

Massachusetts
Organization
of Educational
Collaboratives

2014 **ANNUAL REPORT**



Stretching
Education
Dollars through
Economies
of Scale



www.moecnet.org

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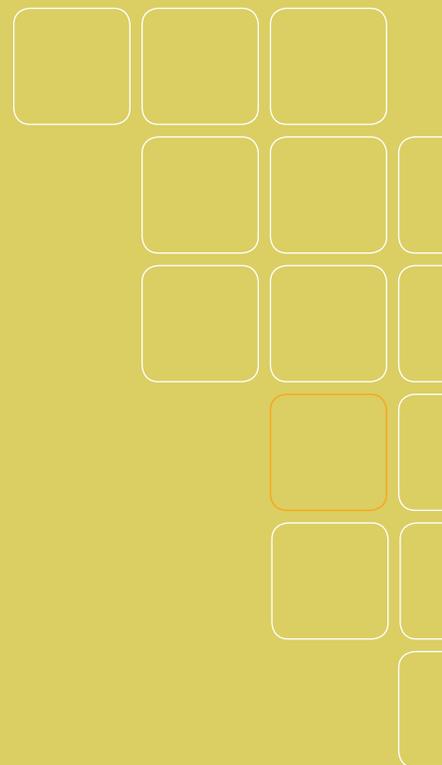
Executive Director's Letter

2013 was a year of significant achievement for the Massachusetts Organization of Educational Collaboratives (MOEC) and its 26 members. The enactment of Chapter 43 of the Acts of 2012 by the Massachusetts legislature created the Commission on Educational Collaboratives. The Commission was charged with issuing a series of recommendations designed to clarify and actualize the role that educational collaboratives play in the Commonwealth. The Commission, ably chaired by Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz and Representative Alice Hanlon Peisch, included designees from major stakeholder groups, including MOEC. Seizing the opportunity to influence the thinking of the Commission, MOEC prepared and presented to the Commission MOEC's blueprint for the future. The presentation, entitled "The Next Generation of Educational Collaboratives: A Design for the Future," described the organization's vision for its role in the educational community.

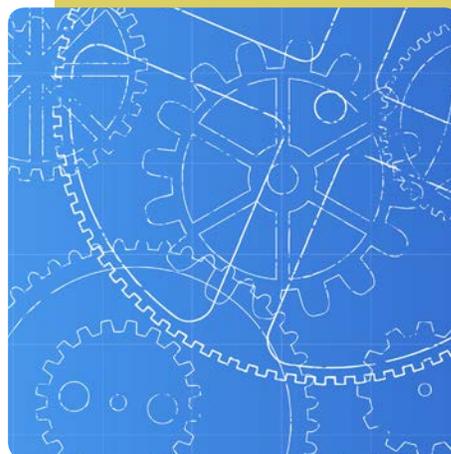
The proposal's framework is to create a statewide network of educational collaboratives. The network will organize the member collaboratives into a system that will identify, plan and determine the strategies, resources, and capacity necessary to ensure that school districts in each region have equitable access to a comprehensive set of services. The network will be designed to:

- Provide high quality professional development and technical assistance
- Develop programs and services to enhance school districts' operating efficiency
- Implement direct educational services and programs to students and adults

The recommendations resonated with the Commission members and many were incorporated in its final report. Subsequent to the Commission recommendations, House 3938, An Act Relative to Educational Collaboratives, was filed and will set many of those recommendations in statute. As of March 2014, the bill was favorably reported out to the legislature by the Education Committee and awaits final enactment.



A blueprint for the future





Tapping into
the enormous
potential of the
state's educational
collaboratives

In addition to these legislative achievements, MOEC members have made considerable impact in a variety of other areas. In cooperation with their member districts and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, educational collaboratives have been at the forefront of a number of statewide initiatives. Plans are underway to tap into the enormous potential that educational collaboratives hold. Discussions with Department policy makers and school district leaders have begun to identify areas in which collaboratives can be of greater assistance. Among those areas are the coordination of statewide professional development programs and services, the advancement of educator evaluation mandates, the training of staff who educate English language learners, and the impending implementation of Chapter 222 of the Acts of 2012, An Act Relative to Student Access to Educational Services and Exclusion from School.

In the realm of virtual education, one of the MOEC members, The Education Cooperative (TEC), has been granted the contract to create a virtual school. TECCA (The Education Cooperative Connections Academy) will be available to those students in the Commonwealth who wish to avail themselves of this ever-growing opportunity. In announcing its selection by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, TEC described the Academy as designed to “deliver full time, tuition-free public school online to students from across the state. The academy will combine Massachusetts licensed educators and award winning technology tools, engaging electives, and social experiences to create a successful online learning program for families and students who want an individualized approach to education.”

