

SOUTH SHORE EDUCATIONAL COLLABORATIVE

ANNUAL REPORT

TO THE COLLABORATIVE BOARD of DIRECTORS

2013 - 2014

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SOUTH SHORE EDUCATIONAL COLLABORATIVE BOARD MEMBERS

2013 - 2014

Henry W. Perrin, Ed.D.	Executive Director
Maureen Murray, Ed.D.	Braintree Public Schools
Barbara Cataldo Vice Chairperson	Cohasset Public Schools
Dorothy Galo, Ph.D.	Hingham Public Schools
Kathleen Tyrell, Ed.D.	Hull Public Schools
Scott Borstel, Ed.D.	Marshfield Public Schools
Matthew A. Keegan	Norwell Public Schools
Richard DeCristofaro, Ed.D. Chairperson	Quincy Public Schools
Steven Moore Interim Superintendent	Randolph Public Schools
John McCarthy	Scituate Public Schools
Kenneth Salim, Ed.D.	Weymouth Public Schools

STAFF OF THE SOUTH SHORE EDUCATIONAL COLLABORATIVE
2013 – 2014

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Gina Manzo	Program Secretary
Mary Scott	Mini School Program Director
Karen Thomsen	Program Secretary
Michelina Berg	Language Enhancement / Learning
Laurie Dolan	Disabilities Program
Timothy Handorf	Clinical Director
Amy Norton	South Shore High School Program
Lisa Penzo-Johnson	Director
Jennie Williams	Program Secretary
Lisa Penzo-Johnson	Quest Program Coordinator
B. Corie Fehsenfeld, Ed.D.	Program Secretary
Lauren Clark	Careers Program Director
Dawn Flaherty, OTR/L	Program Secretary
Anne Rowland	Director of Ancillary Services
	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 2013- 2014 school year.

The process of moving SSEC from 90 Industrial Park Road in Hingham and settling into the new school building at 75 Abington Street in Hingham took place during fiscal year 2014. This relocation project was initiated and implemented as a result of the strategic plan that was approved for 2011-2016. The new building is 86,000 square feet which is approximately 25,000 square feet larger than the building at 90 Industrial Park Rd. After several years of planning, four of the SSEC schools and the administrative offices relocated and began daily operation in July, 2013 at the new building. The Community School for students with complex physical, medical and educational needs has seen an increase in enrollment for several years. The former building was not able to meet facility requirements to provide a safe and adequate environment for the students. Specially designed classrooms, physical and occupational therapy area, bathrooms, and a therapeutic salt water pool are improvements that 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 the new building and have access to improved technology infrastructure, classroom space, culinary center, greenhouse and gymnasium. The building project was made possible with the support of the management of Foxrock Properties by including improvements SSEC may not have been able to afford. Recognition and appreciation are noted for Dr. Dorothy Galo, Dr. Donald Beaudette and Ms. Mary Jo Livingston who were board members that served as the building committee during this initiative.

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 this year.

The strategic plan that was approved in March, 2011 has been utilized as a planning guide as decisions are made for student programs, personnel and facilities.

The leadership team of SSEC considers the goals and objectives that are included in the plan while building the budget and making decisions for personnel, programs, facilities and technology.

2. General Information

The South Shore Educational Collaborative (SSEC) principal address is 75 Abington Street Hingham, MA 02043. The executive director and administrators for SSEC are available at this location. The telephone number is 781-749-7518. This annual report provides a summary of the schools, services and programs for the academic and fiscal year July 2013-June, 2014.

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.

3. Governance and Leadership

The SSEC is governed by a board of directors comprised of the superintendents from member districts. Each school and program has a director or coordinator who reports to the executive director. The program directors are responsible for daily operations. The board members and SSEC administrators for fiscal year 2014 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 2014:

Braintree	Maureen Murray, Ed.D.
Cohasset	Barbara Cataldo
Hingham	Dorothy Galo, Ph.D.
Hull	Kathleen Tyrell, Ed.D.
Marshfield	Scott Borstel, Ed.D.
Norwell	Matthew Keegan
Quincy	Richard DeCristofaro, Ed.D.
Randolph	Steven Moore
Scituate	John McCarthy
Weymouth	Kenneth Salim, Ed.D.

The SSEC had a change in board members this year from Braintree, Dr. Maureen Murray and Randolph, Mr. Steven Moore.

During the past few years, SSEC has been making changes to the Language Enhancement Program to keep enrollment at a level of sustainability. As the year was coming to an end, a final decision was made to merge the Language Enhancement classrooms (2) with the Mini School. The program enrollment has been declining as school districts developed programs to meet the needs of the students that have reading and language learning needs. One of the goals of SSEC is to meet the needs of the member districts.

4. Programs and Services Provided

The SSEC school and program information presented later in this report will clearly define the goals and outcomes of the program 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.

5. Cost Effectiveness of Programs and Services

Each year brings program and financial challenges as difficult decisions need to be made. Overall, this year has been very positive. The enrollments in the schools and programs have been steady throughout the year.

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 have an impact on the annual budget of \$18,268,214. for fy 2014.

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. The SSEC leases two buildings and classroom space in Weymouth, Hingham, Cohasset 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 requires a substantially separate location with the ongoing goal of considering the return to a traditional school whenever feasible. The SSEC school building is licensed by DESE and is 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 leases 7 classrooms 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 14 tuition- \$62,100. (includes summer)
Private School-Perkins Watertown fy 14 tuition- \$107,240.
Private School- BC Campus School fy 14 tuition- \$74,382.
Possible savings per student (107students) w/o transportation factor = \$12,282. - \$45,140.

SSEC Mini School- fy 14 tuition- \$55,369. (includes summer)
Private School- Boston Higashi fy14 tuition- \$70,429.
Private School- May Institute fy 14 tuition- \$82,812.
Possible savings per student (63students) w/o transportation factor = \$15,060. - \$27,443.

SSEC Quest School fy 14 tuition- \$45,884. (includes summer)
Private School- Brandon fy 14 tuition- \$48,354.
Private School- Granite Academy fy 13 tuition- \$59,367.
Possible savings per student (57 students) w/o transportation factor = \$2,470. - \$13,483.

SSEC SSH and Careers fy 14 tuition- \$43,217. (includes summer)
Private School- Compass fy 14 tuition- \$53,778.
Private School- Home for Little Wanderers S.E. fy 14 tuition- \$47,933.
Possible savings per student (86 students) w/o transp. factor = \$4,716. up to \$10,561.

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.

6. Progress toward achieving the purpose and objectives

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has approved the agreement with SSEC this year 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.

This year a licensure program for school administrators enrolled the first cohort of graduate students. The licensure program was approved this year 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 W.I.D.A. course. Recent DESE approval was also awarded to SSEC to provide the required Sheltered English Immersion classes. 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

The 2013-2014 school year has been challenging and exciting. The Board of Directors support of the strategic plan has allowed the SSEC to move forward. The directors' reports that follow provide specific detail and data of the programs and schools of SSEC for the 2013-2014 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 2013-2014

STAFF AND STUDENT POPULATION:

Occupational/Physical/Speech Therapy Services-

During the 2013-2014 school year, The South Shore Educational Collaborative employed a full-time occupational therapist/ therapy supervisor, nine physical therapists (six full time, three part-time) , six physical therapy assistants (five full-time and one part-time), twelve occupational therapists (ten full time, two part-time), and four full-time certified occupational therapy assistants, seventeen speech-language pathologists (14 full time, 3 part-time) . Therapists have conducted evaluations, and provided direct and consultative services for students in six Collaborative programs, and four 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. Therapy consult services were also provided for adults with multiple disabilities in the Collaborative Adult Program. However, therapy consult services were discontinued at the end of June 2014 when a new agency assumed responsibility for services in the adult program.

