

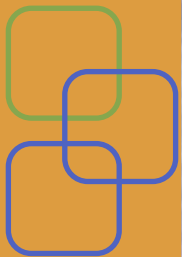
A close-up photograph of a woman with dark hair and a grey shirt adjusting a hearing aid on the ear of a young girl with dark curly hair. The girl is wearing red overalls over a white shirt. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey. The image is framed by a solid orange border on the left and right sides.

Embracing
Excellence in
Special Education

Massachusetts Organization of
Educational Collaboratives

2021 – 2022 Annual Report

www.moecnet.org



Committees, Commissions, and Advisory Boards

The Board appreciates the following members for serving on the MOEC committees:

Legislative Committee

- Catherine Cooper (Chair), Executive Director, Southeastern Massachusetts Educational Collaborative (SMEC)
- Paul Hilton, Executive Director, Cape Cod Collaborative
- Roland Joyal, Executive Director, Lower Pioneer Valley Education Collaborative
- Cathy Lawson, Executive Director, SEEM Collaborative
- Liz McGonagle, Executive Director, The Education Collaborative (TEC)

Professional Development Committee

- Liz McGonagle (Chair), Executive Director, The Education Collaborative (TEC)
- Helen Deranian, Coordinator, Crest Collaborative
- Fran Rosenberg, Executive Director, Northshore Education Consortium
- Dympna Thomas, Executive Director, Pilgrim Area Collaborative

Finance Committee

- Chris Scott (Chair), Executive Director, Valley Collaborative
- John Demanche, Executive Director, Keystone Collaborative
- Todd Gazda, Executive Director, Collaborative for Educational Services
- Cathy Lawson, Executive Director, SEEM Collaborative
- Liz McGonagle, Executive Director, The Education Collaborative (TEC)
- Rick Reino, Executive Director, South Shore Educational Collaborative
- Jim George, CPA (Advisor), Valley Collaborative

The Board appreciates the following members for representing MOEC on Commissions and Advisory Boards:

Digital Learning Advisory Committee

- Angela Burke, Director of Professional Services, Collaborative for Educational Services

Safe and Supportive Schools Commission

- Susan Farrell, Executive Director, Central Massachusetts Collaborative

Special Education Advisory Council

- Susan Farrell, Executive Director, Central Massachusetts Collaborative

BirCH Project

- Francine Rosenberg, Executive Director, Northshore Education Consortium



Educational Collaboratives in Massachusetts

Massachusetts collaboratives are educational services agencies that bring school districts together to form partnerships to create regional educational capacity and resources. Collaboratives benefit school districts, students, families, educators and taxpayers by maximizing efficiency through shared costs and expertise. They play a leadership role in developing a broad range of innovative programming to meet emerging needs by providing training, enabling the sharing of exemplary educational practices, and serving and educating many of our most vulnerable students across the Commonwealth.

In 1974, Massachusetts enacted the legislation that encouraged school districts to come together to address demands for special education services through collaboratives. Further legislation in 2012 clearly delineated the authority under which educational collaboratives now operate. The resulting partnerships have grown to encompass many diverse educational services and programs.

Today, educational collaboratives offer a wide range of programs and services ranging from:

- Special education programs and services
- Vocational and school-to-work programs
- Early childhood services
- Supplemental educational and therapeutic services
- Virtual learning and the Commonwealth Virtual School
- Recovery High Schools
- Health and safety initiatives (including mental health and family support)
- Professional development programs
- Cooperative purchasing programs
- Transportation services for both regular and special education students
- School Based Medicaid reimbursement services
- Services designed for individuals with disabilities post 22 years old

The Massachusetts Organization of Educational Collaboratives (MOEC)

The Massachusetts Organization of Educational Collaboratives (MOEC) is the professional organization representing the Commonwealth's educational collaboratives. MOEC serves as the voice of our members and works to develop a full appreciation for and understanding of educational collaboratives at the state, regional, and local levels. As an influential facilitator and highly visible proponent of regional thinking in service delivery, MOEC is the Commonwealth's primary advocate for collaboratives and the critical role they play in the Massachusetts educational system.

MOEC provides a forum to enhance the ability of collaboratives to promote leadership and direction to their organizations through professional development, information exchange, and advocacy for collaborative programming so that Massachusetts collaboratives may better serve their constituents.