In closing, MOEC and its members consistently provide essential services and programs to its member districts. Our professional development programs support continuous learning for district staff. Through regional economies of scale, our members provide high quality, cost effective programs and services that would otherwise be unaffordable to individual member districts. Our programs and services to the most disabled students and adults ensure for them a rewarding and meaningful educational experience.

We are deeply indebted to the many individuals and organizations that make our work so rewarding and beneficial.

Executive Director
Massachusetts Organization of Educational Collaboratives

Educational Collaboratives in Massachusetts

History

Chapter 43 of the Acts of 2012 has clearly delineated the authority under which educational collaboratives can now operate. Since the inception of Chapter 766 in 1972, a primary purpose of educational collaboratives has been to provide quality programs for some of the Commonwealth's most vulnerable and disabled students. Legislation enacted shortly after Chapter 766 enabled school committees to join together to create economies of scale and produce high quality, cost-effective programs and services. This has been the hallmark of educational collaboratives not only in the area of special education, but also in the countless other areas where joint efforts on the part of school committees can achieve cost-effective results.

Current Services

Today, educational collaboratives provide a wide array of services and programs ranging from special education services for students and school districts, professional development programs to enhance the knowledge and skills of district educators, cooperative purchasing services to create cost savings through economies of scale, transportation services for both general education and special education students, and services to significantly disabled adults after they age out of the PreK-12 system.

Facts and Figures

In 2013, MOEC members provided the following services to their school districts:

- Cost-effective special education to more than 4,000 special education students in more than 300 school districts across the Commonwealth
- Daily transportation for nearly 20,000 general education and special education students
- More than 150 undergraduate and graduate courses to educators
- Facilitation of Medicaid reimbursements

The ability of school districts to collaborate results in numerous benefits for special needs students, their families, school districts and taxpayers. In this report, we highlight how collaboratives across the state have benefitted their communities in four key areas:

1. **Special Education Programs and Services**
2. **Cost Savings**
3. **Professional Development**
4. **Transportation**



Joining together
to produce high
quality, cost-effective
programs and
services



1. Special Education Programs and Services



Massachusetts' educational collaboratives serve students with a range of learning, behavioral and developmental disabilities that prevent them from reaching their fullest potential in a traditional classroom setting. These collaboratives work under the philosophy that every child is unique and has the ability to make tremendous social, emotional and intellectual progress—and the collaboratives offer the specialized instruction and individual attention needed to help students achieve that progress.

In addition to serving students from the ages of three to 22, several collaboratives also offer adult services to help ensure continued success after students have completed their educational programs. For example, the Adult Programs and Services division of the Shore Collaborative provides day habilitation and vocational services to individuals over the age of 22 with developmental, behavioral and physical disabilities. Funding is provided and referrals are made through the participants' Department of Development Services MassHealth program. Adult services are year-round and designed to address the identified skill areas of individuals with highly diverse levels of cognitive, physical and behavioral needs.

To demonstrate the exemplary educational services that Massachusetts collaboratives provide, this section highlights programs provided by five of the state's educational collaboratives. The programs highlighted here represent only a fraction of the work these collaboratives undertake, but they help to showcase the efforts of collaboratives across the state.

COLLABORATIVE CLOSE UPS

Meeting each child's
specific needs and
learning style



CAPS Educational Collaborative

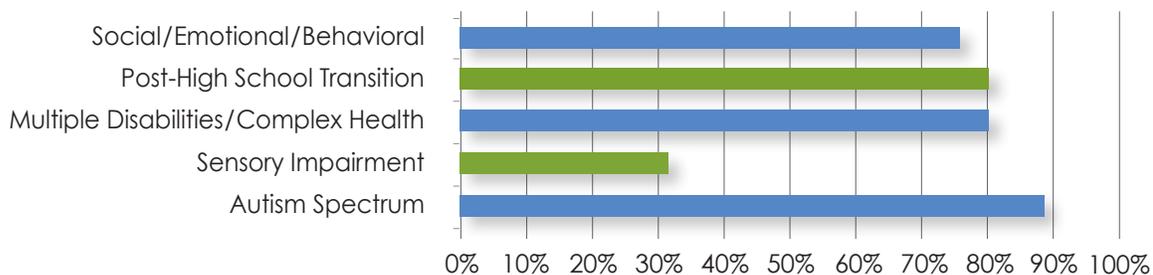
The CAPS Educational Collaborative, headquartered in Gardner, Massachusetts, proudly serves students in surrounding member districts. About 140 students from ages three to 22 were enrolled in CAPS programs in the 2013 school year. The collaborative offers a range of programs including those that aid students who are deaf or hard of hearing, students with multiple disabilities and students with a variety of emotional and behavioral needs, among other services. These programs are also designed to help students transition into adult life after graduation.

One of CAPS' various services includes the School Street Program, which works to help children who demonstrate behaviors that can interfere with their learning, and to prevent such interference from recurring. Within the School Street Program, a counselor is available to support students at any time, and all professional staff are trained in intervention and advocacy for students.

