



Central Massachusetts Special Education Collaborative

ANNUAL REPORT 2014-2015

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Central MA Special Education Collaborative Members,

As a recent addition to the Central Massachusetts Special Education Collaborative Administrative team, replacing Interim Executive Director Dr. Paul Rosen, who “officially” retired upon my arrival on October 19th 2015, I am honored to lead this remarkable group of educators at CMSEC who are providing transformative educational services to the students served by the Collaborative. That being said, I will try my best to encapsulate the educational programs, goals, outcomes and transitions that have taken place within the CMSEC over the course of 2014-2015 school year based on my interviews, record reviews and submissions of materials from Program Leaders and Site Directors who did worked at CMSEC during this time period.

Much of the 2014-2015 school year was spent looking at Collaborative space and program needs as well as adding additional programs to the Collaborative. Members of the CMSEC Building Committee visited Collaboratives and Programs around the state to get ideas and feedback about restructuring CMSEC. In December of 2014, CMSEC submitted a proposal to The Department of Public Health to open the fifth Recovery High School in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The remainder of the year focused on addressing the staffing, space and program needs of the entire collaborative as well as projecting ways to create new revenue for the Collaborative by developing a state of the art professional development/training center on the top floor of the Recovery High School site. The most pressing needs to close out the fiscal year 2014-2015 school year included finalizing the building project of the Recovery High School at 20 Rockdale Street and hiring all staff for the fall opening, finishing the work started throughout the collaborative with teacher evaluation (TeachPoint), District Determined Measures (DDM's), and iPass training. Additionally, CMSEC hired NESDEC to find a replacement for Executive Director Mary Baker, who resigned from her position, and Dr. Rosen served as Interim Director during the period of transition through the summer/ fall of 2015.

The focus of Collaborative Professional Development over the 2014-2015 school year has been to train faculty and staff in use of TeachPoint to assist in the educator evaluation system, creation of DDM's for all programs and grade levels, development and enhancement of Collaborative-Wide PBIS Programming and continued comprehensive training in CPI for all CMSEC employees. These Professional Development efforts will be continued into 2015-2016, with an emphasis on building internal capacity by training more of our own staff as CPI, TeachPoint and PBIS Trainers and working in a pro-active and cost-effective manner by partnering with MOEC, CMEC, the Worcester and Webster Public Schools and local Colleges, Universities and Businesses to best support our students and educational programs.

Very truly yours,

Michael C. Tempesta

Executive Director

MEMBER DISTRICTS, BOARD OF DIRECTORS & LEADERSHIP TEAM

Member Districts

Webster Public Schools
Worcester Public Schools

2014 - 2015 Board of Directors

Dr. Melinda Boone (Chair) – Worcester
Dr. Barbara Malkas – Webster

Leadership Team

Executive Director
Director of Finance and Operations
Director of Curriculum, Data & Technology
HR/ Operations Coordinator
Director of Clinical Services
Director of Central MA Academy
Asst. Director of Central MA Academy
Director of Central MA Prep
Asst. Director of Central MA Prep
Director of Hartwell Learning Center
Asst. Director of Hartwell Learning Center
Director of Robert H. Goddard Academy
Asst. Directors of Robert H. Goddard Academy

Site Coordinators of Woodard Day School

Mary Baker
Beverly Tefft
Neil Trahan
Mary DuBuque
Dr. Paul Rosen
Ann Ortiz
Michelle Klotz
Michael Kelly
Dan Smachetti
Jessica Pitsillides
Deb DiTommaso
Jacqueline Lake
Elizabeth Driscoll
Kathy Loiseau
Evelyn Marrone
Teresa O'Neill
Lisa Roberts

Additional Staffing

- 1 Technology Coordinator
- 58 Teachers
- 73 Instructional Assistants (17 WPS)
- .8 Business Office Assistant
- 57 Masters Level Clinicians (22 placed in WPS and Webster classrooms)
- 1 Guidance Counselor (WDS)
- 3 Nurses
- 7 Administrative Assistants
- 2.5 Custodians

INTRODUCTION

The Central Massachusetts Special Education Collaborative (CMSEC) was founded in 1975 by our member districts, Webster Public Schools and Worcester Public Schools. It continues to be governed by a Board of Directors who ensures that its purpose of providing educational, clinical, and therapeutic services to children, grades kindergarten through twelve, of public school districts in central Massachusetts is upheld.