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 six Collaborative programs, and ten member school districts. Services to outside school districts were provided based upon availability of staff.

During the 2013-2014 school year, the South Shore Educational Collaborative Center for Assistive Technology Team (CAT Team) consisted of a coordinator, a teacher, an assistive technology specialist, 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 weekly consultation to SSEC programs and to school districts who requested this service.

SSEC Therapy and Assistive Technology Service Outcomes for 2013-2014 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 2013-2014 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%	19%	3%
Accommodations/Modifications	9%	0%	11%
*Consultation	8%	6%	3%
*Direct therapy service in context	8%	23%	8%
*Direct therapy service in and out of context	36%	31%	48%
*Direct therapy service out of context	35%	21%	27%

*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.

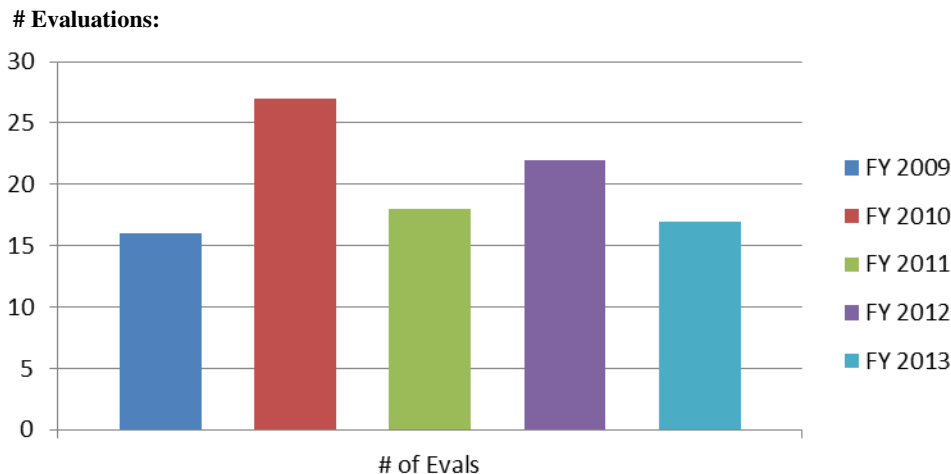
Outcome #2:

Students referred by SSEC programs and member districts for Assistive Technology services will be evaluated by the CAT Team and provided with appropriate recommendations for cost effective AT tools, techniques, and follow-up services. This outcome was measured by the number of students evaluated by the CAT Team during the 2013-2014 school year.

Evaluation Design:

Data was collected and tallied for each activity by the CAT Team. The data was collected on trimester schedule format since most of the AT services are provided from September to June.

Figure 2



Analysis/Discussion:

During the 2013-2014 school year, the CAT Team completed seventeen Assistive Technology evaluations for students who were referred by a Special Education Administrator. There was a 23% decrease in referrals for evaluations from the previous year. However, in addition to the A.T. evaluations, the CAT team also conducted nineteen consultations for students in school district settings.

Following each evaluation and consultation, the CAT team generated a report that included assistive technology recommendations and provided samples or trial software when applicable. The CAT team also attended teams meetings to discuss report findings.

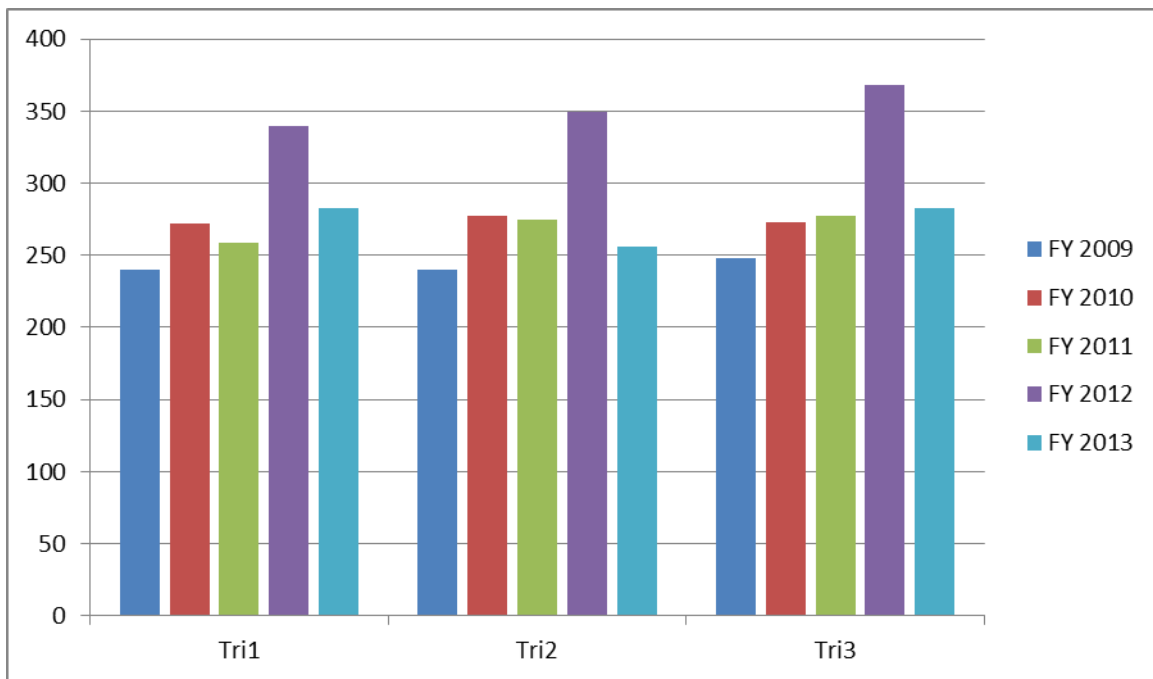
Outcome #3

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 3

Students per Trimester period:



Analysis/Discussion:

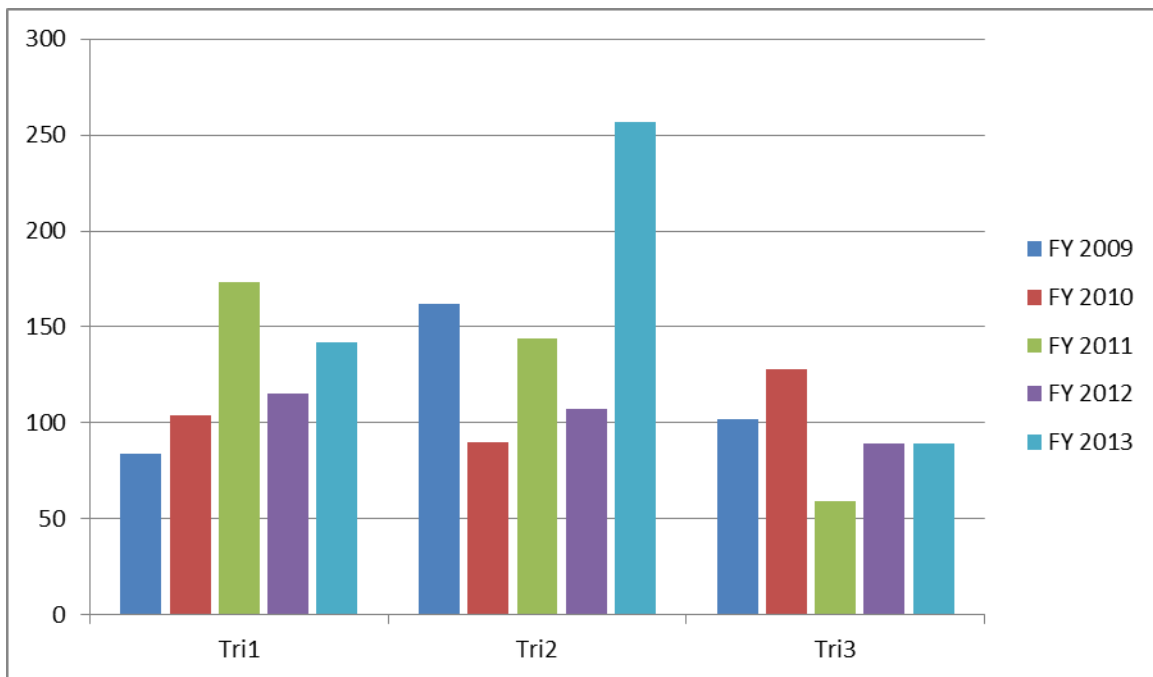
During the 2013-2014 school year, there was a decrease in the number of students who received consultation and used assistive technology tools in the classroom to access the curriculum each trimester when compared to the 2012-2013 school year. This decrease may be due in part to an A.T. team member's medical leave of absence as well as