The Horizons Program, located at the Westminster Elementary School, serves students with moderate to severe disabilities. Many students in the program

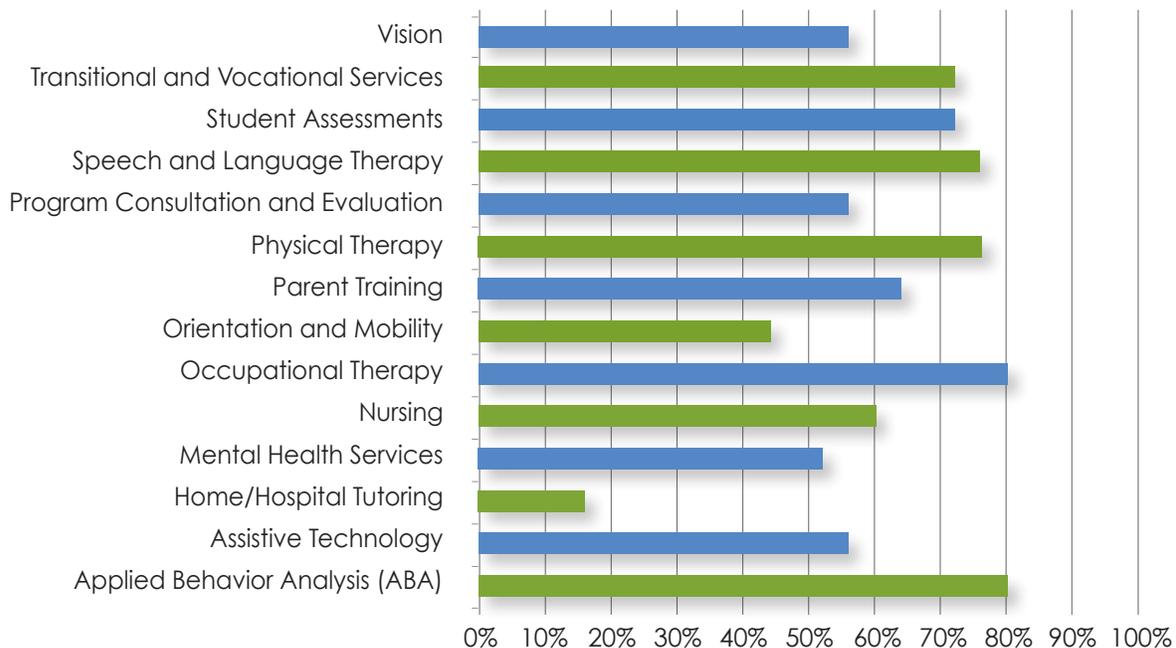
Percentage of Collaboratives providing:

Special Education Programs*



*Substantially separate or partially inclusive

Special Education Services



Special Education



Seeking to improve quality, enhance efficiency, and foster equality in public education



require extensive aid in the areas of behavior, social skills, communication, academics, functional life skills and sensory skills. Students in this program receive one-on-one interaction with their instructors in small group settings, which further meets each child's specific needs and learning style. Additionally, program instructors tailor the small groups to place a heavy emphasis on the development of functional living skills. The School Street Program and The Horizons Program demonstrate two of the many services CAPS offers to help students reach their full potential in and out of the classroom.

Lower Pioneer Valley Educational Collaborative

The Lower Pioneer Valley Educational Collaborative (LPVEC), based in West Springfield, Massachusetts, serves the educational needs of students throughout the region, and not just students in its programs. The goal of LPVEC is threefold: improve quality, enhance efficiency, and foster equity in public education.

Serving students in the elementary grades through age 22, LPVEC offers a wide range of programs for students who exhibit a variety of exceptional learning needs including adjustment and behavioral disorders, learning disabilities, Autism and Autism Spectrum Disorders, Pervasive Developmental Disabilities, physical disabilities, and developmental disabilities. Students are referred to LPVEC when they present needs for specially designed instruction that cannot be addressed effectively within a traditional classroom setting. For example, during the 2012-2013 school year, LPVEC partnered with Agawam Public Schools on a Community Innovation Challenge grant to fund the development of an in-district, therapeutic program for elementary age students with behavioral disorders. The grant was awarded in the spring of 2013. LPVEC and Agawam Public Schools worked collaboratively to design the program, hire staff, and coordinate professional development. The program and the trained intervention team associated with it began working with students and faculty in the fall of 2013. As a result of their successful work, the number of students being placed in out-of-district placements has decreased significantly.

In addition to its special education programs, LPVEC provides alternative education and is the only collaborative to operate an Innovation School in partnership with West Springfield Public Schools. The Innovation School serves students who are at risk of not completing high school. The school focuses on offering students individualized and flexible pathways to meeting credit requirements, including work based learning, online learning and service learning. Students in the Innovation School also have access to Chapter 74-approved Career and Technical Education offerings.