Executive Director's Letter

21-22

was a school year in which schools and districts and collaboratives continued to experience the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. While we had hoped that COVID-19 transmission was waning and that we would return to a more traditional year, it did not turn out that way. Collaboratives

and school districts continued to be challenged to provide equitable high-quality services to their students while also working diligently to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19 through testing and quarantine protocols for students and staff.

Adequate staffing was at a crisis level for the field of education in general, and special education in particular, this year. This became a significant challenge for collaboratives and prompted us to find new ways to most effectively support our students. On top of that, across the country and the state students were presenting with needs that were more acute than we have seen in the past, and this was certainly true in collaboratives as well. At times, this prevented us from accepting new students into our programs and services, leaving our districts without these needed resources. Despite these challenges, collaboratives continued to provide programs and services for a total of over 35,000 students across the Commonwealth. This was a true testament to the tenacity and resilience of the leadership and staff in our collaboratives.

The staffing shortage, along with increasing mental health issues that are adversely affecting the students in the Commonwealth, are overburdening an already depleted field. Recognizing that these issues will become an even greater crisis if not addressed, MOEC collaborated with DESE and with legislators, and with other partners to identify solutions to this crisis so that we can continue to meet student needs.

We regrettably are saying goodbye to one of our members this year; EDCO Collaborative will be dissolving as of June 30th after many years of significant benefit to educators and students across the state and in their districts. We are grateful for their contributions to the work of MOEC as well.

Despite the challenges the year presented, 2021-22 was also a period of considerable progress for MOEC and its member collaboratives. Our organization continues to advance the interests of our members and our member school districts to ensure that every child in the Commonwealth receives a high-quality education. Since our beginning in the 1970s, and through subsequent legislative action over the years, our reputation for providing student and district support continues to flourish. MOEC's impact across the Commonwealth is realized in the important areas of advocacy, partnership and professional development.

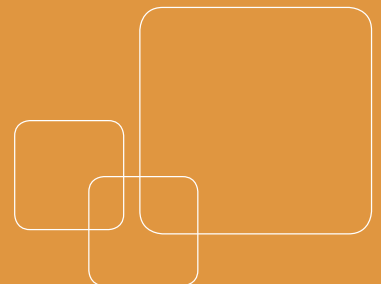
We are grateful to Commissioner Jeffrey Riley and his staff for the many ways they have continued to elevate the awareness and use of educational collaboratives. We particularly want to thank Ruth Hersh, Paulajo Gaines, and Nina Marchese for their advocacy on our behalf.

It is my honor to submit the Massachusetts Organization of Educational Collaboratives' annual report.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joanne Haley Sullivan".

Joanne Haley Sullivan
Executive Director
Massachusetts Organization of Educational Collaboratives

The staffing shortage, along with increasing mental health issues that are adversely affecting the students in the Commonwealth are overburdening an already depleted field. These issues will become an even greater crisis if not addressed.



Collaborative Data and Offerings

MOEC's member collaboratives have long standing partnerships that enhance districts' capacity to provide high quality programming to meet the complex needs of our most vulnerable students. MOEC members provide a wide array of services to schools, educators, communities, and learners of all ages, from professional development and consultation to specialized student programs, wrap-around services, and more.

Collaborative Data

The Commonwealth's 25 Collaboratives employ 5,396 educators and staff to serve 35,052 students:

- serve over 5,253 students in special education programs
- provide special education services to over 4,089 students
- provide general education services to over 5,042 students
- provide special education transportation to over 1,979 students
- provide general education transportation to over 18,689 students

Collaborative Student Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity (2020-2021) Data:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------|
| • African American | 8.7 % |
| • Asian | 3.2 % |
| • Hispanic | 21.6 % |
| • Native American | 0.3 % |
| • White | 61.1 % |
| • Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | 0.1 % |
| • Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic | 5.0 % |

Collaborative educational programs serve students with the following needs:

- Autism Spectrum
- Communication
- Developmental Delay
- Emotional/Therapeutic
- Intellectual
- Multiple Disabilities/Complex Health
- Neurological
- Post-High School Transition
- Sensory: Deaf-Blind; Hearing; Vision
- Specific Learning
- Substance Use Disorders

