific for individualized students.

Task Analysis: A task analysis is often used for instructional purposes to break down specific skills to target acquisition in a more precise manner and is an integrated function within the broader content and the individualized goals from the student's IEP.

Behavioral supports and interventions included such practices as; antecedent based intervention, varied reinforcement procedures, functional communication training, replacement skills training, modeling, formalized prompting, 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 or the five point scale. Structured play groups are provided for younger students including the development of all play levels and individual play skills.

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 emersion.

Curriculum: The Community School uses a number of specialized curricula to support student learning. Individualized accommodations and modifications are applied based on student need with extensive use of assistive technology to improve access. Some of the formalized curricula includes;

1. Equals Math (access points to grade level along with extensive online materials)
2. Number World (elementary grade level hands on math program)
3. AbleNet STEM program (differentiated into three levels with additional online adapted books)
4. ALL(Accessible Literacy Learning) reading program (adapted reading program for students using picture symbols or combinations of pictures and words).
5. Animated Literacy Reading Program
6. Reading A-Z (online program)
7. First Author writing program
8. Writing Without Tears
9. Unique Learning Systems differentiated fully adapted integrated units
10. News 2 You adapted readers
11. Social Thinking
12. Zones of Regulation

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

Community Based & Community Referenced Instruction Content

All students given parental/guardian permission are eligible to participate in the expansive community based instruction programming. Beginning in preschool, students attend regular field trips related to the curriculum with focus on additional skills such as 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 internships are provided for high school students
4. Banking
5. Animal care
6. Academic/content theme based outings

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

Program staff & services include; special education teachers, reading specialist, vision, deafblind, orientation & mobility services, direct assistive technology services, paraprofessionals, speech, physical & occupational therapists, two fulltime registered nurses, a licensed practical nurse, social worker, adaptive physical education teacher, music therapist, fulltime BCBA,

fulltime masters level behaviorist and a part-time masters level behaviorist. We also offer yoga, therapeutic swimming and therapeutic riding.

The program offers additional services including; onsite wheelchair/equipment repair and ordering, splinting and other equipment needs including free trials prior to purchase. The Children's Hospital Communication Enhancement Clinic holds clinics at the school to work more closely with each student's team. 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.

Program hours from August/September to June are 9:00am to 3:30pm. with the exception of the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month which are early dismissals at 12:00pm. This provides times for professional development programs. The program follows a public school calendar from September to June with the addition of a 7-week summer program.

Home Based Services:

The Community school provides direct home supports for students deemed eligible through their individualized educational planning process. These 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;
 - 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

Program Outcomes

1. The Community School and the QUEST School collaborated to develop a new program to address district referral needs with a focus on;
 - a. Social Skills
 - b. Increasingly complex individualized academic content
 - c. Behavioral & Social/Emotional Supports
 - d. Sensory Supports
 - e. Community based instruction

This goal was met with the first AIM classroom opening August 2015 for students in grades 5-8. All services listed above were put into place and content both adapted and traditional was available to all students. Differentiation was based on learning groups and

individualized needs. Extensive sensory motor supports were needed to help facilitate increased self-regulation across the day. All students focused on learning appropriate strategies to create ownership in this process. Students were able to participate in electives and have an opportunity to make a choice in which ones they may prefer.

Social skills training was a high priority and an area that will require increased support for the 2016-2017 school year. Social skills training and content was integrated into all aspects of the curriculum to support the direct services provided by the therapist facilitating the social skills group. Behavioral supports are provided in a similar fashion. There is both a classroom based behavioral support plan as well as individualized ones as needed. Students are encouraged to assist in monitoring their own behavior and growth in this area.

2. The Community School increased fundraising efforts to support community trips, classroom materials, technology and special events for the students.

This goal was met. The Community School ran its first "Crafting Winter Wishes" fundraiser in December 2015. The fair included; craft tables, raffles, art auction, Joe's Crazy Critters, balloon making etc. The Community School collaborated with the other Collaborative Schools for part of the fundraiser as well with hopes to expand and this fundraiser for the next year. The fundraiser brought in approximately \$11,000 and had just under 800 people attend.

3. Transition Planning for Pond Park to a new location. The new location should support vocational and leisure skill opportunities.

This goal was met. Over the course of the 2015-2016 school year, the Community School Pond Park program focused on ways to improve vocational and transitional programming in combination with a move to a new site.

Randolph Public Schools offered the Collaborative space in their high school. Their high school is an ideal location given the numerous stores across the street (within walking distance), the amenities and recreational supports in the high school and the age appropriate social opportunities with typical peers. Confirmation of the move came in late May with classroom assignments finalized in August.

Community school families impacted received initial notices and had the opportunity to attend information meetings. Some chose to send their child while others chose to have their child placed back at the main Collaborative building in Hingham. Tours were provided to families at flexible times to view the area, building and classrooms. Students began school at Randolph High beginning August 31st, 2016.

MINI SCHOOL PROGRAM ANNUAL REPORT

Maureen M. Gattine, Program Director
2015-2016

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 2015-2016 school year, the Mini School provided educational services to 56 students in classrooms located in Hull at the Jacobs Elementary School, Memorial Middle School, Hull High School and in Randolph at Randolph High School, as well as a small high school classroom located at SSEC. 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. Mary Scott, Program Director for the Mini School retired in June, 2016.

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. 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 that we implemented in January, 2016. They also received annual trainings in policies, procedures, health care, emergency drills, child abuse and neglect and bullying intervention and prevention.

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Delineation of Mini School Staff

Position	FTE
Program Director	1.0
Assistant Program Director	1.0
BCBA	1.0
Parent Home Consultant	1.6
Teachers	12.0
Clinician	1.0
Occupational Therapists (2)	1.6
OT Assistants (1)	1.0

Physical Therapist	.61
Expressive Therapists	.20
Speech Therapists	2.71
Adaptive PE Teacher	1.0
Nurses	2.0
Para Professionals	23.0
Total:	49.72

Traditionally, the Mini School has served students on the autism spectrum who present with developmental delays. Over the past eleven 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. In 2014-2015 we also served this population at the High School level in which two of the students improved in the area of social behavior and transitioned to the South Shore High program. One student remained at the Mini School for the 2015-2016 school year as an 11th grader and has been slowly mainstreamed into the Careers Program for ELA and vocational classes.