Shore Educational Collaborative

Based in Chelsea, Massachusetts, the Shore Educational Collaborative provides special educational and day services for students in the Greater Boston area who have behavioral and academic challenges. Each year, the collaborative serves more than 150 students from ages three through 22, giving them

individualized attention aimed at reintegrating students back into traditional school environments and helping them participate productively within their communities.

The Shore Collaborative's programs for students with moderate to severe disabilities use various instructional techniques including a total communication approach, using Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), sign language and the latest technology. In addition to these speech and language services, there are a number of other therapeutic services provided with each student's personalized program including occupational therapy, physical therapy, individual and group counseling, nursing and home training.

Shore's special education programs focus on helping its students both inside the classroom and beyond. Because each student's needs are unique, Shore goes further than just providing a standardized program. It instead uses multiple resources to construct a plan that best fits each child's needs. The personalized educational programs and services provided by Shore help special needs students succeed in educational and community environments.

Southeastern Massachusetts Educational Collaborative

The Southeastern Massachusetts Educational Collaborative (SMEC), based in New Bedford, Massachusetts, offers high quality programs with a strong focus on community integration and independence for individuals with special needs aged three to adult. For example, SMEC's Primary Language and Integrated Services Programs serve students in grades 1-8 with significant language delays and autism spectrum disorders. Staffed by special education teachers, a speech pathologist, an occupational therapist, paraprofessionals and consulting board-certified behavior analysts (BCBA), the programs are intensive and language-based, with a small staff-to-student ratio and opportunities for inclusive activities within the host school buildings and the community. A similar high school program for students in grades 9-12 with severe language delays and autism spectrum disorders is slated to open in September 2014.

SMEC's two Alternative Learning Classrooms, located in Acushnet and Dartmouth, serve students in grades 5-12 with social/emotional, behavioral and learning disabilities. Students are taught in substantially separate classrooms with a small student-to-staff ratio and inclusion opportunities within the host buildings or the community. To accommodate students' special needs, services are provided by special education teachers, reading specialists, paraprofessionals, clinicians and a speech pathologist. Additionally, the SMEC Transitional Program provides community based services including paid integrated employment opportunities, pre-employment training, independent living and social community skills training to students with developmental disabilities aged 16-21. SMEC also has two adult service programs to deliver support services to students aged 22+ who qualify for state funded support services.

Special Education

Each year more than 150 students ages 3-22 receive individualized attention aimed at reintegrating them back into traditional school environments



Addressing the needs of the whole individual, and treating each student with the utmost respect and dignity

Special Education



A strong emphasis on providing a structured environment for students who have emotional, physical, developmental and intellectual impairments

Along with specialized staffing services and high quality professional development, these examples demonstrate just a sample of the programs SMEC offers that strive to meet each student's individual needs and goals. All of SMEC's programs and services emphasize addressing the needs of the whole individual, while adhering to the collaborative's guiding principles, including a strong emphasis on community involvement, valuing the input of parents and families, and treating each student with the utmost respect and dignity.

Valley Collaborative

Valley Collaborative (formerly the Merrimack Special Education Collaborative) provides high quality academic, therapeutic and vocational services to individuals referred by local school districts and social service agencies. Recognizing that the educational environment rapidly changes, Valley Collaborative creates, adapts and provides flexible programming to provide an environment within which educational and occupational skills can be maximized.

Valley Collaborative's programs place a strong emphasis on providing a structured environment for students who have emotional, physical, developmental and intellectual impairments. For example, the Pervasive Developmental Disorder Program (PDD) at Valley's Early Childhood Center provides services designed to meet the needs of elementary and middle school students diagnosed with Asperger's or developmental delays, or who are experiencing sensory issues along the autism spectrum.

Students in the Center for Occupational Awareness and Placement (COAP) learn fundamental skills necessary for entry-level employment. In partnership with the program, the Supported Center for Occupational Awareness and Placement (SCOAP and SCOAP Foundations) provides middle and high school students with community-based employment opportunities as well as functional academic and life skills. These programs demonstrate the kinds of specialized services that Valley Collaborative offers, as it seeks to help every student reach his or her full potential.



2. Cost Savings

Not only do educational collaboratives succeed in providing quality education to special needs students, but they also offer this education in a manner that is cost-effective for school districts and taxpayers. The ability of school districts to collaborate and pool resources results in excellent education at a lower cost.

Across the state, educational collaboratives prove to be more affordable than private schools that offer equivalent programs. This section highlights just a few examples of the ways in which Massachusetts educational collaboratives are bringing outstanding educational services to their communities in an affordable way.

Bi-County Collaborative

The 18 school districts that belong to the Bi-County Collaborative (BICO), based in Franklin, Massachusetts, benefit from receiving needed, high quality services at a cost that is affordable. In Fiscal Year 2013, BICO's member districts purchased services to address special education students' needs in the areas of applied behavioral analysis, occupational therapy, physical therapy and adaptive physical education.