CMSEC incorporates the Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40, Section 4e undertaking of providing quality education to children in need of specialized services while maintaining cost-effective solutions to public school districts. We employ more than 185 full-time dedicated employees and serve over 500 students, from both member and nonmember districts.

As we continue to evaluate and further develop programs to complement and strengthen the needs of our member districts, CMSEC strives to build capacity, thereby enhancing and increasing educational opportunities for all students.

MISSION, OBJECTIVES, FOCUS AND PURPOSE

Mission

CMSEC's mission is to jointly conduct programs and/or services which shall complement and strengthen member districts in a cost-effective manner, increase educational opportunities for children ages 4-22, and improve educational outcomes for students.

Purpose

CMSEC's purpose is to develop and provide educational programs and related services to the students of member districts when it is determined that such services and programs can most effectively and economically be provided on a collaborative basis.

Focus

The focus of the CMSEC is:

- The creation of specialized education programs for students ages 4-22 with or without disabilities;
- Services delivered to member district staff - including training, professional development, consultation, or other service;
- Development of partnerships with community and state agencies to enhance support to member districts;
- Application for grants or other sources of funding for programs from entities that may include, without limitation, state agencies, community-based partners, corporate entities, and institutions of higher education, etc.; and
- Application for grants or other sources of funding to operate programs for individuals that complement the mission and vision of CMSEC.

PROGRESS TOWARD OBJECTIVES AND PURPOSE

As articulated in CMSEC's Collaborative Agreement, specific objectives embodied in our purpose include:

Providing a challenging academic experience to improve the academic achievement of enrolled Students

Progress:

After the implementation of substantial technology hardware and software over the last year to support teaching and learning at CMSEC, the Collaborative remains committed to assessing the usage, efficiency and applicability of technology throughout the district. Additionally, The CMSEC Curriculum team is working to assess all of the curriculum needs of the district and is closing the gap to assure all teachers have access to technology and curriculum in the classroom. The implementation and training continued throughout 2014-2015 with software and curriculum platforms like Edgenuity, Follett and Rosetta Stone, as well as student management software (SMS) and assessment tools such as iPass and MAP Testing (Measure of Academic Progress) that augment the individualized instruction and programming for CMSEC students.

Offering a variety of quality professional development opportunities to general and special educators and related service providers

Progress:

The Professional Development and Curriculum Committee has been meeting since November of 2015 to determine a needs assessment of curriculum, technology and assessment of all of the students in CMSEC.

Teaching staff at CMSEC attended a refresher for key staff of each program using Edgenuity in early 2014. Additionally, there have been trainings for staff in Positive Behavioral Intervention Strategies (PBIS), Keys to Literacy, Understanding by Design (UbD) and Educator Evaluation throughout the 2014-2015 school year at CMSEC.

CMSEC continued to offer and provide to all staff mandatory training in Nonviolent Crisis Intervention. Trained staff members from the Hartwell Learning Center offered full course sessions and refresher sessions throughout the year. We have also expanded the number of staff members (one from each site) who will be trained to be trainers for CPI so that we can offer increased trainings throughout the year.

Offering all programs and services in a cost-effective manner

Progress:

The development of the **T.H.R.I.V.E.** Program (**T**ransitional Program to **H**elp students **R**each Independence through **V**ocational Experiences) at the Robert H. Goddard Academy has been a highlight of the 2014-2015 school year. This program is designed to use Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) for students with Autism Spectrum Disorders whose behavioral challenges cannot be met within traditional school settings. Another example of offering programs and services in a cost-effective manner is the efficiencies in providing CPI training throughout the Collaborative in 2014-15. This “train-the-trainer” modeling has resulted in substantial cost savings as well as capacity building within the collaborative.

As a Collaborative, CMSEC is also proud of the quality of programming we are able to provide to our member and non-member districts. We will continue to develop and expand programs and services such as **T.H.R.I.V.E.**, Rockdale Recovery High School, Woodward Day School based on the feedback and needs of our Member and Non-Member districts. As we look to continue our build upon our Programming and Space needs reconfiguration from FY15 to FY16, we will continue our collaboration with all stakeholders to best serve the needs of our students.