At the beginning of the 2014-2015 school year, the Language Enhancement Program, located at the Chapman School in Weymouth, became part of the Mini School program for seventh and eighth graders. This program was phased out in June of 2016. The remaining students were able to successfully go back to their home districts and two of the students transitioned to South Shore High School.

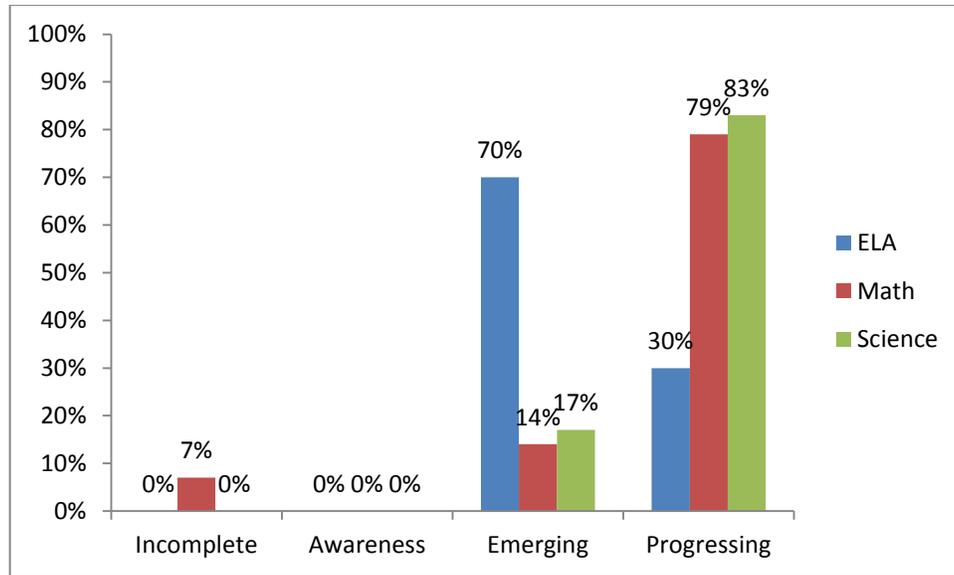
Mini School curriculum emphasizes language based programming, positive behavior management techniques, social skills training and acquisition of functional life skills. Instructional methods include prompt hierarchies, systematic instruction, task analysis, incidental teaching and discrete trial training. 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 Massachusetts core curriculum. 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.

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.

During the 2015-2016 school year, eleven Mini School students participated in standard MCAS in grades 3-8 with accommodations. 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 submitted to the Department of Secondary and Elementary Education in the spring of 2016. Student work can receive a score of incomplete, awareness, emerging and progressing. The Mini School has been aligned with state

averages for MCAS-Alt scores. ELA-Writing requirements in grades 4, 7, and 10 were replaced with an annual ELA writing assessment. Writing was assessed in grades 3-8 and 10. Submission requirements included: 3 final writing samples in any text type from the “Text Types and Purposes” cluster, 1 draft/baseline writing sample for each text type and students used their primary mode of communication to produce writing samples. Scoring was based on a rubric that the teachers scored. The graph below represents the scores of the Mini School students.

Mini School MCAS Alternate Assessment – All Content Area Scores



During the 2015-2016 school year, the youngest Mini School students (grades K-5) attended school in four 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 is provided throughout the school day. 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.

Middle school classrooms were located at the Chapman School in Weymouth and 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 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. At Memorial

Middle School, Mini School students performed the recycling tasks for the school on a weekly basis.

Planning for transition to adulthood is a major component of the curriculum for our high school students. During the 2015-2016 school year, nineteen high school students attended the Mini School classrooms. We had two classrooms located at Hull High School and one classroom moved from Scituate High School to Randolph High School this year. Emphasis is placed on helping students prepare for adulthood. 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, Cohasset Community Center, Senior Elder Services, Holly Hill Farm and Road to Responsibility. Students at Hull High School operated a greenhouse and 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. Community based experiences to stores, restaurants, bowling, etc. happen on a weekly basis. A highlight of the school year for family engagement was our annual walk-a-thon that was held in May. Two Mini School students turned 22 during the 2015-2016 school year. Mini School staff work closely with parents and adult service providers to ensure a smooth transition from school to adult programming.

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.

QUEST PROGRAM ANNUAL REPORT FY 2016

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 issues. 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 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 and depression) comprise other prevalent disorders. These disorders, along with diagnosed specific learning disabilities, make learning a challenge for the majority of our students. This year we also expanded to provide programming for students with intellectual disabilities who have concurrent social skills and mental health needs. Many students struggle to attend school on a daily basis. Once in school, the inability to remain focused combined with mood swings 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 a functional, remedial and academic curriculum which has been aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and integrated with the Common Core.

The Quest Program increased from having 8 to 9 classrooms permanently for the 2015-2016 school year. The ninth classroom was a joint venture with the SSEC Community Program. This classroom, given the name AIM (Achieve, Inspire, Motivate), was 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 required programming more similar to what was available at the Community Program. In conjunction with Patty Mason, Community Program Director, the AIM classroom served 10 students (4 enrolled in the Quest Program) over the course of the school year. The classroom was led by a Special Education teacher with the support of 4 paraprofessionals. In addition, a Quest Program counselor and an OT and SLP from the Community Program rounded out the classroom team. The classroom also accessed both the Quest Art and Gym teachers and the APE teacher from the Community Program. Behavioral support was provided by both programs as needed. Students in the AIM room were able to

participate in electives, field trips and Field Day with the Quest Program while also taking part in trips and outings with the Community Program. Students were also able to access the therapy pool, sailing and horseback riding programs through the Community Program. As with all new ventures, there were challenges throughout the year but the staff worked together to meet the needs of the students each time. By the end of the school year, this classroom was truly a part of both the Community and Quest Programs. Most importantly, SSEC was able to meet the needs of 10 students with challenging and unique needs. Without the AIM class, it is likely these students would have had to travel farther from home to attend school daily. The AIM room is 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, we have expanded to three AIM classrooms for the 2016-2017 school year.