expansion of universal design for learning approaches with carryover by classroom staff and instructional technology support in some programs.
The majority of consultation services occurred within the weekly blocks of contracted time for SSEC programs and school districts.

Outcome #4

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 4
Educators and Parents per Trimester Period



Analysis/Discussion:

During the 2013-2014 school year, the CAT Team provided training for educators and parents in the use of Assistive Technology tools/techniques through workshops, in-services, and one to one trainings conducted in public schools, and SSEC programs. Between December and March there was a significant increase in the number of parents and educators who participated in trainings on using literacy and text to speech software

programs, tablet use and applications, and new augmentative communication software and devices.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- SSEC A.T., O.T., P.T. and S.L.P. services sponsored the following workshops and trainings during the 2013-2014 school year:
 - The Partnership of Advancement of School Service-Providers (P.A.S.S.) presented a full day workshop on Moving Toward Participation Based Evaluations: A Workshop for Related Service Providers. Two workshop sessions were conducted with thirty-seven related service providers from six school districts attending the first session and forty-three SSEC related service providers attending the second session.
 - A Literacy Software Program for Students with Special Needs training was attended by thirty participants that included teachers and speech language pathologists from two SSEC programs.
 - Thirty-two participants that included educators and therapists from SSEC and several school districts attended Reaching All Learners, presented by Apple Software.
 - Communication App webinar training and two Augmentative and Alternative Communication Device Trainings were attended by SSEC speech language pathologists.
 - Eleven staff from Careers, South Shore High School, Quest, and the Learning Enhancement Programs participated in a hands on text to speech software program training.
 - Fifty-four staff in the Community School participated in a Tablet/App and Stylus training.
 - Forty-nine staff from the Mini School participated in Tablet/App and Text to Speech software training.
- SSEC CAT Team coordinated a survey of all SSEC staff using the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Technology Self Assessment Tool (TSAT). A customized tool was also included to determine staff level of skill, frequency of assistive technology use in the classroom use and training needs for assistive technology tools and software.
- The SSEC CAT Team was on a SSEC Technology committee that created a new SSEC Technology Plan, and developed a Technology and Electronic Communication Responsible Use Policy and Procedures.

- Throughout the 2013-2014 school year, two 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.
- The SSEC Center for Assistive Technology has coordinated mobile device sharing systems for SSEC Programs using web-based applications.
- An on-line curriculum based measurement tool for progress monitoring in reading and math for grades K-12 was set up and managed for several SSEC programs with training provided to teachers.
- The SSEC Center for Assistive Technology set up, maintained Bookshare.org accounts for students, and provided training for teachers. Bookshare.org provides accessible books and periodicals for readers with print disabilities at no cost.
- The SSEC Center for Assistive Technology and Community School Therapists has facilitated trainings provided by vendors of a variety of augmentative and alternative communication devices and adaptive equipment. In turn, these companies have loaned devices for trial use at no cost.
- The AT 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 2013-2014 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 316 students and 41 adults in the CAP Program. Physical therapy services were provided for 266 students and 41 adults in the CAP Program. Speech/Language services were provided for 304 students and 41 adults in the CAP Program.

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 2013 – 2014 School Year

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 High* 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 and the strong emphasis on transition to successful post-secondary experiences.

Capacity

Careers High School has a capacity of thirty-six students in grades nine through post-graduate. The age range of the student population is from fourteen through eighteen, although older students may remain enrolled if the educational TEAM determines it meets the students' needs. 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 ensured this happened. 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 High School* 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 tradition comprehensive high schools in the sense that the students move from content class to content class during the academic portion of the program. While class size is dependent upon population need, it generally ranges between six and nine students.

The fifth classroom is the Transition Room that is self-contained for the core academic classes. It too is staffed by a special education teacher and a paraprofessional and is generally filled to a maximum of twelve students. The student population tends to have greater difficulty with change and may have diagnoses that include Asperger's Syndrome, anxiety disorders and nonverbal learning disabilities. Students are encouraged to take one or more classes in our mainstream as their comfort level increases. This classroom will include transitioning eighth graders in the spring terms.

Staffing

Careers High School is staffed with five special needs teachers, five paraprofessionals and two full-time clinical therapists to support students as they accrue the concepts, skills and credits to graduate with a Massachusetts diploma issued by their sending school district. All staff 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 through individual and group therapy situations. These sessions may be scheduled or on an as needed basis. This team works closely with classroom teachers, student 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.

In addition, Careers High school is the physical home for the transitional specialist for SSEC's two high schools and a transitional paraprofessional. These individuals are critical to the developing transitions center for all SSEC students. Careers High School is fortunate to also be the home for the STARTS coordinator who also serves as the program coordinator.

Transition

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 one of five on-site transitional-vocational projects during their school day. When their core academic subjects are completed, the students spend the remainder of their day on employment-oriented activities. This includes entrepreneurial activities, work study experiences, community service activities, paid positions in competitive employment situations, and dual enrollment in college courses.

The on-campus revenue-generating businesses include Culinary Arts, Fundraising, Copy Center, Coffee Shop, Careers Cleaning Crew, Ebay Sales and the Woodworking project. Students learn basic employment expectations, vocabulary and experience that translate directly to the work world. In addition, basic "soft" employment skills are built into the behavior management system of the program to reinforce real world expectations.

The part-time Transitional Specialist works with the students on employment and transition activities. This educator assists students in gaining access to employment opportunities as well as 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 easier. Resume development, mock job interviews and support in the pre and post phone calls are part of their efforts with students.

Year in Summary

Student Population

Careers 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 credit. Our 2013 - 2014 student population is more complex than last year as indicated by increases in percentages of students on medication, having psychiatric hospitalizations, and involvement with external agencies.

Throughout the 2013 - 2014 school year, a total of 45 students were enrolled in the Careers High School. Seventy six percent (76%) of the students enrolled in the 2013 - 2014 school year were on daily medications and 29% of our students experienced psychiatric hospitalizations during the course of the school year. 24% of enrolled students were involved with Department of Mental Health (DMH) and 31% of our students are involved with the Department of Children and Families; 31% of our students are involved with the court system.

Table 1. Interventions

Medication	76%	DCF Involvement	31%
Psych Hospitalization	29%	DMH Involvement	24%
Court Involvement	31%		

Seventy-six percent (76%) of the students enrolled in the 2013-2014 school year were on daily medications, a decrease of 13% from last school year. Twenty-nine percent (29%) of our students experienced psychiatric hospitalizations during the course of the school year which is a 20% decrease from last year.. The percentage of students involved with the court system also decreased from 55% in the 2012-2013 school year to 31% in the 2012-2013 school year.