PROGRAM AND SERVICES

CENTRAL MA ACADEMY

Program Administration

Ann Ortiz, Director

Michelle Klotz, Assistant Director

Bryanna Carrion, Administrative Assistant

Location Information

15 Harlow Street

Worcester, MA 01605

Tel: 508-459-5426

Fax: 508-459-5448

Eight years in current location. Building provided by Worcester Public Schools.

Student Capacity: 80

Program Description

Central MA Academy (CMA) is a therapeutic day school offering a structured educational program along with targeted clinical services to students in grades 7 through 12. With a driving force behind the school's mission of believing that all students can be successful regardless of their disability, staff at CMA take pride in supporting and guiding each individual's personal and academic goals, along with their range of talents and skill sets. Ultimately, CMA's objective is to nurture well-developed and driven youth who complete high school with valuable skills they will use beyond the classroom to accomplish their personal and professional goals. A low student-to-staff ratio in the classroom (10:2 maximum) creates an environment of trust for academic and/or emotional support throughout the school day. Clinicians who

work closely with instructional teams to help develop strong therapeutic relationships. CMA's motto of All Students Can SOAR, reflect **S**afety – not in harm's way during school and out in the community; **O**ptimism – confidence in abilities; **A**bility – capable of meeting and undertaking any endeavor; and **R**espect – courteous to others.

Staffing

Director

Assistant Director/Clinician

Administrative Assistant

4 Masters level Clinicians

8 Classroom Teachers

9 Classroom Instructional Assistants

Nurse

Art Teacher

Physical Education Teacher

Student Profile

Many students at CMA have struggled with academics and behaviors in their sending districts and schools, making CMA a good fit given a progressive behavioral management system which encourages positive behaviors with tangible rewards, while providing opportunities for growth and repair following target behaviors. Our philosophy is rooted on the premise that interventions and conversations are most conducive to learning more effective and positive ways to handle similar situations in the future. In addition, to further reinforce generalization, community outreach is an essential value of the staff and students where they often participate in community service within the school building as well as surrounding neighborhood.

With over 30% of students identified as English Language Learners, staff assess proficiency by examining prior academic knowledge, culture and traditions and family circumstances. While students come from diverse backgrounds, typical CMA students are resilient and have developed skills for functioning in an urban environment. Many are coping with emotional and academic disabilities and are invested in improving their abilities to cope with stressors in their daily lives. As such, along with individual counseling, students participate in group sessions and have the available of crisis counseling is available as needed.

Program Changes/Accomplishments

In November, CMA invited students and their families to a Thanksgiving meal prepared and served by the staff to celebrate the upcoming holiday season. At this event, families had the opportunity to meet the teaching staff, enjoy spending time with their children, and mingle with other CMA families.

In December, CMA staff reached out to the community for donations that would allow the purchase of Christmas gifts for the students. Thanks to our generous donors we were able to purchase an MP3 player for each student. Staff decided on MP3 players for their gift because it is an item that can be used as a coping strategy for students that can help keep them in the classroom and avoid distractions.

This year, the CMA teaching staff successfully introduced students to a social bookmarking website called Diigo.com to increase student homework completion percentage and performance. Other highlights

include that the computer lab is now functional and being used for entire class lessons. Students were also able to fulfil credit requirements and are recovering credits through Edgenuity.

The CMA staff and students have also fashioned a partnership with Summer Star Wildlife Sanctuary in Boylston, Massachusetts. This is forty-five acres of natural land where both students and staff will have the opportunity to learn about plants, streams, and wildlife. The Summer Staff has set up both instructional sessions and nature walks for students and staff free of charge. Students will also have the chance to maintain the Wildlife Sanctuary in the future.

CMA hosted a Parent Workshop for parents/guardians called, How to Completely Change Your Child's School Experience. Together with the Latino Educational Institute, the CMA staff facilitated a discussion over coffee, juice, and staff-made snacks. Topics of discussion at the workshop included:

- How to improve rapport between parents and school.
- How does the school work with my son/daughter differently at CMA?
- How to develop a personal plan for students to achieve both short and long term goals.

CMA had a turnout of twenty one parents/guardians along with their children at the workshop on March 11th. CMA is extremely thankful to Hilda Ramirez and her staff for their time and dedication to the program.