In addition to the AIM classroom, there were some changes made this school year regarding **program staff and service**. For the 2015-2016 school year our staff included: 8 full time certified special needs teachers, 2 part time certified special needs teachers, a part-time PE/Health teacher, a part time Art teacher, 12 classroom aides, 2 part time reading teachers, 4 full time school based clinicians, a clinical psychology intern, a social work intern, a part time occupational therapist, a full time speech and language therapist, 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 the Clinical Director and comprised of a four full time and one part time behavioral aides. An administrative assistant, a full time and a part time school nurse, clinical director, a food service director and two food service aides are shared with two 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 times 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 loss of previously learned skills.

Program Development for the 2014-2015 School Year

This year, the Quest Program continued to implement and expand upon the initiatives begun during previous years. Our most notable change, the AIM classroom, is described above. We welcomed a new doctoral psychology intern and a social work intern. This stability in staffing and in programming allowed us to build on the positive changes implemented the year before. We have continued to offer Health, PE, art and music which has allowed us to create a more well-rounded education for Quest students. These additions also continued to provide 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 new DESE regulations, we have continued to devote considerable resources to data collection. More specifically, we utilized the services of consultant Marc Hauser and his Educata system to track student behavior. This system allowed the staff to track a wider variety of data than in previous years and the program also helped to manage new reporting requirements with regard to time out 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. Importantly, at our IEP meetings we have been able to present collected data in a visually and readily understandable format for parents and district colleagues. Lastly, 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.

Classroom Pods

At the core of service delivery in the Quest Program is the “pod” model. Each of the nine 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 aide, 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 drafting 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 sixth year, the pod model has evolved to incorporate the data collection completed by all 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.

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 four “settling” rooms, two quiet study rooms, a sensory room, a comfort room, an office for the behavior specialist 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. 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 3,400 times during the course of the year.

The Quest Program also continued to benefit from the shift made three years ago from CPI to the NAPPI, Int. NAPPI stands for Non-Aggressive Psychological and Physical Intervention. The primary reason the program switched to NAPPI is that their program's floor restraint is safer for students and staff. This program also provides more staff training in de-escalation and psychological intervention than previous programs. The switch to NAPPI, along with minimal turnover of the program's behavioral staff, has continued to help us decrease the use of physical restraint in the Quest Program. During the 2015-2016 school year, a change in DESE regulations impacted how restraints were tracked and reported. Previously, a NAPPI assist, utilized to safely move students from one location to another, was not considered a physical restraint. During the 2014-2015 school year, Quest utilized the assist 289 times. There were 16 other physical interventions during the 2014-2015 school year, for a total of 305 interventions. During the 2015-2016 school year, we had 21 physical restraints that were not assists, with the increase from 8 to 9 classrooms. However, we decreased the number of NAPPI assists to 245 in 2015-2016 for a total of 266 instances of physical intervention. 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 with some of the most challenging behaviors.

Social Skills Curriculum

As a program, we adopted the Social Thinking® Curriculum in 2010 and the language and concepts of the curriculum continued 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 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. 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 behavioral staff continues to use Social Behavior Maps to guide processing of behavioral incidents with students and students throughout the program 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 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.

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 now 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. All professional staff participated in a one day follow up in March 2016 while the paraprofessionals were able to take part in a one day overview of the Responsive Classroom method. 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 Quest staff greatly appreciated this professional development opportunity.

Bully 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 was discussed at one of the Parent Support Group Meetings and was 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 social skills groups, in individual therapy sessions, and in IEP goals to ensure that Quest is a safe and respectful environment for all students.

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. Not only did students participate in a weekly music class, our music therapist helped organize students from Quest and other programs to sing holiday carols at a local nursing home.

Quest students participated in an educational field trip to the Franklin Park Zoo in September and visited a corn maze and pumpkin patch during October. In November, we held our annual Thanksgiving Feast, which was attended by over two hundred parents and extended families this year. 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.

Quest students went caroling at a local nursing home for the winter holidays and then celebrated the Winter Solstice with a brunch here at school. Other field trips and activities included a trip to the Museum of Science, a trip to a roller skating rink and a live animal demonstration at the school. Quest students also held a can drive to benefit a local food pantry and collected 240 canned goods.

In the spring, our 6th and 7th graders participated in a ropes course to build relationships and trust among our current middle school students. The 8th grade students also took a trip to Dave and Buster's to celebrate their graduation from middle school. Field Day was attended by most Quest students. Our gym teacher and the staff organized games, noncompetitive activities and art activities. Again the entire Quest community, including all the students in the AIM classroom, was involved in the field day activities. This year's graduation of 12 eighth grade students was attended by the entire school as well as the student's family and friends. The graduation was held in the gym and was another opportunity to showcase the progress our students make throughout the year.

Quest also continued our relationship with Holly Hill Farm, with students visiting weekly to learn about growing organic vegetables and caring for the farm animals. A farmer from Holly Hill also visited our school and helped our 1st, 2nd, and 3rd graders plant their own garden and learn how to compost. These are just some of the learning opportunities and activities available to Quest students this year.

Summer Program:

The 2015 Summer Program was very successful, with 63 students enrolled. This was a significant increase from 58 students the previous summer. 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.

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 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 to the weekly communication, parent council meetings were held.

This school year we again offered a Quest Parent/Guardian Support Group. The group was co-facilitated by two clinicians. The purpose of this group is to keep parents informed of the happenings at Quest, such as the new social skills curriculum, as well as provide a forum for parents to get support and share strategies and resources. Childcare was provided. Participation was limited so the group did not meet in the spring. A presentation by Dr. E. Englander of the MARC Program was offered in the spring for SSEC parents

In addition, families were included in the Thanksgiving feast and graduation as described above.

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 begun to provide in-home behavioral services to current and former 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.