Negligible change was noticed in the percentage of students involved with the Department of Children and Families (DCF) services (31%) or with those engaged with the Department of Mental Health (DMH) services (24%).

Mental Health Diagnoses

The 2013-2014 student population in *Careers High School* had a variety of mental health diagnoses. Sixty-seven percent (67%) of the student body were diagnosed with depressive disorder, oppositional defiant disorder, pervasive developmental delay/Asperger's syndrome or post traumatic stress disorder.

Nine percent (9%) of the students carry a mood disorder diagnosis and seven percent (7%) have a diagnosis of anxiety disorder. Seventeen percent (17%) of the students carry a diagnosis of poly-substance abuse (7%), intermittent explosive disorder (4%), schizophrenia (3%), or psychosis (3%).

Table 2 - DSM IV Diagnosis

Diagnosis	%	Diagnosis	%
Depressive disorder	21	Anxiety disorder NOS	7
PDD/Asperger's Syndrome	17	Substance Abuse	7
Oppositional defiant disorder	16	Intermittent explosive disorder	4
PTSD	13	Schizophrenia	3
Mood disorder	9	Psychotic	3

Respectively submitted,

Corie Fehsenfeld, Ed.D.
Careers High School
Program Director

Community School Annual Report 2013-2014

Description of Program, 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 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. 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. 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.

40 Pond Park Road 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.

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 behaviorist and fulltime BCBA behaviorist. We also offer yoga, therapeutic swimming and year round 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.

Program hours from 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. Parent training
3. 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
4. Vision services
5. Orientation & Mobility services
6. Direct home programming on a case by case basis

Transition to New Building

Over this past year, the Community School successfully transitioned to the new building on Abington Street. The staff worked diligently and came in on their time-off to prepare all of the classrooms to open July 1. On July 1 the rooms were prepared to support the students and the typical extended school year program with all the recreational, therapeutic and academic features went off smoothly. The dedication the staff displayed in planning, setting up on days they were off and working together to have schedule from day one of the ESY was exceptional.

Accomplishments:

1. Expansion of community based instruction across all ages. Over the past year we completed **over 400 community trips** to support learning.
2. The school continues to work with the **Northeastern Enabling Engineers** program to develop unique supports for students. They developed a new mounting system for a communication device and are currently working on individualized key guards for the iPads for the various communication applications. The

- Community school was mentioned in their annual report as one of their three project partners. They are moving towards being on site monthly.
3. Collaboration with QUEST to include students and increase exposure to grade level content continues to expand.
 4. The pool has fully opened with students participating on a rotating basis for a gym cycle as well as some participating in individualized therapy.
 5. Ongoing successes in the area of home based behavioral supports. Students have been supported in successfully using the Ride for appointments, being on other types of public transportation, special events and learning how to access their home community safely.
 6. This was the first year of year round therapeutic riding. It was quite successful and implemented on a five week rotating schedule.
 7. The specialized adaptive furniture and cooking equipment was purchased for the training apartment and training kitchen. These items also help our families try various pieces of equipment before making the decision to purchase in the future.

Program Outcomes

1. **The Community School will enhance the transitional services provided to match the long term educational planning developed for each individual student and as written in the Individualized Transition Plan.**
 - a. Completed over 400 community based instruction trips to various sites in the community.
 - b. Added 3 additional community vocational sites.
 - c. Implementation of the AFLS (Assessment of Functional Living Skills) to improve transition assessments and the identification of specific transitional goals for each student.
 - d. Regular transitional meetings between the high school and middle school staff to plan out continuity of services. This includes the types of community based and community referenced instruction that is completed to support better transition into high school.
 - e. Development of middle school jobs which mirror vocational opportunities in the high school.
2. **The Community School will increase and improve behavioral services and programming.**
 - a. Monthly behavioral clinical meeting implemented for each student who currently has a behavioral intervention plan or is receiving a functional behavioral assessment.
 - b. Classroom behavior books implemented to organize data collection, ongoing analysis, incidents/concerns and meeting minutes.
 - c. Program director has a behavioral notebook including all of the information documented in the classrooms for the entire program. This documentation is reviewed upon receipt.
 - d. Behavioral boxes have been provided in each classroom with additional (back-up) materials to make sure programs are run consistently:

- i. Reinforcers (variety)
- ii. First-Then Boards
- iii. Clip board
- iv. Timer
- v. Counter

3. The Community School will continue to develop direct and consultative home based services.

- a. Home behavioral consultation which is included as part of the program has seen an increase over the past year. This is provided at no additional costs to our districts.
- b. Flexible hours including weekends and evening continue to be offered.
- c. Community based instructional services to support specific identified skill development are provided which include such activities as (examples);
 - i. Swimming at the beach
 - ii. Accessing the Ride for doctor appointments successfully.
 - iii. Traveling through crowded public areas such as malls and downtown Boston.
 - iv. Attending loud events such as parties or other types of gatherings.
 - v. Accessing the student's neighborhood safely.
 - vi. Attending doctor appointments successfully.
- d. The service is considered temporary with clear outcomes.

4. The Community adult program will be transitioned to an identified human services agency.

- a. Road to Responsibility (RTR) was identified by the administration as being a viable agency to support the adult participants at the Community Adult Program (CAP). The administration worked closely with the Department of Developmental Disabilities and RTR to manage a smooth transition.
- b. Families were notified of the change in administration by letter and through an informal meeting.
- c. Program staff was supported in applying for employment opportunities with RTR.
- d. The official transition successfully took place on July 1st 2014.

**MINI-SCHOOL PROGRAM
ANNUAL REPORT
Mary Scott, Program Director
2013-2014**

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 for forty years, joining the South Shore Educational Collaborative in 1987. During the 2013-2014 school year the Mini-School provided educational services to 70 students in classrooms located at the Chapman School in Weymouth, Cohasset High School in Cohasset, at the Collaborative main building in Hingham and in Hull at the Jacobs School, Memorial Middle School and Hull High School. 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.

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, adapted physical education, and yoga. The Mini-School hours are 8:30 AM – 4:00 PM Monday – 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 seven weeks, Monday – Thursday, 8:30 AM - 2:45 PM. Staff trainings are held on Thursdays during the school year, following early dismissal, once 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.

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Delineation of Mini School Staff

Position	FTE
Program Director	1.0
BCBA/Assistant Program Director	1.0
Assistant Program Director	1.0
Parent Home Consultants (2)	1.6
Teachers	11.
Occupational Therapists (2)	1.6
OT Assistants	1.0
Physical Therapist	0.61
Physical Therapy Assistant	0.61
Expressive Therapists (2)	0.40
Speech Therapists (3)	2.71
Adaptive PE Teacher	1.0
Paraprofessionals	22.0