Clinical Highlights

Our clinical staff has been working on transition planning with many of our students. At the beginning of the year, clinicians helped high school students complete career interest surveys to narrow down areas of strength and potential concentration. Additionally, clinicians are assisting CMA students with creating resumes, applying for jobs, and learning interview skills. Clinicians have also been running “Pop-up” incentives for good behavior. These privileges include time at the gym, hair and nails, crocheting, and arts and crafts. These incentives have proved effective in promoting positive behavior throughout the building. This year, clinical staff had the opportunity to attend a two day PBIS training to aid with the implementation of PBIS strategies at CMA. Clinicians also created PBIS lesson plans helped the staff learn how to more effectively utilize PBIS in their classrooms.

Community Involvement

Students have been working on cleaning up the neighborhood! Students earn free time during the week. The time is added up and on Friday afternoons, students were able to sign up for neighborhood areas to pick up trash, sweep, and rake the sidewalks. This allowed them the opportunity to get some fresh air and burn off energy, while making a difference in the community. Additionally, this year, students continued to reach out by assisting in renovations at St. Bernard's Church. They helped with painting, cleaning and removing materials from the auditorium and gym. Students also wrote letters to businesses throughout the community and secured donations from Skyzone, the Worcester Ecotarium, Wachusett Mountain, Roll-On America, Just Paint, as well as 80 tickets to the Worcester Bravehearts and Worcester Sharks.

CENTRAL MA PREP

Program Administration

Michael Kelly, Director

Dan Smachetti, Assistant Director

Melissa Barry, Administrative Assistant

Location Information

100 Hartwell Street, Door #8

West Boylston, MA 01583

Phone: 508-835-3570

Fax: 508-835-3509

Fourth year in current location. Building Leased.

Student Capacity: 50

Program Description

Central MA Prep (CMP) is dedicated to educating middle school (grades 7 and 8) students with serious emotional disturbance and preparing them for the social and academic expectations of high school and life through the provision of a positive and predictable environment. With a therapeutic milieu that includes counseling services, low student to staff ratios (10:1) and effective use of coping skills, students start to develop the self-determination skills necessary to help navigate them through the difficult transition from middle to high school.

CMP's mission is based on the principle that all students are responsible for their education and behavior. Our students are taught strategies to determine how to make the right choices to positively enhance their social, emotional and academic progress. It is fundamental at CMP to have high academic expectations for all students while modifying and accommodating individual needs in order to access the curriculum. Our school features include a structured, consistent behavior modification model in and out of the classroom; a daily point system to monitor student progress with positive behavioral reinforcements, and strong partnerships with community agencies.

Staffing

Director

Assistant Director

5 Classroom Teachers

8 Classroom Aides

2 Clinicians

Administrative Assistant

.5 School Nurse

Student Profile

CMP serves students in seventh and eighth grades that are presenting with severe emotional disabilities, and/or mild to moderate cognitive deficits. In addition, there are some individuals with major psychiatric diagnoses, often requiring psychotropic medication as a component of their outside treatment. While

the population may vary in terms of defined disabilities, students at CMP exhibit difficulties with maintaining appropriate behavior and self-regulation, along with a high level of distractibility. Support from outside agencies, including the Department of Mental Health and the Department of Children and Families, and other collaterals from outside therapeutic and psychiatric treatment are critical components to assuring student success and educational progress.

Program Changes/Accomplishments

CMP is in its 4th year servicing students with special needs. We have continued to evolve as the needs of our population dictates, staying up to date with the latest research. During the 2014/2015 school year we have hired a new Masters Level Clinician. We have had several of our teachers achieve Professional Status in their Massachusetts Licensure this year and one of our teachers is nearing the completion of his Masters in School Administration. We have several IA's that have completed their Masters in Special Education and have successfully passed their MTEs. This next level of achievement will translate to a more in-depth understanding of our student's diverse needs. In addition to this, we have also...