Averaging the cost of five or more private special education day school programs servicing students with autism, intellectual/neurological impairment and emotional impairments—based on Fiscal Year 2013 daily rates published by the Massachusetts Operational Services Division—demonstrates that the economy of scale BICO provides is effective in bringing these services to school districts at a more affordable rate.

In Fiscal Year 2013, tuition programs for autism averaged \$41,254 for BICO programs, compared to an average of \$62,640 for private school programs. BICO programs for intellectual and neurological impairment averaged \$47,592, compared to private school averages of \$62,044. BICO's day programs for emotional impairment average \$40,737, compared to average private school tuition rates of \$58,116.



COLLABORATIVE
CLOSE
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High quality services
at an affordable cost

\$21,386

SAVINGS PER STUDENT
FOR AUTISM
PROGRAM TUITION

Cost
Savings

Bringing together
students from 57 districts
to serve those with low-
incidence and highly
specialized needs

Collaborative for Regional Educational Services and Training (CREST)

Based in Methuen, Massachusetts, CREST Collaborative (formerly the Greater Lawrence Educational Collaborative) brings high quality services to students in a more cost effective way than if school districts were to create such programs on their own. All of CREST's programs and services have been structured and created to meet the needs of students and member districts in the most cost effective way possible, while ensuring they are offering the highest quality.

CREST students come from 57 school districts in Massachusetts and New Hampshire. Its staffing pattern allows multiple students to be served by the staff member best suited to meet each student's needs, reducing the individual cost per student. Bringing together students from multiple communities, particularly those with low-incidence and highly specialized needs, is also central to allowing CREST to provide a comparatively low cost option for school districts.

CREST's Lifeways School serves students with intellectual disabilities, autism spectrum disorders, and social/emotional disabilities. In 2012-13, a 180-day tuition at Lifeways cost \$45,203, compared to similar private school program tuitions that ranged between \$85,309 and \$101,313. CREST's Essex Academy at Coastal provides programs to students with learning disabilities, anxiety, depression and mental illness. In 2012-13, CREST tuition cost \$33,998, compared to private schools in the area that range between \$54,634 and \$72,276. CREST's Essex Academy serves students with emotional, behavioral and/or psychiatric needs. Its Fiscal Year 2013 tuition was \$33,998, compared to private school tuitions that ranged between \$45,198 and \$72,276.



South Shore Educational Collaborative

An important part of the South Shore Educational Collaborative's (SSEC) mission is for its innovative, high quality educational programs to be fiscally sound. SSEC, based in Hingham, Massachusetts, reviews tuition and fees, as well as the level of services needed, on an annual basis to keep its programs affordable for its member districts.

One of SSEC's cost saving measures includes leasing classroom space in Weymouth, Hingham, Cohasset and Hull for students who perform well in a traditional school setting, an approach that offers significant savings on transportation while giving parents the benefit of having their children close to home. SSEC also utilizes advanced energy purchasing for natural gas and electricity, which has allowed it to lock in low prices that, in Fiscal Year 2013, resulted in over \$180,000 in savings for electricity and over \$100,000 in savings for natural gas, when compared to market prices. These are just two of the ways in which SSEC employs cost saving measures that make a difference for the districts it serves.

SSEC's close attention to its costs allows the collaborative to maintain services that are more affordable than comparable private school programs in the area. A comparison done with private schools to which students of similar profiles to SSEC's have been referred or accepted in the past shows that the collaborative remains a more affordable option. In Fiscal Year 2013, the tuition for SSEC's community school, including summer programs, was \$60,881, compared to tuitions of \$105,343 and \$73,066 for comparable private schools. SSEC's mini school for students with autism and receptive/expressive language processing challenges had a tuition of \$54,293, including summer, in Fiscal Year 2013, compared to private school tuitions of \$69,183 and \$81,347. SSEC's South Shore High School and Careers High School programs cost a yearly tuition of \$42,369 for Fiscal Year 2013, compared with \$52,827 and \$47,086 for private school programs.

Cost
Savings

Advance energy
purchasing locked
in low pricing, resulting
in significant savings