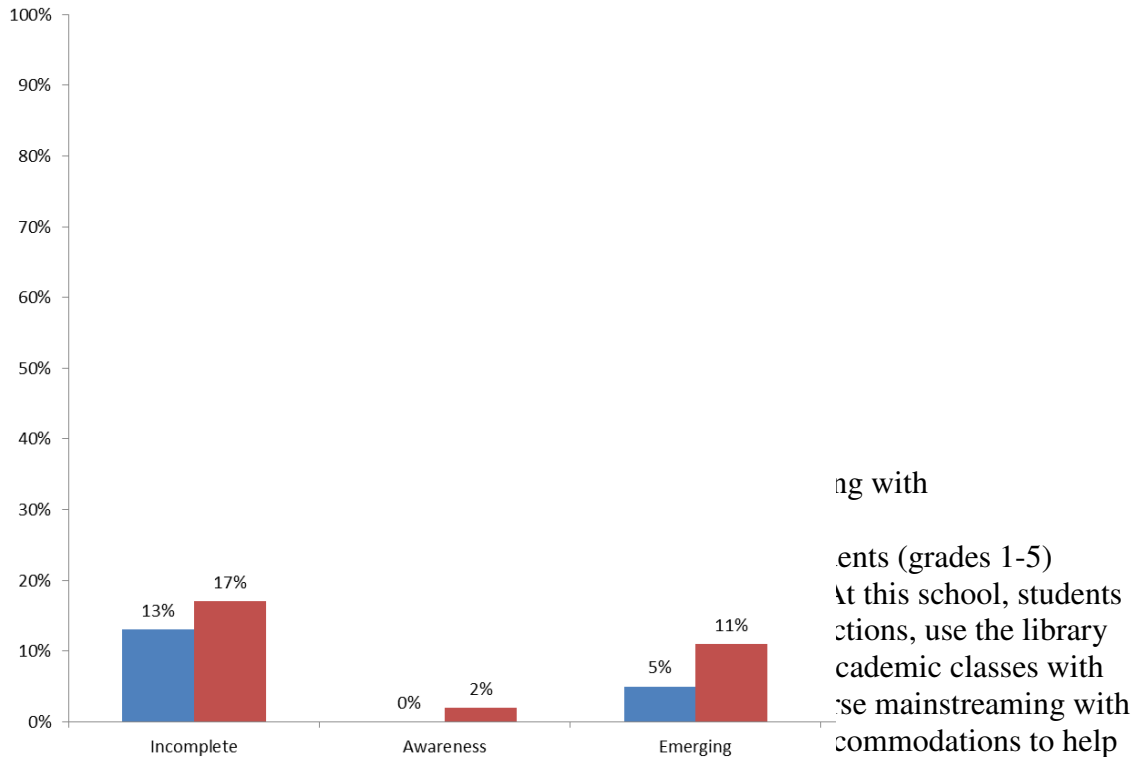
Nurses	2.0
Total	44.84

Traditionally, the Mini-School has served students on the autism spectrum who present with developmental delays. Over the past 10 years the Mini-School has expanded to serve students on the autism spectrum in grades 1 – 8 who function at or close to their grade level. At the beginning of the 2013 – 2014 school year, a high school class was added to the Mini-School to accommodate 9th grade students who, although they are able to complete grade level work, do not possess the socialization skills necessary to be educated in their home districts. This new classroom is located at the Collaborative main building in Hingham where there is the opportunity for students to attend some classes at South Shore High and receive a high school diploma.

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 on demand testing or by portfolio assessment at their chronological grade level according to the state model. Students on the autism spectrum 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 on the autism spectrum have average or above average intellectual abilities, the remaining students exhibit cognitive deficits and will need some level of support throughout their lives.

During the 2013-2014 school year, 15 Mini-School students participated in MCAS testing by alternate assessment. Students with 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 2014. Student work can receive incomplete, awareness, emerging and progressing scores. The Mini-School has consistently exceeded state averages for overall progressing MCAS scores as demonstrated by the following graph.

2014 Comparison of Mini-School and State Results All Content Areas



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 Reading Naturally Live as well as instruction in phonics and spelling.

Middle school classrooms continue to be 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 2013-2014 school year, twenty-five high school students attended the Mini-School classrooms in both Hull High School and Cohasset High School. 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 Stop and Shop, Papa Gino's, Roche Bros., Cohasset Community Center, Holly Hill Farm and Road to Responsibility. Students at Hull High School operated the school store and greenhouse. Community and social experiences are an integral part of the high school curriculum. Students go to the Hanover Y two afternoons a week and use the fitness rooms in both schools. Field trips to stores and restaurants occur weekly. Two highlights of the school year occurred in May when the Mini-School held its annual walkathon for high school and middle school students and, in collaboration with the Community School, a prom was held on Sunday afternoon, May 18th. Two Mini-School students turned 22 during the 2013-2014 school year. One of these students completed his entire educational career at the Mini-School, starting at age 3 and graduating the last day of school in June. Both of these students were found eligible for adult services through the Department of Developmental Services. By using current 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 2014

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. 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.

It is important to note that in the spring of this school year, we were again referred several students in kindergarten through 3rd grade. The Quest Program was full at that time, but we recognized the need for these young students to be in a safe and supportive school setting. In April, Quest opened a classroom that served six grade K and 1 students for the remainder of the school year. With some creativity and flexibility on the part of the Quest staff, these students were able to access the therapeutic, academic, and behavioral supports available to all Quest students. This classroom was very successful and we were pleased to be able to meet the needs of these students and their sending districts. All six of these students continued to be part of the Quest Program past the end of the school year. As a result, we have expanded from 7 to 8 classrooms for the 2014-2015 school year.

There were some changes made this school year regarding **program staff and service**. For the 2013-2014 school year our staff included: 7 full time certified special needs teachers, 2 part time certified special needs teachers, a part-time PE/Health teacher, 8 classroom aides, 2 part time reading teachers, 3 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 has also begun to access the services of two certified art teachers and a music therapist on a part time basis. The behavioral needs of the students were served by a behavioral team comprised of a full time milieu coordinator and four behavioral aides. An administrative assistant, a full time and a part time school nurse, clinical director, a food service director and a food service aide are shared with two other school programs in the building. Quest also shared two part time board certified child and adolescent psychiatrists with two other 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 2012-2013 School Year

This year, the Quest Program continued to implement and expand upon the initiatives begun during previous years. We welcomed a new doctoral psychology intern and also had a social work intern. In addition, the Quest Program increased the hours of our part time gym teacher to provide one Health class per week in each classroom. This stability in staffing and in programming allowed us to build on the positive changes implemented the year before. The addition of both Health and PE and increased instruction in art and music has allowed us to create a more well-rounded education for Quest students. These additions also continued to provide Quest classroom teachers consistent planning time for the second year in a row. 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, we have continued to devote considerable resources to data collection. More specifically, we transferred all of our data into the Google Docs format. We are using Google forms to collect data in a variety areas including time on task, use of sensory breaks, behavioral interventions, and student's IEP goals. In doing so, we have increased our abilities to analyze and synthesize our data. 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.

Classroom Pods

At the core of increased collaboration is the “pod” model. Each of the seven 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 psychiatrists, prior to a student’s appointment, through structured online communication forms. Now in its fourth 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 approach of Collaborative Problem Solving. 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. We were very pleased to move into a newly designed behavioral space in our new school building, which includes four “settling” rooms, two quiet study rooms, a sensory room, a comfort room, an office for the milieu coordinator and an office for the behavioral aides. The behavioral space in the new school building was designed to be safe and also away from a main hallway. This 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 2,600 times during the course of the year.

The Quest Program also continued to benefit from the shift made two 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 coincided with a significant decrease in the use of physical restraint in the Quest Program. During the 2010-2011 school year, 32% of Quest students required one or more physical restraints. This number decreased to 28% during the 2011-2012 school year. During the 2012-2013 school year, as well as the current year, only 25% of Quest students required at least one physical restraint. Even more striking is that the total number of physical restraints was reduced from 110 in 2011-2012 to 65 during the 2012-2013 school year. This year the number fell again, with only 30 physical restraints required. This is more than a 50% reduction from last year and a 70% decrease from 2 years ago. Despite these positive trends, reducing the need for physical restraint continues to be an important goal of the Quest Program even as we 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 are 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 has also begun 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. Behavioral staff have begun to use Social Behavior Maps and "Superflex" Plans to guide processing of behavioral incidents with students. In addition, weekly planning time was 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.

