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**Massachusetts
Organization of
Educational
Collaboratives**



Joanne Haley Sullivan,
Executive Director

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Keystone Educational Collaborative Uses
State-of-the-Art Robotic Device to Teach
Students in Worcester and Middlesex
County How to Walk**



Alex Scott, 4, of Lunenburg, during a session with the Trexo Gait Trainer. (Photo Courtesy Keystone Educational Collaborative)

FITCHBURG — The Keystone Educational Collaborative is pleased to share that it recently secured a Trexo Gait Trainer, a wearable robotic device designed to assist students with disabilities in learning to walk.

The collaborative began using the Trexo in June, with seven students participating in daily use of the Trexo at Keystone's facility in Fitchburg. Keystone's Trexo is the second device of its kind available for multi-student usage in Massachusetts.

The Trexo adjusts to fit each child comfortably, allowing them to maintain a standing position. It guides the user to take sequential steps while a physical therapist monitors the student's performance. Data is transferred from the Trexo to a tablet, which alerts the therapist to when the child is initiating independent movement instead of relying on the device.

Data received during sessions allow therapists to track students' progress and make informed decisions about the student's upcoming sessions, including adjustments to the user's walking pattern, the speed of steps, the amount of weight bearing and the

level of support provided by the device.

Unlike standard gait trainers, which are not robotic, the Trexo gait trainer does not require manual manipulation from the therapist to replicate walking patterns. Instead, it allows for increased repetition, which is crucial, especially for those with neurological impairments, as well as functional stretching and alignment correction needs.

“Standard gait trainer methods are very effective, but are labor-intensive for therapists,” Director of Physical Therapy Amanda Costella said. “The Trexo Robotic Gait Trainer bridges that gap to allow for longer duration and a high repetition of steps, which helps our students lay down a solid framework for walking.”

The collaborative is leasing the Trexo for one year at no cost. The collaborative won the device through a Trexo contest giveaway. To win the giveaway, Keystone staff, member districts, and families formed a grassroots campaign to encourage voting. Keystone was one of the top two vote-getters.

"As a small program in Central Massachusetts, winning was fairly far-fetched, but our team was extremely dedicated," Costella said. "We made flyers, reached out to our member districts and communities — everyone got involved. There was tremendous energy surrounding the competition and it really unified our community."

The typical cost of a Trexo Gait Trainer is \$75,000. The device is not covered by insurance.

“At Keystone Educational Collaborative, mobility training and adaptive equipment support is an intricate component in our student's plan of care. This device is so special and students will have access to it every single day for a prescribed period of time,” Executive Director John Demanche said. “We are confident that this state-of-the-art resource will help generate quality outcomes.”

"Obtaining a device of this caliber is a reminder of the Keystone staff's unwavering advocacy for their students' best interests," Massachusetts Organization of Educational Collaboratives Executive Director Joanne Haley Sullivan said.

To view a video of the device in use, click [here](#).

About Keystone Educational Collaborative

The Keystone Educational Collaborative, based in Shirley, specializes in teaching children with a wide range of complex neurological, physical and educational needs from Middlesex and Worcester Counties, including students who have difficulty walking and are wheelchair users.

It provides intensive educational programs and services for students with disabilities; provides professional development to educators; provides related services to students with disabilities in member and non-member districts and provides other high-quality cost effective services to meet the changing needs of member districts.

Keystone serves school districts in the Nashoba Valley, Central Massachusetts, and North Central Massachusetts, including the districts of Ashburnham, Westminster, Ayer-Shirley, Clinton, Fitchburg, Gardner, Leominster, Lunenburg, Narragansett, North Middlesex, Quabbin, West Boylston and Winchendon.

To learn more about collaboratives with similar initiatives in your region, please visit MOEC's website [here](#).

About Massachusetts Organization of Educational Collaboratives

[MOEC](#) represents the Commonwealth's 25 educational collaboratives. MOEC serves as the voice of its members and works to develop a full appreciation for and understanding of educational collaboratives at the state, regional, and local levels. MOEC is the Commonwealth's primary advocate for collaboratives and the critical role they play in the Massachusetts educational system.

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Mia McGann, 4, of Winchendon, is guided down a hallway with Director of Physical Therapy Amanda Costella (left), Physical Therapist Aly Briody (center) and Mia's mother Kayla McGann (right). (Photo Courtesy Keystone Educational Collaborative)



Mia McGann, 4, of Winchendon, during her session with the Trexo Gait Trainer. (Photo

Courtesy Keystone Educational Collaborative)



Mia McGann, 4, of Winchendon, walks with assistance from the robotic Trexo Gait Trainer. (Photo Courtesy Keystone Educational Collaborative)

A message from the Massachusetts Organization of Educational Collaboratives

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