Collaboratives provide the following special education services:

- Applied Behavior Analysis
- Parent Training
- Assistive Technology
- Physical Therapy
- Home/Hospital Tutoring
- Program Evaluation & Consultation
- Mental Health Services
- Speech & Language Therapy
- Nursing
- Student Assessments
- Occupational Therapy
- Transitional & Vocational Services
- Orientation & Mobility
- Vision

Collaboratives provide the following other education services:

- Career and Technical Education
- Recovery High Schools
- Cooperative Purchasing
- Student Data Privacy
- Family Supports/Wrap-around Services
- Student Transportation
- Medicaid Reimbursement
- Mental Health Supports
- Professional Development
- Virtual Schooling

The Commonwealth's 25 Collaborative employ 5,396 educators and staff to serve 35,052 students in a variety of ways.



Massachusetts Organization of Educational Collaboratives (MOEC)

Three overarching goals were set for MOEC for 2021-22:

1. Expand the role of MOEC as a statewide resource for collaboratives.
2. Provide advocacy with DESE and with state and local legislators.
3. Advocate for greater recognition and use of collaboratives.

1. MOEC as a resource for collaboratives.

- **Job Alike Groups:** To support collaborative leaders with communication, networking, and support MOEC provided various learning communities across collaboratives. We enhanced and created new job-alike groups who met multiple times this year. Participants experienced opportunities to share common issues and concerns and learn from one another, including:
 - EL Program Leaders (new for FY22)
 - Equity Specialists (new for FY22)
 - Executive Directors
 - Business Leaders
 - Special Education Program Leaders
 - Professional Development Leaders
 - Home Services Providers Leaders
 - Technology Leaders
 - Human Resources
 - Transportation Leaders
 - Data Specialists
- **Professional Development specific to the needs of Collaborative Leaders**
 - *Virtual Learning Tours*

Collaborative Leaders were able to join colleagues from across the state, to network and learn more about educational design being used in other collaboratives. This virtual professional development provided an opportunity to share new ideas, successful practices, and current solutions for models of instruction in collaborative settings.
 - *Social Security for Collaborative Employees*

A Regional Public Affairs Specialist for Social Security provided a high level overview to all interested collaborative employees about this important benefit that they may be entitled to receive.
 - *Make Friends with Legislators Before You Need Them*

This panel session focused on what the panelists have done to maintain positive relationships with elected officials to promote the good work and the needs of collaboratives.
 - *Self Care, Mindfulness and the Importance of Relationships*

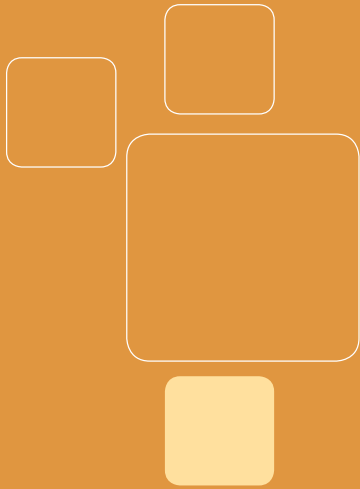
Former LABBB Executive Director, Patric Barberi, facilitated a session on self-care, mindfulness, and the importance of relationships.
 - *Integration of Collaborative Programs in Host Schools*

Former LABBB Executive Director, Patric Barberi, provided effective strategies to ensure collaborative programs are welcomed in host schools.
 - *Legal Issues Workshop*

Sarah Spatafore from Murphy, Hesse, Twomey, and Lehane discussed timely and meaningful topics including: Title IX, Maternity Leave/FMLA, and District-based/contracted staff and the notion of joint employment.



Participants in Job Alike Networks had increased opportunities to share common issues and concerns and learn from one another.



In FY22, MOEC successfully advocated for Collaboratives to access federal funds allocated for K-12 education to reimburse them for extraordinary expenses related to keeping students and staff safe during the pandemic.