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 was given an iPad or laptop to use for instruction, data collection and accessing teach point and working on the DESE teacher evaluation. Students continue to use iPads to support their learning. A set of 9 student iPads continues to be shared among the classrooms. A schedule was created and teachers were able to sign out the iPads for classroom use. Teachers utilized the iPads for interactive lessons and classes also read books on the iPads using Bookshare. Staff were given time to swap useful sites and apps with each other. Each Quest classroom continues to have an interactive white board along with at least two desktop computers. Students are able to access the computer lab several times a week as well as a set of laptops that can be used in the classrooms. Teachers had access to an Instructional Technology consultant who was available to provide 1:1 support and training. Members of the Tech Committee also provided training in available technology to interested staff members.

Quest School Handbook:

A school handbook was revised before school reopened in the fall of 2015. 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 included in this report.

Year in Summary

In total, the Quest Program serviced 82 students in total this school year. We began the school year with 67 students and ended the year with 70 students. The 82 students that we serviced came from a total of 28 different school systems.

We serviced 15 S.T.A.R.T.S. students (45 day assessments). Two students returned to their sending school after the assessment period, two students required different school setting and 11 students remained at the Quest Program for the remainder of the school year.

During the 2015-2016 school year, 1 student required a more restrictive setting and 5 moved to more appropriate day school settings. Over the course of the school year, 9 students returned to their sending district. In June we graduated twelve 8th grade students. Of the 12 students, 5 students attend South Shore High School and 1 student attends the Careers Program at the South Shore Educational Collaborative. Three students returned to their sending district for high school and three went to other school programs. In total, 12 students (15 percent of those serviced) were able to return to their sending district from the Quest Program.

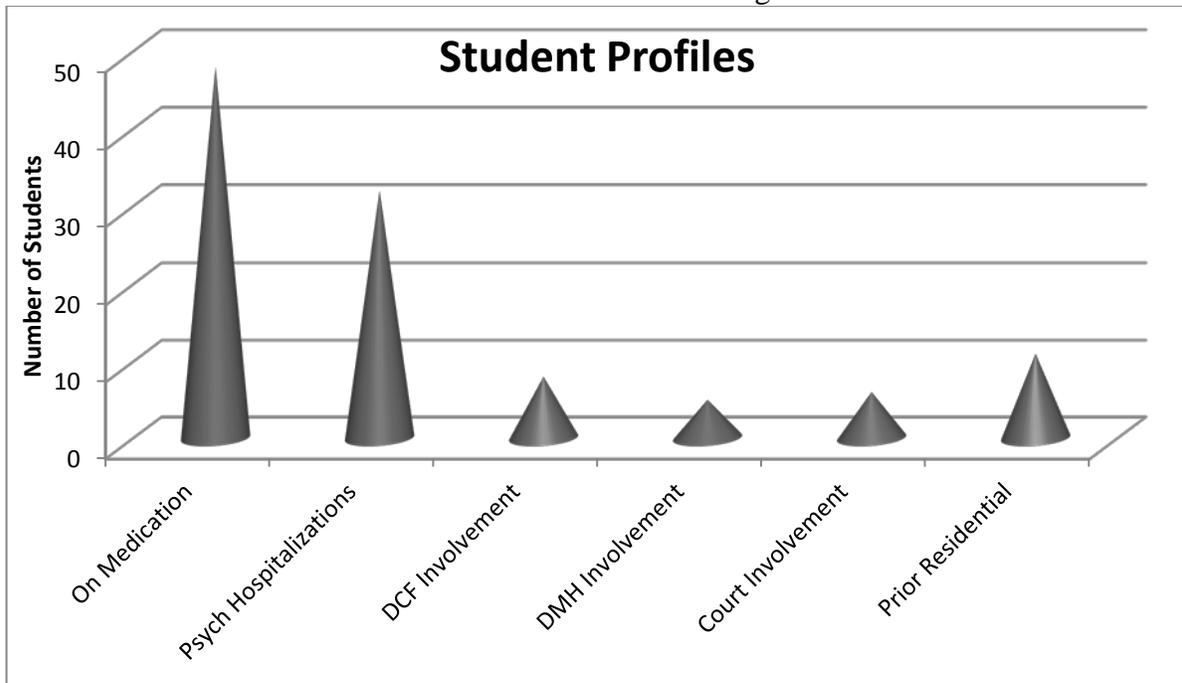
Quest had a steadily increasing enrollment over the course of the school year. The enrollment was at capacity by the end of the school year. Numbers continued to grow over the summer of 2016 and Quest began the 2016-2017 school year with 68 students.

REPORT FROM THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR
SOUTH SHORE HIGH SCHOOL
2015-2016

Program Description, Students, and Staff

Students referred to South Shore High have emotional, behavioral, and academic problems that make it difficult for them to function in a larger, less structured environment. All of the students have special needs as defined by Chapter 766. Many students have complicated lives, sometimes with community-based agencies involved in their treatment. Table One provides a visual representation of the services represented by our students. Eighty percent of this year's students are prescribed medication to help them manage their diagnoses. Fifty-three percent have received treatment in a psychiatric hospital. Thirteen percent of this year's students have DCF involvement and eight percent have DMH involvement. Ten percent of this year's students have court involvement, predominately due to CHINS petitions. Eighteen percent of students have prior or current out-of-home placements. It is interesting to note that, compared to prior years, there has been a significant decrease in the students who have the support of agencies other than their sending school district.

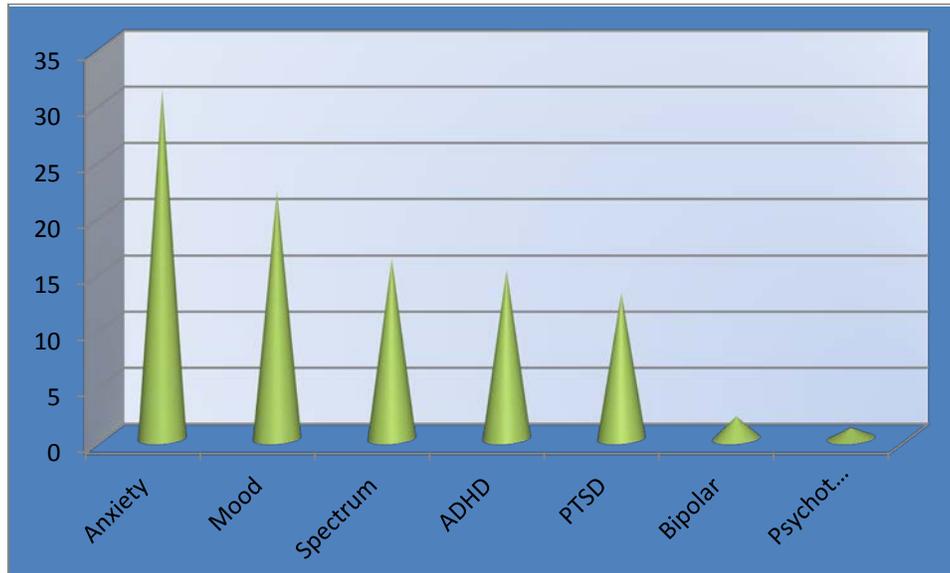
Table 1
Student Profiles at South Shore High School