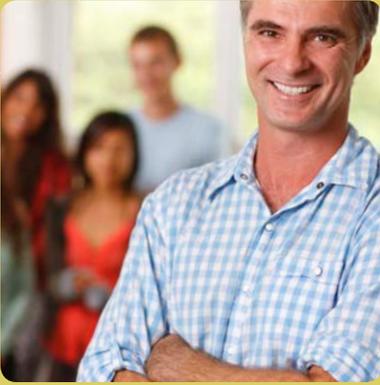
\$180,000

SAVED ON ELECTRICITY



\$100,000

SAVED ON NATURAL GAS



Providing teachers with the tools they need to help their students succeed

3. Professional Development

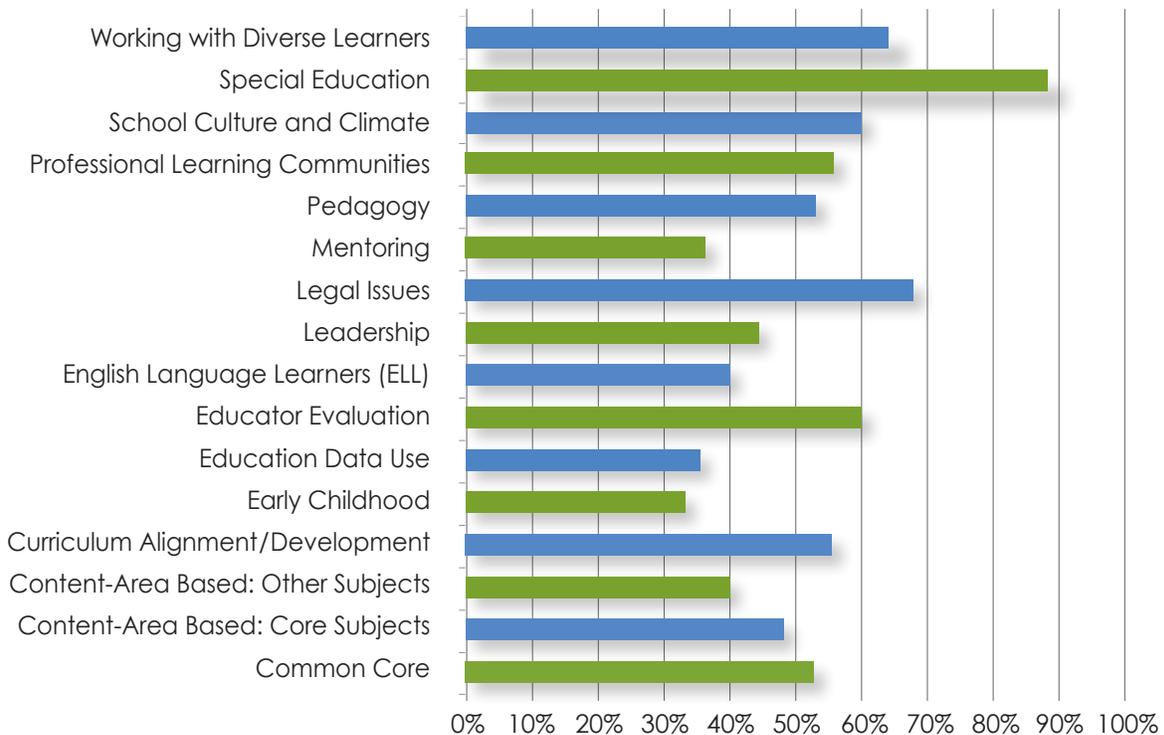
The goal of educational collaboratives is to ensure that all students have access to high quality education. This objective cannot be reached without a team of talented instructors who have the skills and the knowledge necessary to help students reach their fullest potential. The Commonwealth’s educational collaboratives offer professional development opportunities to faculty and staff to ensure that teachers are trained in the most up-to-date educational techniques and technology.

Through many of these professional development programs, collaboratives have been able to form unique relationships with important local organizations, universities and businesses. These partnerships not only provide additional resources that enhance students’ overall educational experiences, but they also allow the local community to become invested in the collaborative.

The collaboratives featured in this section have succeeded in providing educators with the resources needed to best serve students.

Percentage of Collaboratives providing:

Professional Development Programs and Training



Charms Collaborative

The Charms Collaborative, based in Stoughton, Massachusetts, serves 21 school districts with six different program sites in southeastern Massachusetts. The collaborative's central focus is to provide staff with access to the most current and innovative educational strategies, which in turn benefit students' growth and learning. To achieve this, the collaborative has committed to bringing members of the community, as well as neighboring school districts, the most up-to-date special education programs and services.

During the 2012-2013 school year, Charms met its goal to increase professional development opportunities that enrich classroom instructional techniques, augment the curriculum and provide overviews of special education related topics. Charms provided its staff and neighboring districts with professional development programs such as "Balanced Literacy by Current Theory and Developmental Stage," "EdTech Teacher iPad Training," and "Darkness to Light." The "Balanced Literacy" seminar focused on understanding the need for Response to Intervention (RTI) and curriculum-based assessments, whereas the "Darkness to Light" program explored the methodology to prevent, recognize and react to child abuse.

Additional professional development topics for Charms staff continued during the 2013-2014 school year, including balanced literacy classroom support, strategies for addressing bullying, transition planning, behavior supports, aligning IEP goals to the curriculum, and health-related topics. Thanks to these engaging and effective programs, the collaborative's staff was not only able to improve and expand educators' understanding of the latest teaching methods, but staff members were also able to bring the surrounding communities together.