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 cyberbullying. 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. This music program was very successful and will be continued during the upcoming school year. 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. And the new music class provided an opportunity to encourage students to participate in our first annual Talent Show in June. Quest was also pleased to provide an opportunity for students from the Community Program to be included into our classrooms.

The 2013 Summer Program was very successful, with 46 students enrolled. Students participated in a variety of field trips as well as spending time in the classroom reviewing skills they had learned the previous school year. Quest students participated in an educational field trip to the Franklin Park Zoo in September. 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. 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. We also held a Holiday Bazaar in the gym. This project was a fundraiser for the Quest Student Fund while also providing an opportunity for students to do holiday shopping for their families. Quest

held a Spirit Week in February that included a celebration of the 100th day of school in February, which included a can drive for a local food bank. Due to the growing number of students enrolled in the program in the spring, we provided students with educational learning opportunities onsite instead of travelling. Students attended a presentation on adaptations presented by the staff of the New England Aquarium. We were also pleased to welcome Rainforest Reptiles, who did a live animal demonstration for the students. These activities allowed all students to participate while removing the challenge of a long bus ride. In the spring, our 6th and 7th graders participate in a ropes course to build relationships and trust among our current middle school students. In May, the entire program participated in a kite building workshop with Sea Side Kites. Field Day was attended by most Quest students. Our gym teacher and the staff organized games and noncompetitive activities. Again the entire Quest community was involved in the field day activities. This year's graduation of 9 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 show off our beautiful new school building.

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 helped some of our older students build a teepee. Our 2nd and 3rd grade class also hatched chickens this spring. These are just some of the learning opportunities and activities available to Quest students this 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. Guest speakers included Dr. Jeff Turley, child and adolescent psychiatrist, Lynne Mitchell of the AANE (Asperger's Association of New England), and members of the Hingham Police Department who spoke about how we can protect staff and students from intruders in schools. Childcare was provided which increased participation.

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

Outreach Initiative

During the past academic year, we noted an increase in the number of 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.

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. This year, the program purchased 20 iPads for staff and student use. Each professional staff member was given an iPad to use for instruction, data collection and accessing teach point and working on the DESE evaluation. A set of 9 student iPads was also purchased to be shared. 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 provided training on using the iPads and also 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 had access to a computer class with an Assistive technology teacher one time a week and were also able to access the computer lab several times a week. Teachers had access to an Instructional Technology consultant who was available to provide 1:1 support and training.

Quest School Handbook:

A school handbook was revised before school reopened in the fall of 2014. 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 66 students this school year. We began the school year with 55 students and ended the year with 62 students. The 66 students that we serviced came from a total of 26 different school systems.

We serviced 13 S.T.A.R.T.S. students (45 day assessments). Two students required a different school setting and 11 students remained at the Quest Program for the remainder

of the school year. One of these students was able to return to their sending district for the start of the 2014-15 school year.

During the school year 2 students required a more restrictive setting and 2 moved to more appropriate day school settings. In June we graduated 9 8th grade students. Of the 9 students, 3 students attend South Shore High School and 3 students attend the Careers Program at the South Shore Educational Collaborative. Three students returned to their sending district for high school. At the end of the school year, two students moved to a less restrictive setting and three moved to new day placements.

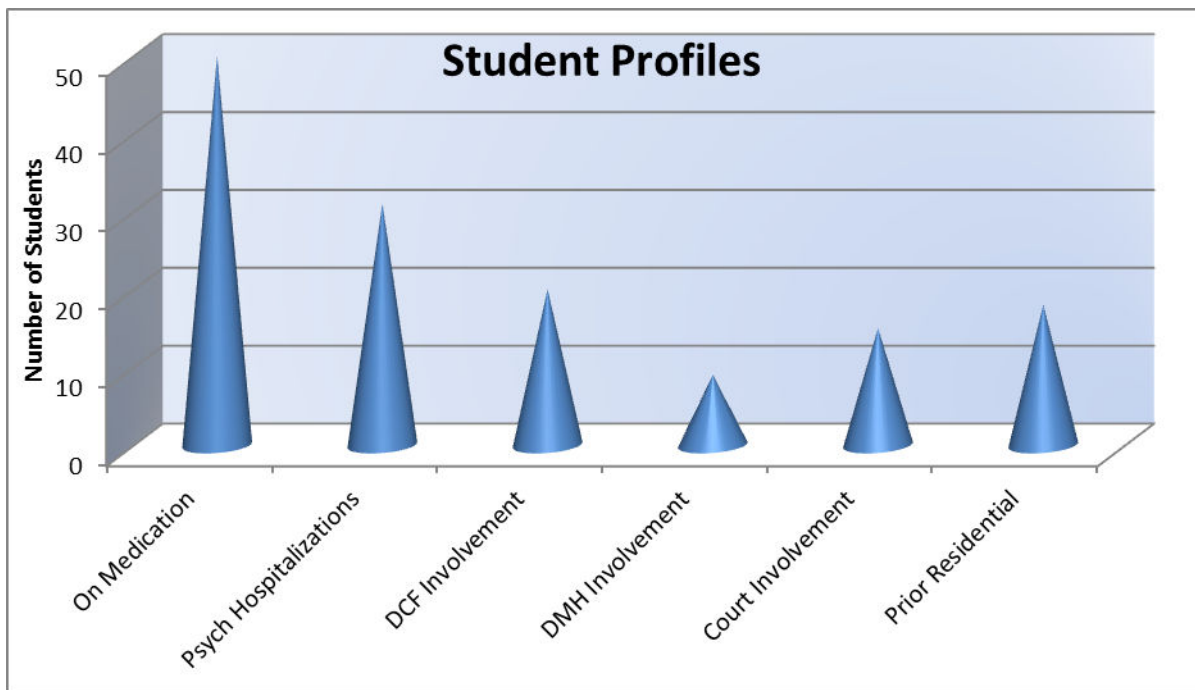
Quest had a steadily increasing enrollment over the course of the school year. The enrollment was at capacity by the end of the school year even with the addition of another classroom. Numbers continued to grow over the summer and Quest began the 2014-2015 school year with 55 students.