The great majority of the students at South Shore High have one or more major diagnoses which impact their ability to learn in a less restrictive setting. Most students carry a diagnosis of anxiety (fifty-two percent), coupled with a mood disorder (thirty-seven percent). Major depression is a common diagnosis, along with dysthymic disorder and generalized mood disorder. The primary diagnosis for twenty-eight percent of our students is spectrum disorder, with social communication disorders describing the great majority of these diagnoses. Twenty-five percent of our students are diagnosed with attention deficit disorder. The percentage of students at South

Shore High who are diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder is twenty-three percent. Three percent of our students have been diagnosed with a bipolar disorder and two percent are diagnosed with psychotic features. A visual representing these statistics follows in Table 2.

Table 2
Student Diagnoses at SSHS



The teaching staff (see Table 3) is all certified in their subject areas and the majority is certified in special education. More than fifty percent of the students from South Shore High attend college after graduation so the teaching staff must be strong in their subject areas. They are trained to be aware of various learning styles and in methods of differentiating instruction. In addition the staff participates in workshops to enhance their skills. South Shore High has a Transition Skills curriculum that begins in grade nine and that instructs students in developing the skills base to successfully transition after high school graduation. South Shore High offers behavioral support through the active development of a positive student climate. A doctoral level clinical psychologist supervises the milieu staff and works with the staff and the student population to increase the range of effective coping strategies to improve student functioning. The program offers formal and informal therapeutic support to students during the school day provided by LICSW therapists, as well as medication oversight by a board certified child and adolescent psychiatrist.

Table 3
Staff of SSHS

Number of staff employed by discipline:

- 1 Program Director
- 1 Behavior Specialist/Assistant Program Director
- 8 Teachers
- 2 Academic Paraprofessionals

.6	Transition Specialist
.3	Clinical Director
3.2	Therapists
6	Milieu Paraprofessionals
.3	Nurse
.85	Secretary

Students:

A total of 60 students were in placement for all or part of this school year. Average monthly enrollment was as follows:

Table 4
Monthly Enrollment

South Shore High	
September 2015	45
October	50
November	48
December	50
January 2016	52
February	53
March	52
April	53
May	54
June	55

This is an alternative educational and therapeutic program designed to meet the special needs of its student population. Principles of both CBT (Cognitive Behavioral Therapy) and CPS (Collaborative Problem Solving) are used in the work done with students. When a student exhibits struggles, the staff works with the student to determine what underlies the behavior, and to help the student understand triggers and effective coping strategies. A vital component of the school is teaching verbal communication skills. Students learn to accept constructive criticism and share feelings and emotions. They learn skills in conflict resolution and negotiation. A school-to-work component trains students in job readiness skills and assists in placing students at volunteer and paid employment sites.

Students are assigned courses designed to meet the graduation requirements from their sending school system. They are placed in classes according to their ability levels. Classes are small (8:1), with the majority of students “mainstreamed”, changing classes by subject. The curriculum at South Shore High is designed to model that of their public schools, as closely as possible considering the small size of the setting. In addition, students are offered options to take classes through online curriculum (Virtual Learning Academy), through independent study classes

designed between the student and the teacher, or to take community-based college classes through dual enrollment or through a setting such as the MFA. Students use these options for credit recovery, to pursue a particular academic interest, or to bridge the skills needed to transition to post-secondary education. All students are encouraged to return to their sending school before graduation, but the severity of problems often makes South Shore High the least restrictive educational setting. Upon meeting the graduation requirements of their sending school system, students graduate with a diploma from their sending school.

One of the classes at South Shore High is designed to work more with students who experience deficits in social pragmatics. The design of this classroom is more self-contained. The students remain in the classroom for three of their academic subjects, and they travel as a group, with the classroom paraprofessional, to their other three classes. This classroom generally serves students with significant social comprehension difficulties, generally students who have spectrum disorders. The class is called the Transition Room, as the focus is preparing students to transition into more mainstreamed classes as they demonstrate readiness.

Program Outcome Evaluation

A review of this year's outcomes indicates that approximately between eighty-eight and ninety-three percent of our students have been able to achieve the goals outlined in our program outcomes. Important in understanding the statistical outcomes is the fact that the students referred to South Shore High were experiencing significant difficulties in these identified areas before placement, often receiving failing grades, refusing to attend school, earning numerous suspension days, and/or spending significant periods of time in a psychiatric setting. Many students who do not reach the desired level of attendance and credit are still achieving significantly higher standards than they were before placement. The strong attendance outreach component has contributed to the number of students meeting program outcomes.