Training to keep Executive Directors informed about changes that pertain to collaboratives as they arise

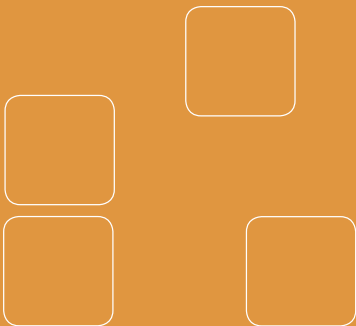
- Collaborative Dissolution
Executive Directors learned more about the considerations to protect member districts in the event of dissolution of a Collaborative. Topics include real estate liability, RFP, and Collaborative vs. District Responsibility--what are the appropriate protections for member districts?, Retirees Health Insurance Trust, Vacation Liability, and Liability of Districts after leaving the Collaborative

2. Provide advocacy with DESE and with Federal, State, and Local Legislators.

A significant challenge for collaboratives throughout the pandemic has been the lack of dedicated funding to reimburse collaboratives for the extraordinary expenses needed to keep students safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. Our unique governing structure left us lacking COVID related funds for our programs that have been available to others in the educational domain. In FY21, Collaboratives were unable to access the state and federal funds allocated for k-12 education to respond to this unprecedented pandemic as these funds were reserved for LEAs.

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)

- MOEC and its members participated in numerous sessions with Department policy makers to ensure that the collaboratives' perspectives are embedded in their initiatives and outreach efforts, particularly during this continuing Pandemic year.
 - Reimbursements to Collaboratives for additional expenses due to COVID-19 (75% reimbursement)
 - Staffing shortages: MOEC worked closely with DESE and our partners at ASE and MAAPS to seek solutions to the staffing crisis in special education. Working in partnership with MASSHire, we participated in the development of regional and statewide job fairs.
 - Regional Liaisons discussed timely topics with the Commissioner and Associate Commissioners. Topics included:
 - mental health,
 - services for students who turned 22 during COVID-19,
 - family supports,
 - and other issues.
- We collaborated with DESE to enhance clarity of the Cumulative Surplus Guidance. This document is designed to provide sufficient information to allow collaboratives to conform with the intent of the regulations.
- We were successful in advocating for inclusion in some grant opportunities that collaboratives may not have been eligible for in the past. We are grateful to DESE for their openness to these opportunities to best serve our students.
- We were represented on DESE Advisory Groups:
 - Safe and Supportive Schools Commission
 - Special Education Advisory Council
 - Digital Learning Advisory Committee



Massachusetts Great and General Court

An ongoing challenge for collaboratives that has been exacerbated by the pandemic is a provision in the Ethics Law that limits the ability of collaboratives to leverage the expertise of member district staff to meet the needs of students in collaborative programs and to provide high quality professional development to staff. We have advocated for the filing of *An Act to Support Educational Collaboratives (S2066 and H4350)*. This bill is designed to address what we perceive is an unintended consequence of the statute. Current law limits the ability of collaboratives to leverage the expertise of member district staff who are currently precluded from sharing their expertise across and among collaborative member districts or within collaborative programs. This bill is a keystone element of the effort to reduce this shortage and allow us to more effectively meet the needs of our students while ensuring a fair approach to recruiting and hiring the needed staff. We are grateful to Senator Adam Hinds and Representative Marc Pacheco for their recognition of this need and filing this bill on our behalf.

We look forward to continued discussion regarding the consequences of this dilemma and are confident of its resolution.

3. Advocacy for Greater Recognition and Use of Collaboratives

Statewide Educational Organizations

MOEC is recognized as a significant voice in the educational community across the Commonwealth. We have longstanding and valued partnerships with the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (MASS), the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) and the Massachusetts Association of School Business Officials (MASBO). Together, our organizations focus on our primary mission of ensuring high quality programs and services for each and every child and staff member in our school districts. We are proud of our relationship with these organizations and welcome their support of educational collaboratives. We are frequent presenters and participants at their annual conferences and institutes and appreciate the respect that their organizations afford us.

Promote public awareness and knowledge about the state's educational collaboratives. MOEC continues to advocate for greater recognition and use of collaboratives by promoting public awareness and knowledge about the state's educational collaboratives. In addition, MOEC contracted with a Public Relations firm to produce stories raising awareness of collaboratives. In FY22, we engaged in dialogue with the following statewide leaders for this purpose.