**REPORT FROM THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR
SOUTH SHORE HIGH SCHOOL
2013-2014**

Program Description, Students, and Staff

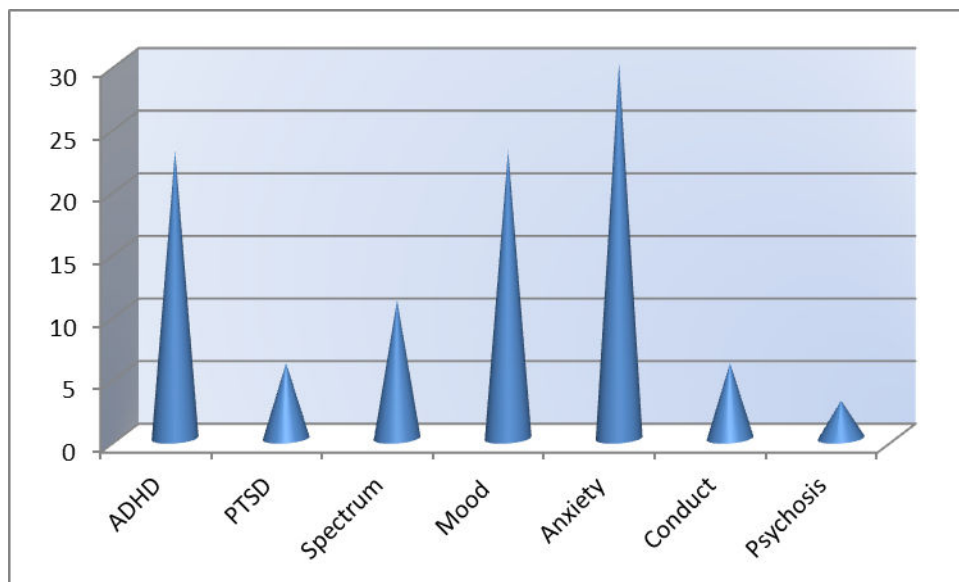
Students referred to South Shore High have emotional, behavioral, and academic problems that make it difficult for them to function in a larger, less structured environment. All of the students have special needs as defined by Chapter 766. Most students have complicated lives with a number of agencies involved in their treatment. Table One provides a visual representation of the services represented by our students. Eighty-eight percent of this year's students are prescribed medication to help them manage their diagnoses. Fifty-six percent have received treatment in a psychiatric hospital. Thirty-six of this year's students have DCF involvement and sixteen percent have DMH involvement. Twenty-seven percent of this year's students have court involvement, predominately due to CHINS petitions. Thirty-three percent of students have prior or current out-of-home placements.

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. Many students carry a diagnosis of attention deficit disorder (forty-two percent), coupled with a mood disorder (also forty-two percent). Major depression is a common diagnosis, along with dysthymic disorder and generalized mood disorder. The number of students at South Shore High who are diagnosed with disorders on the autism spectrum has grown considerably, with the majority of students carrying a diagnosis of Asperger's, (twenty percent of the population). Fifty-five percent of the student population carries a diagnosis of anxiety disorder. The primary diagnosis for eleven percent of our students is post traumatic stress disorder, while eleven percent carries a diagnosis of conduct disorder. Five percent of our students have a psychotic disorder. 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. Many 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 implemented 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
.5	secretary

Students:

A total of 59 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 2012	50
October	51
November	51
December	52
January 2013	51
February	52
March	52
April	54
May	51
June	51

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 (VHS), through independent study classes designed between the student and the teacher, or to take community-based 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 ninety and ninety-eight 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

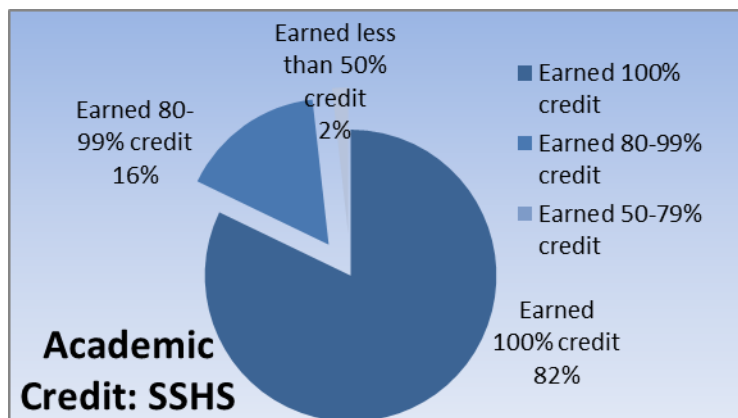
In line with the school's Mission Statement, student progress is monitored by the following program outcomes:

- The student will receive passing grades and earn academic credit in courses.
- The student will maintain at least 80% 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. Eighty-two percent of the students earned 100% of their academic credit. Sixteen percent earned 80-99% of their credit, and two 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.

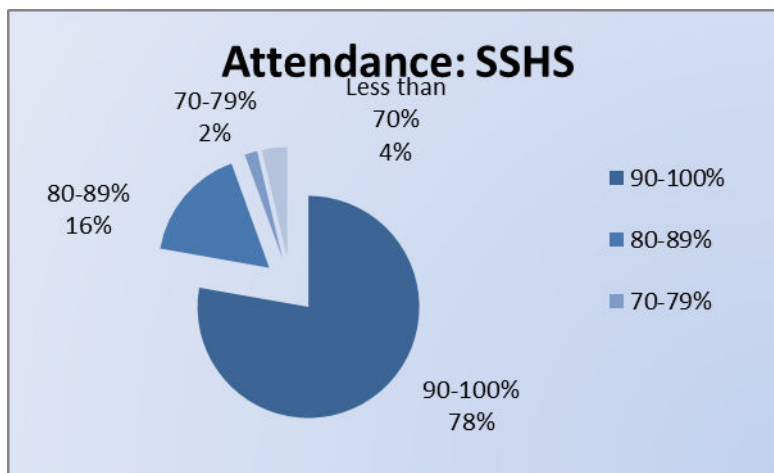
Chart 1



- Outcome Two: The student will maintain at least 80% attendance.

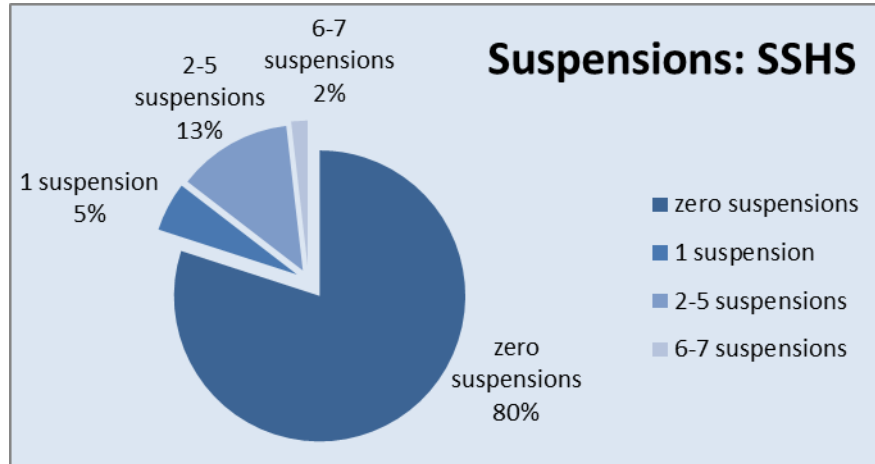
- See chart 2 for a detailing of this outcome. School attendance records yield the data regarding attendance. Performance on Outcome Two at South Shore High is strong, with ninety-four percent of the student population able to meet the stated outcome. The records indicate that seventy-eight percent of the student population showed an attendance rate of 90% or higher. Sixteen percent of the students attended between 80 and 89% of the time. Two percent attended between 70 and 79% of the time. 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



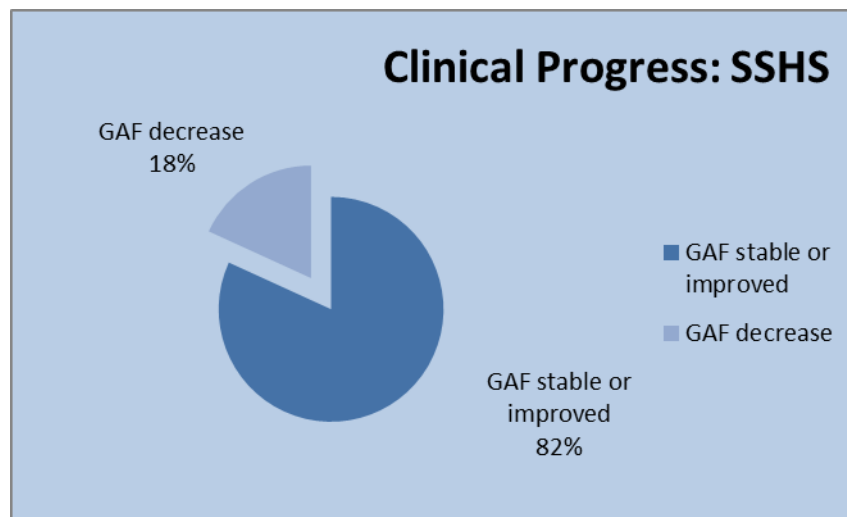
- Outcome Three: The student will receive the supports and interventions necessary to avoid receiving out of school suspensions.
- See Chart 3 for a depiction of this outcome. The data on Outcome Three indicates that eighty percent of our students were able to meet this goal. Five percent of the students received one suspension day, thirteen percent received between two and five suspension days, and two percent received six or seven 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-R). 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 eighty-two 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:

- South Shore High moved to a new site at the close of the 2013 school year. The students were kept informed of the process, discussing programming opportunities that would be available in a facility with a commercial level kitchen, a greenhouse, a media center, and an apartment. Students were able to visit as the construction neared completion in preparation for their transition into the new space.
- The Transitional Programming at South Shore High has continued to expand. Students take an active role in drafting their transition plans and assessing their progress on their action plans. Most students made use of the option of transitional assessments, either through completing a web-based O*NET Interest Profiler or through a more comprehensive inventory using the Conover Company's MECA Interest Indicator. Staff supported students across the board as they pursued transition goals, through options such as participating in community-based internships, completing community service hours, taking PSATs and SATs, participating in on-line curricula (using VHS), and taking dual enrollment classes at Quincy College, Massasoit, and Bridgewater University. All students completed a full term class called Transition Skills where they became stronger advocates for their learning needs and practiced skills they will need as they transition beyond high school.
- Again at South Shore High there was curriculum that reached into the community. The school went on an all-school field trip to Salem, MA where they visited the Witch Museum and historical sites within the community of Salem. Students participated in a series of trips aimed at improving community access and becoming familiar with community resources. These included trips to restaurants, to the Registry of Motor Vehicles and to Father Bills and to a local business to volunteer. The students went to Castle Island and went kayaking, as well as going to Newport, RI to take the Cliff Walk. They visited the Wildlife Center in Weymouth, and took numerous trips to community colleges, trade schools and college/job fairs.
- Technology in the classroom continued to grow last year. Kindles were purchased to provide a digital option for literature classes. We increased student access to technology within the classroom by expanding our BYOD policy. Many students brought in their own devices including laptops, tablets and smartphones. We purchased ten iPads to fill in the gaps for students who did not have their own device so that all students could access online learning tools. Teachers participated in a training series increasing their skill in using mimio boards. Several staff attended the MassCue conference and the Technology Forum and brought back knowledge and resources for staff. Teachers increased

their skill base in using apps for curriculum enrichment and for student response systems.

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 called 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)
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 2013-2014
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, but this year there were no referrals appropriate for that program. 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 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 17 students for assessment this year, 14 males and 3 females. One evaluation was completed within SSHS, 13 were completed in Quest, and 3 were completed within the Careers High School Program. There continues to be significantly more males than females referred to STARTS over the years; however, this year, there was a significant increase in elementary/middle school age students and decrease in high school age students who were enrolled.

This was the eighth 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, Mary Gerrie, completed 9 evaluations, Tim Handorf, LICSW completed one, Liz Donahue, LICSW, completed one, and Julie Grant completed two. Within Careers, Katelyn Hagan, LICSW, completed two evaluations and Anne Rowland, PsyD, completed one. Anne Rowland also completed one evaluation within SSHS.

Referrals came either from districts' mainstream classrooms or their alternative classrooms within mainstream buildings. This has been the eleventh 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; year eight, 29 were enrolled; year nine, 23 were enrolled, in year ten, 22 were enrolled, and this year, 17 were enrolled.

This year, upon completion of the STARTS assessment, one student returned to his district school, compared to four students who returned the previous year. Three students were referred to other, more restrictive programs after their STARTS assessment, and the remainder (13 students) continued in the program in which they were placed for evaluation (Quest, Careers, SSH).

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, and 76% this year.

Table 1
Primary and Secondary Diagnoses of Students

<u>Primary and Secondary Diagnoses:</u>	<u>Number of Students/Year</u>			
	<u>'10-'11</u>	<u>'11-'12</u>	<u>'12-'13</u>	<u>'13 – '14</u>
Bipolar Disorder	0	0	0	1
Learning Disorder	2	3	3	1
Anxiety Disorder	8	7	6	5
PTSD	1	2	2	2
Oppositional Defiant Disorder	9	10	7	6
Conduct Disorder	0	1	0	0
Intermittent Explosive Disorder	2	0	0	0
Substance Abuse	2	5	2	0
ADHD/ADD	8	6	5	2
PDD/Asperger's/Autism	8	3	3	6
OCD	0	0	0	1
Mood Disorder	1	6	8	1
Personality Dis Traits	0	1	0	1

The primary and secondary diagnoses are listed in the statistics chart (Table 1).

All students presented with multiple diagnoses. Since each STARTS student receives 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. This past year has been a transition year of utilizing both DSM-IV and DSM-V diagnoses; next year will utilize only DSM-V diagnoses.

Diagnostically, there was a notable increase in students presenting with Autism Spectrum Disorders, and a continued decline in those diagnosed with Substance Abuse and Oppositional Defiant Disorder. This may in part be a result of fewer high school age STARTS students enrolled this year.

Table 2
Enrollment by District

<u>DISTRICT</u>	<u>NUMBER of STUDENTS ENROLLED</u>				
	<u>'09-'10</u>	<u>'10-'11</u>	<u>'11-'12</u>	<u>'12-'13</u>	<u>'13-'14</u>
Abington	0	1	0	0	0
Barnstable	0	0	1	0	0
Braintree	6	6	5	4	1
Bridge/Rayn	2	0	1	0	1
Brockton	1	0	0	0	0
Canton	1	3	0	0	0
Cohasset	0	0	1	2	0
Dedham	1	0	0	0	0
Easton	0	3	0	0	0
Hanover	1	0	0	1	0
Hingham	1	1	0	1	0
Holbrook	1	0	0	1	0
Hull	1	2	3	1	3
Marshfield	1	0	1	0	0
Middleboro	0	0	1	1	0
Milton	0	1	1	1	1
Norwell	1	1	1	0	1
Pembroke	1	0	0	0	0
Plymouth	0	1	0	0	0
Quincy	0	1	0	1	1
Randolph	0	2	0	1	0
Scituate	1	2	2	1	3
Sharon	3	0	2	0	0

Silver Lake	0	0	0	2	2
South Shore VT	0	2	0	0	0
Stoughton	0	1	1	3	0
Walpole	0	1	0	0	0
Wareham	0	0	0	0	0
Westwood	1	0	0	0	0
Weymouth	2	1	3	1	3
Whitman/Hans	0	0	0	0	1
Wrentham	0	0	0	1	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. Referrals continue to come from member districts (12) and other surrounding towns (5) similar to previous years, including one town (Whitman/Hanson) that had not referred to STARTS previously.

Similarly, 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. As SSEC makes further internal changes, STARTS anticipates assessing students in the programs within Weymouth Schools and Hingham Schools, in addition to Hull. There was less availability to complete STARTS evaluations in SSHS due to the “Remote STARTS Clinician” being out on maternity leave, then giving her notice. Hopefully one can be re-instated for the ’14-’15 school year. Other changes that may impact STARTS in the upcoming school year include the employment transition from SSMH to SSEC of two clinicians in Careers HS, and Dr. Turley.

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 and their families.