Program Evaluation and Outcomes

In line with the school's Mission Statement, student progress is monitored by the following program outcomes:

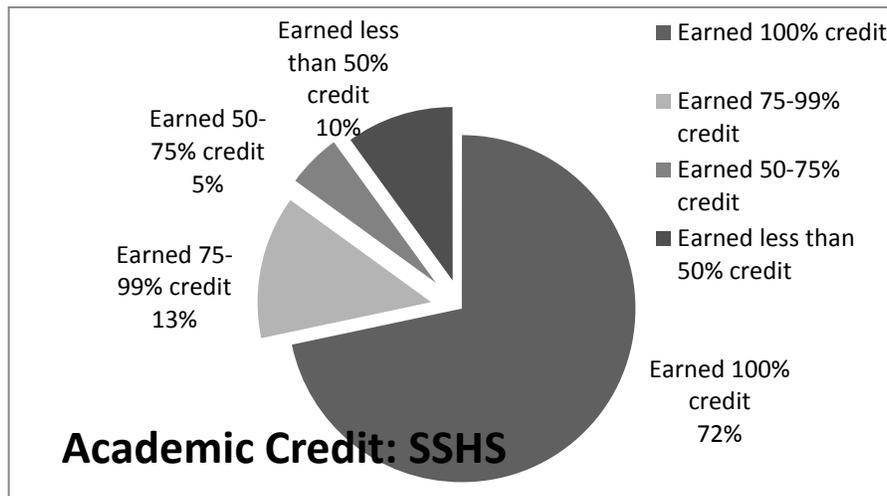
- The student will receive passing grades and earn academic credit in courses.
- The student will maintain at least 85% attendance.
- The student will receive the supports and interventions necessary to avoid receiving out of school suspensions.
- The student will demonstrate clinical stability by maintaining or improving their functioning as determined by the GAF (Global Assessment of Functioning).

Analysis and Discussion of Evaluation By Outcome:

- Outcome One: The student will receive passing grades and earn academic credit in courses.

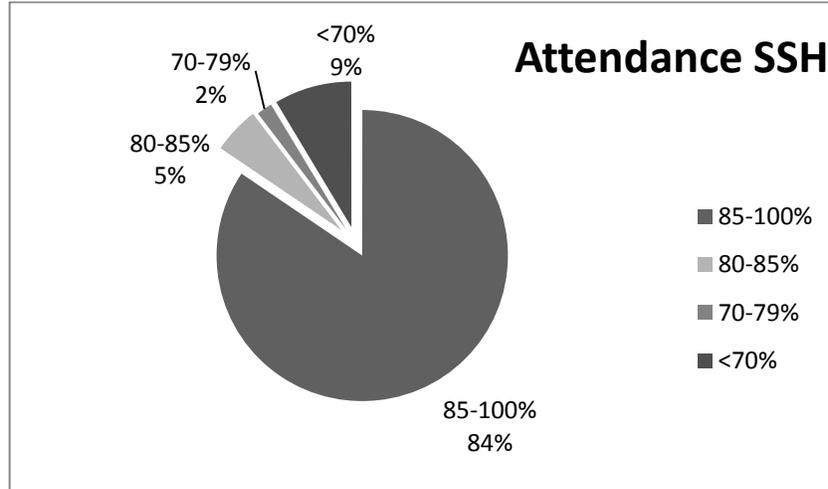
- See Chart 1 for a delineation of this outcome. Performance on Outcome One is strong as indicated by data from final report cards, showing mastery of Outcome One. Seventy-two percent of the students earned 100% of their academic credit. Thirteen percent earned 75-99% of their credit, Five percent earned 50-74% of their credit and ten percent earned less than 50% of their credit. As would be expected, student performance on this outcome is closely correlated with their attendance rate. The low staff to student ratio and the myriad of interventions available to students at South Shore High allow students who have previously been unsuccessful academically to experience academic success and to find hope for their futures.

Chart 1



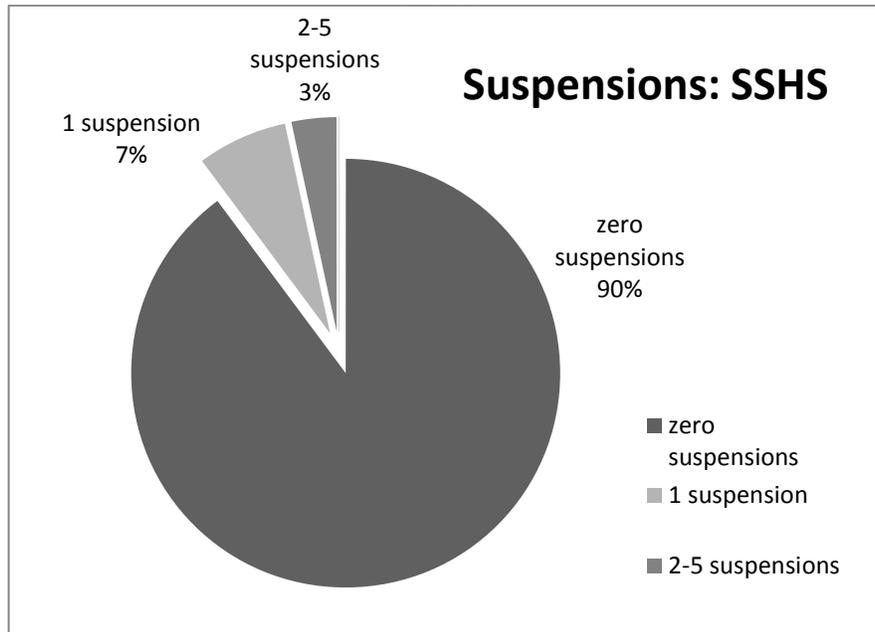
- Outcome Two: The student will maintain at least 85% attendance.
- See chart 2 for a detailing of this outcome. School attendance records yield the data regarding attendance. Performance on Outcome Two at South Shore High is strong, with ninety percent of the student population able to meet the stated outcome. The records indicate that seventy-three percent of the student population showed an attendance rate of 90% or higher. Seventeen percent of the students attended between 80 and 89% of the time. Two percent attended between 70 and 79% of the time. Eight percent of the students attended less than seventy percent of the time. The Team decision for most of these students was that they required a more restrictive level of service. Many students enrolled at SSHS demonstrated chronic truancy before entering placement. The results of this data are in large part due to the aggressive and comprehensive attendance outreach program that involves daily calls and in-home interventions for truant and school phobic students.