- Repainted our recovery room, the main office and touched up areas of the hallway that needed attention.
- Hosted a "Get to know your school Day", where parents and families of students came to see the student's classrooms, met and talked with their teachers and viewed samples of their work.
- Provided training to CMP staff and other Collaborative employees in the area of P.B.I.S. and Behavior Management.
- Become a participating school in the Worcester Mini Olympics.
- Provided 5 CMP families in need with gift baskets containing turkey and side dishes for the Thanksgiving break.
- Developed a partnership with the Be Like Brit Foundation. Our students visited their warehouse biweekly to assist in procuring, organizing and packaging donations to their orphanage in Haiti.
- Continued to use SWIS data to track and analyze behaviors and drive strategies to modify behavior.
- Continued training and implemented the new MA Educator Model Evaluation System
- Attended trainings and workshops in the areas of: Suicide Prevention, Relating Trichotillomania, Bullying Prevention and Education, Experimental Approach to Building Empathy and Respect in Group Counseling, Youth Substance Abuse and Non Violent Crisis Intervention (CPI).

HARTWELL LEARNING CENTER

Program Administration

Jessica Pitsillides, Director

Debra DiTommaso, Assistant Director

Debra Cosway, Administrative Assistant

Location Information

100 Hartwell Street, Door #2

West Boylston, MA 01583

Tel: 508-835-2704

Fax: 508-835-3460

Seven years in current location (in existence 18 years). Building leased.

Student Capacity: 100

Program Description

The Hartwell Learning Center (HLC) is a public, highly structured, therapeutic K – 6 day school with small classroom size, low student to staff ratios, and a school-wide positive therapeutic behavior system. In addition to group and individualized academic instruction, students receive individual and group counseling, case management, and crisis intervention. The program focuses on improving academic, social, and coping skills while providing students with a safe, consistent, and positive learning environment.

Assessment Center at Hartwell (ACH): Included within HLC is an Assessment Center which serves students in the first through sixth grade that present with social/emotional disabilities and behavior difficulties. Students have a range of diagnoses, including, but not limited to Bipolar Disorder, ADHD, Mood Disorders, Autism Spectrum Disorders, and specific learning disabilities. Sending districts refer students who are struggling with significant behavioral issues which interfere with their ability to make effective progress, and not making progress within their current school placement. During the 45 day term at ACH, students undergo complete clinical, educational and other identified evaluations to assist the Team in making informed decisions relative to educational placements. An extensive list of therapeutic and academic accommodations is included in the final assessment to ensure appropriate supports are in place.

Staffing

Director

Assistant Director

Administrative Assistant

Clinical Coordinator

4 Masters level Clinicians

10 Classroom Teachers

26 Classroom Instructional Assistants

Nurse

Art Teacher

Physical Education Teacher

Part-time Learning Disabilities Teacher, Occupational, Physical and Speech Therapists

Student Profile

The Hartwell Learning Center serves students in kindergarten through sixth grade that are presenting with severe emotional disabilities, including major psychiatric diagnoses and/or mild to moderate cognitive deficits. As a result of their psychiatric issues and social-emotional deficits, many students at the HLC exhibit behavioral difficulties including a high level of distractibility, low frustration tolerance, suicidal ideation, poor peer relationships, and weak academic performance. Some students display occasional aggressive behavior that is a function of their psychiatric illnesses or social-emotional deficits and not typically directed at others for the purpose of control or intimidation. Many students at the HLC also receive support from outside agencies, including the Department of Mental Health and the Department of Children and Families, and the majority of the students receive outside therapeutic and psychiatric treatment.

Program Changes/Accomplishments

- Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Mini Grant Recipient (\$3800)
- Fourth full year of the Assessment Center at Hartwell (ACH) – 45 Day Assessment and Stabilization Classroom
- Ongoing support and training for the new MA Educator Model Evaluation System
- Upgrades and renovation to computer lab providing increased access to students and teachers for specific teaching and learning opportunities
- Instituted new curriculum including Step-Up to Writing, decodable books/literature series; Lively Letters; EnVision Math; Houghton Mifflin Science Kits
- Project-based learning and school spirit activities including kits from Worm's Way for garden hydroponics and organics; international day food festival; spring art show; luau festival; Cinco de Mayo and first annual competitions - Highland Games, Pinewood Derby, Chili Con Carnival Cookoff
- Family and community partnerships
 - Open House
 - Special Olympics
 - Giving Tree Holiday Celebration
 - MCPHS Student Comprehensive Eye Exams
 - Annual Pine Wood Derby
 - Annual 6th Grade Fishing Trip
 - HR 7&8 to Sutton Senior Center for yard work and lunch
 - 6th grade Step-Up Day with CMP
 - National Volunteer Week – Sutton Senior Center Yard Clean-Up
- Professional development activities continue to support and strengthen educators and program staff through exposure to best practices.
 - Monday & Wednesday Morning Educator Meetings (8:30 – 9:10)
 - MA Model Educator Evaluation System
 - CPI
 - UbD
 - PBIS Leadership, Whole Staff, Conference (March 12-13)
 - Kinems Instructional Technology Demo/Training for Teachers
 - Clinicians – Superflex Social Thinking Curriculum (w/ Dr. Jean & Ashley G.)