SEEM Collaborative

Serving 10 member school districts in northeastern Massachusetts, as well as non-member districts, the SEEM Collaborative, based in Stoneham, provides the support services, best practices, and knowledge that educators need to bring continued instructional excellence to students. A critical component of SEEM's success has been its commitment to supporting, encouraging and investing in its employees' and member districts' professional goals. SEEM is dedicated to developing the tools needed to expand the skills of educators, administrators, and related service providers, which are critical to improving student achievement.

SEEM hires reputable trainers known for their high impact on instructional practice, but who would be too costly for districts to fund entirely on their own. SEEM Collaborative also uses highly skilled collaborative staff, such as safety care trainers and board-certified behavior analysts, to provide customized workshops, and partners with Salem State University and Fitchburg State University to offer graduate level courses. These programs allow surrounding districts to access the training that is necessary for select faculty without incurring the burden of the training's total cost.

Professional
Development

COLLABORATIVE
CLOSE
UPS

Providing staff with
access to the most
current and innovative
educational strategies
benefits students'
growth and learning



Supporting,
encouraging, and
investing in employees'
and member districts'
professional goals

Professional Development



Placing course offerings and materials in a central online location makes high quality professional development available to educators throughout the region

SEEM Collaborative offers Job-Alike training meetings to their member districts' curriculum leaders, department heads, preschool directors, educational team leaders and transition services members. These highly sought after sessions are offered at little to no cost to the districts. With this practice, upwards of 75 participants are able to grow and learn from one another, as well as to nurture beneficial professional relationships. Courses are offered in the SEEM training facility, as well as within member districts and online to accommodate varying staff schedules.



Southeast Collaborative Regional Organization

The Southeast Collaborative Regional Organization (SCRO), a consortium of nine Educational

Collaboratives representing 88 school districts in southeastern Massachusetts, secured a grant to implement a Professional Development Cloud using Smart PD. The grant supported the development of a cloud-based system that encourages educators to register for professional development in collaboratives and school districts throughout the region. By placing course offerings and materials in a central online location that is updated in real time, districts and collaboratives are able to offer available seats in high quality professional development programs to educators from other districts in the region in order to maximize professional development throughout the southeast.

Courses related to technology in the classroom, collaboration to improve teaching, and empowering writers are just some of the opportunities that the SCRO Professional Development Cloud offers the almost 40 participating school districts. Prior to implementing the Professional Development Cloud using Smart PD, professional development opportunities were shared via websites, brochures and informal discussions, meetings or e-mails. This approach was inefficient for reaching all districts, especially smaller districts that often lack the capacity for a special development coordinator and other related resources.

While encouraging greater collaboration, the SCRO PD Cloud using SmartPD has also created an increased awareness of the robust professional development offerings available to educators, administrators and other school faculty. This transparency encourages districts to consider what they could be offering to enhance their educational programs. The strong coordination in professional development that this cloud-based system provides will reduce duplication and provide expanded educational opportunities that are more cost-effective.

4.

Transportation

Across the Commonwealth, general education and special needs children and their families rely on educational collaboratives for transportation to and from school. Transportation often requires specialized vehicles, such as those that can comfortably accommodate students in wheelchairs and students who require other accommodations.

Transportation is one of the many non-instructional services that collaboratives provide. Several collaboratives are in the process of expanding the array of services they offer. A 2008 study performed by the Donahue Institute at the University of Massachusetts found that creating a series of transportation networks across the Commonwealth would enable significant cost-savings for districts in the transportation of their out-of-district special education students.

This section of the report highlights three collaboratives that have continued to improve and expand their transportation services.

ACCEPT Educational Collaborative

Based in Natick, Massachusetts, the ACCEPT collaborative first developed regional special education transportation services for its member districts in 1978 and has enhanced this program ever since. During the 2012-13 school year, ACCEPT provided safe, reliable, efficient and cost-effective door-to-door transportation to approximately 450 students attending over 95 different schools each day.

ACCEPT takes needed measures to ensure its transportation program meets the highest safety standards for the students it serves. The collaborative's vehicles are equipped with both GPS and Direct Connect phones. All drivers are carefully and thoroughly screened and 7-D licensed, and they are supervised and trained in defensive driving, first aid, medical emergencies, Epi-Pen administration, disability awareness, behavior management and the safe transport of students with various disabilities. In addition, all wheelchair van drivers and monitors are trained in CPR.

Through ongoing updates, such as recent changes to its parent handbook and driver training programs, ACCEPT works to continuously enhance the transportation services it provides to hundreds of students.

Assabet Valley Collaborative

The Marlborough, Massachusetts-based Assabet Valley Collaborative (AVC) provides high quality, safe, reliable and cost-efficient special education transportation services by contracting with transportation vendors on behalf of 15 member districts. AVC leverages cooperative purchasing power to yield competitive bids from transportation providers, reducing costs, increasing quality



COLLABORATIVE
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UPS

Carefully screened drivers are trained in first aid, disability awareness, behavior management and the safe transport of children with disabilities

Transportation

Leveraging cooperative purchasing power to yield competitive bids



GPS tracking allows bus locations to be pinpointed in an emergency, while also providing maintenance and mileage data

and relieving districts of administrative burdens. AVC monitors the contracts with vendors to ensure high quality services, compliance, and customer service. In 2012-2013, AVC transported a daily average of 273 students.