Chart 2



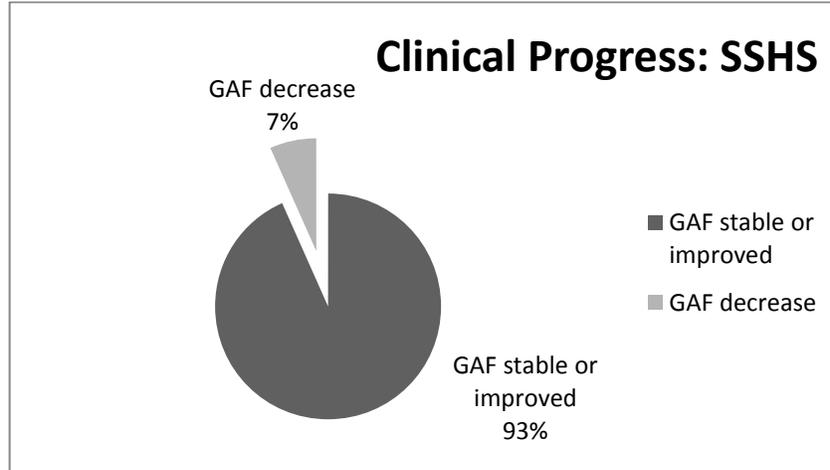
- Outcome Three: The student will receive the supports and interventions necessary to avoid receiving out of school suspensions.
- See Chart 3 for a depiction of this outcome. The data on Outcome Three indicates that ninety percent of our students were able to meet this goal. Seven percent of the students received one suspension day, three percent received two or three suspension days, and no students received greater than three suspension days. An analysis of the data regarding suspensions indicates that the majority of suspensions occur during the initial months of placement, when students are still learning to trust that staff will be able to assist them in problem solving. The great majority of suspensions are for actions taken due to difficulty finding effective coping strategies. There is a significant decrease in suspensions when a student has been in placement long enough to learn their triggers and better responses.

Chart 3



- **Outcome 4:** The student will demonstrate clinical stability by maintaining or improving their functioning as determined by their GAF score.
- Data in Chart 4 supports that Outcome Four was met. In order to assess the clinical progress of students enrolled in South Shore High School, the Global Assessment of Functioning Rating Scale is used. The GAF scale is the accepted measurement tool for functioning within the mental health field and is contained in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM IV). In September each student is assigned a GAF score. At the conclusion of the school year the Clinical Team reconvenes, re-evaluates functioning level, and assigns a revised GAF score. Data indicates that this year ninety-three percent of the student population demonstrated stability or improvement in their GAF score.

Chart 4



Significant Achievements for the Year

This has been a year of significant growth at South Shore High School. The following notes highlights of the year:

- The most exciting development in the past year was the award of a significant grant to develop a 3D printing lab and engineering class. The curriculum and training is being supported by a collaboration with the 3D printing and engineering lab at Northeastern University. A cohort of six students will participate in the program during the 2016-2017 school year.
- South Shore High continued to offer a positive behavior approach to student transgressions, ensuring that any suspension days were served in school, allowing the students to receive all services during their suspension. Staff works hard to ensure that they develop strong, supportive relationships with students so that they are able to assist students in exploring their triggers and developing the strategies that help them solve their difficulties without engaging in problem behaviors.
- Twenty-five percent of the South Shore High student population either earned their high school diploma or returned to their sending schools last year.
- New curriculum offerings were available for our student population, adding gym and art classes with teachers certified in those content areas, offering production and marketing classes in the field of graphic arts, accessing a new provider for online curriculum, and expanding the number of students able to take dual enrollment classes at local colleges.
- Clinicians joined with our speech and language specialist to run joint social pragmatics and relational groups to the great benefit of our student population.

- Collaboration between the programs at SSEC continued to grow during the 2015-2016 school year, with students from South Shore High and Careers able to access curricular offerings in both programs. This has allowed students within the Career High School to experience more challenging curriculum and students from South Shore High to become involved in more project-based learning.
- More milieu staffing was provided within the classrooms at South Shore High, supporting students in their efforts to remain in the classroom when experiencing stress.
- The science teacher incorporated the Wellness Garden into her Botany curriculum, coordinating her efforts with the Greenhouse program and with our Culinary Arts program. Students had the experience of planning and implementing a garden project, maintaining it through the summer session, and harvesting in the fall. Students were involved in use of the produce through our culinary arts program and had the pleasure of enjoying the harvest along with the many compliments they received.
- Two additional staff members were trained by NAPPI personnel to conduct restraint trainings for staff. This will allow us to conduct monthly staff trainings throughout the year with the focus on relationship building and supporting students in making healthy choices.
- Three staff members chaperoned a trip to the 911 Memorial in New York City for the senior class. It was a meaningful trip and many seniors spoke of it as the highlight of their high school years. The senior class also managed several fundraising projects which helped with the funding of this trip and with the costs associated with their senior prom, held on the Spirit of Boston.

Home and Community Involvement

Parents are encouraged to take an active part in their children's education. Regular communication by email, phone, and mail is maintained throughout the school year. Parents are contacted on a weekly basis, if not more frequently, for their input and to share information about progress and any concerns. Parents participate in yearly educational planning and are involved when changes occur in their child's educational program. An annual Open House is held, providing an opportunity for parents to experience their son/daughter's schedule. In addition parent conferences are held twice a year, in November and in February when parents are given an opportunity to meet the program teachers, therapists, and aides to discuss their child's performance.

Regular communication is maintained with the student's sending school system. School liaisons are kept informed on the progress and struggles of their students.

Many of our students are involved with outside agencies. It is important for the school, parents, and community agencies to support each other and coordinate efforts to better serve our students. Some of the agencies involved include:

Department of Children and Families

Department of Mental Health

Division of Youth Services

Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission

South Shore Mental Health

Hingham, Quincy, Brockton, Plymouth, Dedham Courts

MARC (Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center)

The Asperger/Autism Network (AANE)

Norfolk County Sheriff's Department

BayState Community Services

Career One Stop

Various treatment centers and hospitals throughout the region

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

ANNUAL REPORT 2015-2016

Anne Rowland, Psy.D. Program Coordinator

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The S.T.A.R.T.S. (Short-Term Assessment and Return to School) Program is an Alternative Interim Educational Setting (A.I.E.S.) which provides educational, psychological and psychiatric assessment for students who are having serious difficulties in their school and require evaluation to better understand their problem behavior and learning styles. It now accommodates students in grades K-12, for up to 45 school days, after which recommendations for future educational and psychiatric supports are made. For high school age students, STARTS Program students have been assessed while in small classrooms (8-10 students) within the South Shore High School (SSHS) or the Careers High School. Elementary and middle school age students are assessed while in small classrooms (7-8 students) within the Quest Program. In the past, 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 program. For example, opportunities for job interest exploration (Graphic Design and Greenhouse, e.g.) are available through the Careers High School and are incorporated into the assessment. Careers HS 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.