ROBERT H. GODDARD ACADEMY

Program Administration

Jacqueline Lake, Director

Kathleen Loiseau, Assistant Director

Kristen Mulhern, Administrative Assistant

Location Information

100 Hartwell Street, Door # 6

West Boylston, MA 01583

Tel: 508-835-1687

Fax: 508-835-3907

Seven years in current location (in existence 18 years). Building leased.

Student Capacity: 140

Staffing

Director

2 Assistant Directors

Administrative Assistant

Nurse

5 clinicians

15 CMSEC teachers, includes 1 building-wide health teacher

2 BASICS teachers

28 CMSEC/WPS IAs

16 THRIVE IAs

WPS Art, PE, and Music Teachers

Part-time OT, PT, SLP

Program Description

The Robert H. Goddard Academy (RGA) consists of 5 highly structured programs that meet the emotional, social, and academic challenges of our diverse student population. RGA students receive rigorous academic instruction, individual and group counseling, emotional and behavioral support, social skills training, case-management, crisis intervention, a structured, positive classroom management system, and individual behavior plans within a safe, predictable learning environment. RGA's "Three-Belief Philosophy" is the foundation for all facets of our programming:

- **We Believe in "All-In-Education"** providing meaningful, comprehensive, and engaging education for all students through the use of research-based, best teaching/learning practices that have been proven to promote high academic achievement.
- **We Believe in "Each Other"** based on the strongly held belief that trusting, respectful relationships are the foundation for success in school, as well as in life. Every staff person

endeavors to be a “charismatic adult” by affirming our belief that all of our students are all endowed with special qualities and talents.

- **We Believe in “Peaceful Learning”** within our Trauma-Sensitive school community. To achieve peacefulness within both mind and body, we offer diverse sensory opportunities so that students can learn to regulate strong emotions stemming from intense, challenging life experiences to allow them to better focus on academic endeavors.

Therapeutic High School Program (TSP)

PER HOMEROOM: 2:10 staff/student ratio – 1 Special Ed. Teacher, 1 Instructional Assistant, 4 homerooms

Student Profile: TSP serves high school students with serious emotional disabilities, including psychiatric disorders, self-destructive behavior, social skill deficits, or suicidal thinking.

Services: The TSP program provides a comprehensive high-school curriculum based on the MA Curriculum Frameworks. The expectation and goal for TSP students is to graduate with a diploma. This is accomplished through rigorous academic course offerings which enable students to pass the MCAS and meet the credit requirements of their sending high schools.

Therapeutic High School – Vocational Program (TSP-V)

PER HOMEROOM: 2:10 staff/student ratio – 1 Special Ed. Teacher, 1 Instructional Assistant, 5 homerooms, 1 IA floater

Student Profile: The TSP-V program has the same student profile as TSP in that all students are on an MCAS-Diploma track with a rigorous curriculum to pass MCAS and meet the credit requirements of their sending schools. However, these students lack social/community skills to be productive, working citizens.

Services: Separate vocational/ work component of this program. TSP-V students take advantage of an additional vocational course offering and work in conjunction with the Vocational Program to participate in community-based job sites for exposure and exploration of the work world to support a more successful transition post-graduation.

Vocational Program – (VP)

PER HOMEROOM: 4:10 staff/student ratio – 1 Special Ed. Teacher, 3 Instructional Assistants, 1 Woodworking instructor, 2 homerooms

Student Profile: VP serves middle and high school students (ages 12-21) who have been diagnosed with mild to moderate cognitive limitations in addition to a behavioral and/or serious emotional disability.

Services: The VP program provides case-management services and highly individualized educational programs that include small group, one-on-one instruction, and classroom management systems. The primary curriculum focus for VP students is community-based vocational programming, vocational classroom training, and functional academic skills. Students ages 16-21 receive vocational transitional services, which include self-determination training, assessment, career exploration and job placement.