AVC views transportation as an integral part of each student's education and seeks to contract with vendors that share AVC's passion and expertise in serving students with disabilities. Drivers and monitors receive training in first aid, CPR, Epi-Pen administration, bullying prevention, verbal de-escalation, and disability awareness to ensure that they can skillfully respond to student needs. In addition, AVC's contract sets expectations for vehicle equipment and conditions, ensuring that students are transported in new, safe, reliable and clean vehicles that represent AVC's commitment to quality services. Vehicles are equipped with GPS and video monitoring and meet all state requirements. AVC's rate setting model provides predictability to districts in budgeting for their costs (a flat rate per route) and also provides an affordable method for districts to fund both individual and group transportation.

Districts save money by purchasing transportation services through AVC, but they also benefit from flexibility, individualization and expertise. AVC's vendor model also reduces organizational risk while capitalizing on the industry expertise and economy of scale afforded by a state-wide vendor.

Southern Worcester County Educational Collaborative

The Southern Worcester County Educational Collaborative (SWCEC), based in Dudley, Massachusetts, takes pride in offering special needs students, their families and their school districts high quality transportation. SWCEC provided transportation services to 128 students throughout the 2012-13 school year, including daily transportation to and from school, as well as summer programs, after school programs and field trips.

SWCEC's drivers are committed to ensuring safe, enjoyable transportation for students. At the end of 2013, there were 22 drivers, three of whom were hired within the year to accommodate increased need. Nine of the transportation routes needed extra monitors so seven additional staff members were employed as school bus monitors. All drivers and monitors are trained in CPR, first aid, and automated external defibrillator (AED) and Epi-Pen administration.

In 2013, SWCEC selected Actsoft hard-mounted tracking devices after evaluating several GPS providers. The new system, which was implemented in the 2014 school year, allows SWCEC to pinpoint the exact location of buses in case of emergency, while also providing data on maintenance needs, wait times and odometer reports, among other features. GPS tracking is another step in SWCEC's ongoing efforts to ensure that its transportation adheres to the highest safety standards, while also being convenient and reliable for parents and students.

Looking Forward

With the anticipated enactment of House 3938, an Act Relative to Educational Collaboratives, MOEC members are filled with great energy about the possibilities that the legislation presents. For many years, we have looked forward to playing a more significant role in helping our member school districts implement the many state and federal initiatives with which they are faced. We recognize the enormous potential that lies within our collaborative organizations and envision a future of greater cooperation and participation with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) in order to provide support and expertise to our districts.

In the initial phase of implementation, we will reconfigure our geographic regions and will appoint individual collaboratives to represent our interests on the coordinating council with representatives from ESE. We will:

- Identify regional needs and priorities for service
- Develop policies to coordinate service delivery to school districts that is responsive to regional needs and priorities
- Work on partnerships with ESE and other regional entities to coordinate the dissemination of information and support to the districts

We recognize that this is an ambitious undertaking and will require considerable time, resources, commitment and creativity. Nonetheless, MOEC members are excited and energized about the opportunity to assist our districts in new and long-lasting ways.



Creating a system
to foster greater
cooperation and
participation



MOEC Member Collaboratives

West

Collaborative for Educational Services (CES)
Lower Pioneer Valley Educational Collaborative (LPVEC)

Central

Assabet Valley Collaborative (AVC)
CAPS Education Collaborative
Central Massachusetts Special Education Collaborative (CMSEC)
FLLAC Collaborative
Southern Worcester County Educational Collaborative (SWCEC)

Greater Boston

ACCEPT Education Collaborative
CASE Collaborative
EDCO Collaborative
LABBB Collaborative
Shore Educational Collaborative
The Education Cooperative (TEC)

North

Collaborative for Regional Educational Services & Training (CREST)
Valley Collaborative
Northshore Education Consortium (NEC)
SEEM Collaborative

South

Bi-County Collaborative (BICO)
Cape Cod Collaborative
CHARMS Collaborative
North River Collaborative (NRC)
Pilgrim Area Collaborative (PAC)
READS Collaborative
South Coast Educational Collaborative (SCEC)
Southeastern Massachusetts Educational Collaborative (SMEC)

www.collaborative.org
www.lpvec.org

www.avcollaborative.org
www.capsped.org
www.cmsec.org
www.fllac.org
www.swcec.org

www.accept.org
www.casecollaborative.org
www.edcollab.org
www.labbb.com
www.shorecollaborative.org
www.tec-coop.org

www.crestcollaborative.org
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