The STARTS Program enrolled 24 students for assessment; 13 males and 11 females. This is the first year there were not significantly more males than females.

Four evaluations were completed within SSHS, 15 were completed in Quest, 5 were completed within the Careers HS. Again this year, as evidence of the effort to share services within the building, one student began in one SSEC program and moved to another program in an effort to complete a more effective evaluation and better meet the students' needs. This indicates a continuation of greater collaboration between programs, a movement that dramatically increased throughout the summer and into the fall of the 2015-16 academic year.

This was the tenth year that a pre-doctoral psychology level intern was placed at SSEC via the South Shore Mental Health internship program, which allowed STARTS to continue to assess elementary age students for evaluation. Within Quest, the intern, Emily Ring, completed 15 evaluations. Alli Mitchell, LICSW completed eight evaluations (three in SSHS and five in Careers HS), and Tim Handorf, LICSW, completed a partial evaluation (an agreement was made with the district that there would be no summary report written) within SSHS.

Referrals came either from districts' mainstream classrooms or their alternative classrooms within mainstream buildings (one from a private school). This has been the 13th operational year of the STARTS Program. 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, and this past year 24 were enrolled.

This year, upon completion of the STARTS assessment, five students (21%) returned to their district school (including one who returned to private school). Two students were referred to more restrictive programs after their STARTS assessment, and the remainder (71%) continued in SSEC in the program in which they were placed for evaluation (Quest, Careers, SSH), including one who moved to the Mini School.

Percentages of students remaining at SSEC programs from STARTS 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, and this past year 71% remained in SSEC programs after their STARTS evaluation.

Table 1
Primary and Secondary Diagnoses of Students
(DSM-IV and DSM-V)

<u>Primary and Secondary Diagnoses:</u>	<u>Number of Students/Year</u>			
	<u>'12-'13</u>	<u>'13 – '14</u>	<u>'14-'15</u>	<u>'15-'16</u>
Bipolar Disorder	0	1	1	2
Learning Disorder (Intell Dis)	3	1	3	2
Anxiety Dis/Social Phobia	6	5	10	10
PTSD(Spec'd Trauma)	2	2	5	3
ODD (DMDD)	7	6	7	5
Conduct Disorder	0	0	1	3
Substance Abuse	2	0	3	2
ADHD/ADD	5	2	12	9
PDD/Asperger's(ASD)	3	6	9	4
OCD	0	1	2	0
Mood Disorder/Dep'n	8	1	6	2
Personality Dis Traits	0	1	0	0
Social Comm'n Dis	n/a	n/a	2	1
Unspec'd Neuro Dis	n/a	n/a	1	0

The primary and secondary diagnoses are listed in the statistics chart (Table 1). All students presented with multiple diagnoses. Since most STARTS student 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. The past two years have been transition years of utilizing both DSM-IV and DSM-V diagnoses; now only DSM-V diagnoses are being used.

Despite the changes in diagnostic criteria between the DSM-IV and V, just looking at the categories of disorders, one can see there is a decrease in depressive mood disorders, ADHD, and ASD, and a continued higher number of anxiety diagnoses.

Table 2
Enrollment by District

<u>DISTRICT</u>	<u>NUMBER of STUDENTS ENROLLED</u>				
	<u>'11-'12</u>	<u>'12-'13</u>	<u>'13-'14</u>	<u>'14-'15</u>	<u>'15-'16</u>
Braintree	5	4	1	3	2
Bridge/Raynham	1	0	1	0	0
Canton	0	0	0	0	0
Cohasset	1	2	0	0	2
Easton	0	0	0	1	2
Foxboro Regional Charter	0	0	0	1	0
Hanover	0	1	0	0	0
Hingham	0	1	0	4	2
Holbrook	0	1	0	0	0
Hull	3	1	3	5	5
King Philip RSD	0	0	0	0	1
Mansfield	0	0	0	1	0
Marshfield	1	0	0	1	0
Middleboro	1	1	0	0	0
Milton	1	1	1	1	1
Norwell	1	0	1	5	2
Pembroke	0	0	0	1	0
Plymouth	0	0	0	0	0
Quincy	0	1	1	3	1
Randolph	0	1	0	1	0
Rockland	0	0	0	0	1
Scituate	2	1	3	0	3
Sharon	2	0	0	1	1
Silver Lake	0	2	2	1	0
South Shore VT	0	0	0	1	0
Stoughton	1	3	0	1	0
Taunton	0	0	0	0	1
Walpole	0	0	0	1	0
Westwood	0	0	0	0	0
Weymouth	3	1	3	6	0
Whitman/Han	0	0	1	0	0

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

In terms of outcome measures, the major goal of the STARTS Program 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.

Again this year, STARTS had multiple repeat referrals (both within this year and from previous years) from districts (Table 2), indicating a level of satisfaction through meeting these goals for the districts. One exception is Weymouth who did not refer any students to STARTS this year, which is a first for this district. Referrals continue to come from member districts (17) and other surrounding towns (7) similar to previous years, including one district/school (Taunton) that had not referred to STARTS previously. This was the second year the referring districts were asked to fund the optional psychiatric evaluation completed by Dr. Jeff Turley (instead of the family’s insurance being billed by South Shore Mental Health). Nearly all the districts continued to request the evaluation despite the increased cost.

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 enables STARTS to accept a greater range of students. We hope to increase STARTS enrollment within other SSEC programs, which will require increased travelling of the STARTS clinicians where needed. But this will allow other programs and other students opportunity for evaluation as requested by the districts. Next year, STARTS also plans to build upon its service of providing greater consultation within the districts by increasing the number of classroom visits.

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.