Life Skills Program - (LSP)

PER HOMEROOM: 4:10 staff/student ratio – 1 Special Ed. Teacher, 4 Instructional Assistants, 3 homerooms

Student Profile: The Life Skills Program provides educational services to students in seventh through twelfth grade (up to age 22) who exhibit challenging behaviors as a result of emotional disabilities, intellectual disabilities, developmental delays, and autism, neurological and medical disorders.

Services: In addition to an academic curriculum adapted to meet the essence of the MA Curriculum Frameworks, the LSP provides instruction in daily living skills, prevocational skills, and community based instruction.

THRIVE Program: This is the first year for the new THRIVE Program. An ABA structured program for students grade K-12 for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder with significant behavioral challenges.

2 Homerooms, 2 Special Ed. Teachers, 16 Instructional Assistants, 1 Asst. Director, 1 Educational Supervisor

Student & Program Profile: Students who attend the THRIVE Program are children, grades K-12, who have been diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder and whose behavioral challenges cannot be met within traditional school settings. THRIVE Program provides an applied behavior analysis approach to learning and students receive a highly structured, systematic, and data-driven education. The behavior management system is reliant on a myriad of interventions based upon the principles of positive reinforcement. Functional communication training is utilized to teach students to convey their needs through functionally equivalent communicative alternatives.

Student Profile

Outlined under individual program descriptions

Program Changes/Accomplishments

- This is the first year for the new THRIVE program. An ABA structured program for students grade K-12 for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder with significant behavioral challenges
- A Successful Thanksgiving meal for all students
- A Successful Toys for Tots Drive
- R.I.S.E. (Life-skills population) classes had an art exhibit at DAB with entertainment by the RGA Chorus and Jazz group
- Turkey Trot - to raise \$ for Thanksgiving meal and to give to a local charity
- Christmas Carols within RGA
- Art Field Trip to Holy Cross College
- Start of the Understanding by Design training
- We did our first MAPs testing and evaluated the results to drive instruction.
- Ms. Clark (ELA teacher) started a poetry unit and prepared students for a January Poetry Slam to invite family
- RGA had a beautiful prom at The Manor restaurant
- RGA enjoyed a senior breakfast at Grille on the Hill.
- GTP (Vocational Program) students provided a wonderful Brunch and presentation to parents/guardians of GTP students. The purpose was for students to educate families (through posters and presentations) on exactly what GTP students do on a daily basis and enjoy the fruits of their labor, a yummy brunch.
- Two RGA clinicians went to a Suicide Prevention workshop that they felt was informative, useful, and pertinent to their work with RGA students.
- 3 RGA teachers successfully completed their Practicums for their Masters in Education within RGA
- There were 11 high school graduates this year from RGA!!!

WOODWARD DAY SCHOOL

Program Administration

Evelyn Marrone, Site Coordinator, Hartwell Street
Teresa O'Neill, Site Coordinator, Fremont Street
Lisa Roberts, Site Coordinator, McKeon Road

Monica Miranda, Administrative Assistant
Leslie Mojica, Administrative Assistant
Jennifer Sears, Administrative Assistant

Location Information

190 Fremont Street Worcester, MA 01603 Tel: 508-799-3513 Fax: 508-799-3486	100 Hartwell Street West Boylston, Ma 01583 Tel: 508-835-6732 Fax: 508-835-2058	11 McKeon Road Worcester, MA 01610 Tel: 508-792-9373 Fax: 508-792-9374
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22 years in current location

Student Capacity: 40

20 years in current location

Student Capacity: 40

15 years in current location

Student Capacity: 40

Program Description

The Woodward Day School (WDS), a transitional alternative school operating in three separate locations, provides a small, structured environment (8:1 staff-student ratio) to students who have been excluded from school under the MGL 37H or have a pending felony charge and are suspended under the MGL37H1/2. Students at WDS receive a comprehensive education with a strong academic focus in a safe, nurturing, respectful, and healthy environment, based on the premise that all students can learn. Guiding principles include:

- Model and Expect Mutual Respect
- Maintain High Academic Expectations for All Students
- Treat Every Student Equally, and As Unique Individuals
- Identify Students' Needs, Modify Curriculum, Adapt Instruction to Enhance and Support the Learning Process
- Emphasize Pro-Social Skills and Character Education