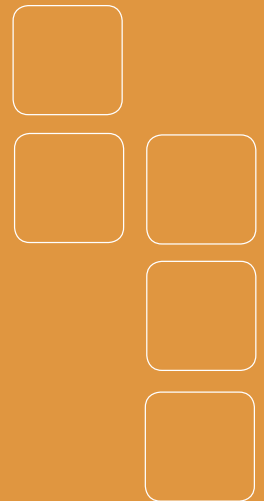
- Deputy Commissioner Regina Robinson
- Office of the Child Advocate
- Legislators, including Speaker of the House of Representatives Ron Mariano's office
- BirCH Advisory Board

Expand Relationships with statewide educational groups

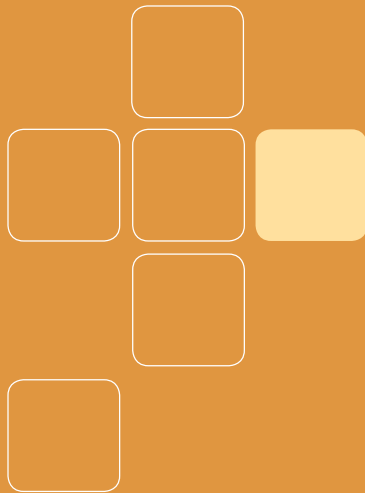
MOEC consistently works to expand relationships with statewide educational groups in order to find new and creative ways to address student needs. In FY22, we formed new partnerships and continued existing partnerships with the following organizations:

- Massachusetts Partnership for Youth (New for FY22)
- Workforce Investment Boards (New for FY22)
- Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents
- Massachusetts Association of School Committees
- Massachusetts Administrators of Special Education
- Coalition for Special Education Funding
- Transition Aged Youth Coalition
- Association of Educational Service Agencies
- Massachusetts Association of Pupil Transportation
- Special Education Transportation Task Force
- Massachusetts Association of Approved Private Schools

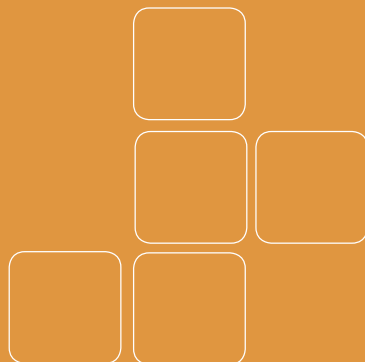
We are extremely grateful to Senator Adam Hinds and Representative Marc Pacheco for filing *An Act to Support Educational Collaboratives (S2066) and H4350* on our behalf.



Executive Board



Regional Liaison Representatives



The 2021 - 2022 MOEC Board of Directors

President	Liz McGonagle The Education Collaborative (TEC) www.tec-coop.org
Vice-President	Theresa Craig READS Collaborative www.readscollab.org
Treasurer	Chris Scott Valley Collaborative www.valleycollaborative.org
Secretary	Stephen Donovan North River Collaborative (NRC) www.northrivercollaborative.org
Past President	Catherine Lawson SEEM Collaborative www.smecollaborative.org
AESA Liaison:	Catherine Lawson SEEM Collaborative www.smecollaborative.org
Executive Director	Joanne Haley Sullivan Massachusetts Organization of Educational Collaboratives (MOEC) www.moecnet.org
Greater Boston:	Jacki Clark Shore Educational Collaborative www.shorecollaborative.org
North:	Francine Rosenberg Northshore Education Consortium www.nsedu.org
South:	Catherine Cooper Southeastern Massachusetts Educational Collaborative (SMEC) www.smecollaborative.org
Central:	Arnold Lundwall Southern Worcester County Educational Collaborative (SWCEC) www.swcec.org
West:	Roland Joyal Lower Pioneer Valley Education Collaborative (LPVEC) www.lpvec.org

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 Collaborative (CMC)
Keystone Collaborative
Southern Worcester County Educational Collaborative (SWCEC)

Greater Boston

ACCEPT Education Collaborative
CASE Collaborative
EDCO Collaborative*(closed as of June 30, 2022)
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
North River Collaborative (NRC)
Pilgrim Area Collaborative (PAC)
READS Collaborative
South Coast Educational Collaborative (SCEC)
Southeastern Massachusetts Educational Collaborative (SMEC)
South Shore Educational Collaborative

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www.valleycollaborative.org
www.nsedu.org
www.seemcollaborative.org

www.bicounty.org
www.capecodcollaborative.org
www.northrivercollaborative.org
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