A core component of every student's academic, career and social/emotional development includes a guidance program which assists students in gaining insight to their goals, abilities, and interests, and encouraging them to become life-long learners and good citizens who value diversity. Due to the transient nature of the program (length of stay ranging from several days to one calendar year), improving academic performance is the primary focus of WDS in order to help students be more successful in school and the community, with the hope that success would breed success. By changing student's attitudes toward school, the likelihood of a successful return to their district with a positive mind-set is increased, regardless of the circumstances impacting their home and environment. WDS endeavors to convince students that education is the great equalizer and that their way out of many of the difficulties they experience at home and in the community.

Staffing

3 Site Coordinators

3 Administrative Assistant

1 Guidance Counselor/ Vocational teacher

16 CMSEC teachers, includes 1 program-wide computer teacher

WPS Art, PE, and Music Teachers

Student Profile

The student population consists of general education and special education students who have been long term suspended from school due to a violation of the district's policies prohibiting weapons, teacher assaults, or illegal drugs. In addition, students may be suspended under MGL37H1/2 for a pending felony charge, if they are deemed a detriment to the safety and well-being of the school. Students remain at Woodward Day School until their charges are resolved through court or for a period of one year in the event that they are adjudicated for the felony charge.

WDS fosters an advocate/student relationship in that homeroom teachers maintain open lines of communication between parents, and all student support service providers. In addition school administration works closely with the service providers to ensure that students and families are receiving the maximum interagency benefits.

Program Changes/Accomplishments

- Woodward Day School continued implementation of new Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM) curriculum. The goal of STEM is to improve student performance in math and science while also preparing them for jobs in the 21st century workforce. STEM jobs are projected to grow 17% by 2018 for a total of 20 million jobs. Students in STEM class studied/constructed solar collectors; developed helmets to prevent traumatic brain injury; studied DNA to create cube critters; and created and developed computer games
- Work force America Coordinator Roy Lucas met with students in grades 10-12 to discuss job opportunities in the STEM field
- STEM teachers met regularly the third Thursday of every month to discuss and design standard based lessons
- Teachers utilized Edgenuity to support their work in the class room. More advanced students could move forward/study more in-depth, while struggling students could avail of more opportunities for practice
- Teachers participated in Keys to Literacy professional development. Keys to Literacy is a combination of comprehension, writing, and study strategies that helps students understand and learn content information. The routine helps teachers provide effective comprehension instruction with the goal that all teachers use the same strategies thereby allowing the students numerous opportunities to learn and understand content in different contexts, while using the same tools

CLINICAL SERVICES

Program Administration

Dr. Paul Rosen, Director

Location Information

Worcester & Webster, MA

Tel: 508-757-7898

Program Description

CMSEC provides an array of clinical and consultative services to schools to help support seriously emotionally disturbed students. Our clinical and consultative staff have extensive experience dealing with very complicated and challenging students who present problems ranging from severe behavior problems to serious mental illness. We have developed a variety of models to assist schools in meeting the needs of these students.

There are two components to the clinical services provided by CMSEC. The first component is that CMSEC provides clinicians to work with students with IEPs for serious emotional disturbances (SED). We assign clinicians for these students within day schools operated by CMSEC programs as well as in substantially separate classrooms within Worcester Public Schools. In Webster, there are two CMSEC clinicians who provide services to students who have counseling written into their IEPs.

The second component of our clinical services is consultation to member and other school districts. This consultation is primarily provided by Paul Rosen, Ph.D. who is the Clinical Director of CMSEC. This consultation includes assistance in developing programming for students with SED, case consultation around highly complex cases, and expert witness testimony for cases that are being heard by the Bureau of Special Education Appeals.

All clinicians have Masters Degrees in counseling psychology or social work and have, or are in the process of having, met the requirements for DESE licensure. Clinicians provide individual and group counseling as specified in the IEP, coordinate care with outside providers and agencies, respond to crisis situations with their students, and consult with professional staff and parents. They are committed to using a data driven approach and continuously strive to incorporate evidenced-based practices into their counseling with students. Conducting Functional Behavioral Assessments (FBAs) and subsequent Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs) is another facet of the clinicians' role.

Staffing

Director

22 School-based clinicians

Program Changes/Accomplishments

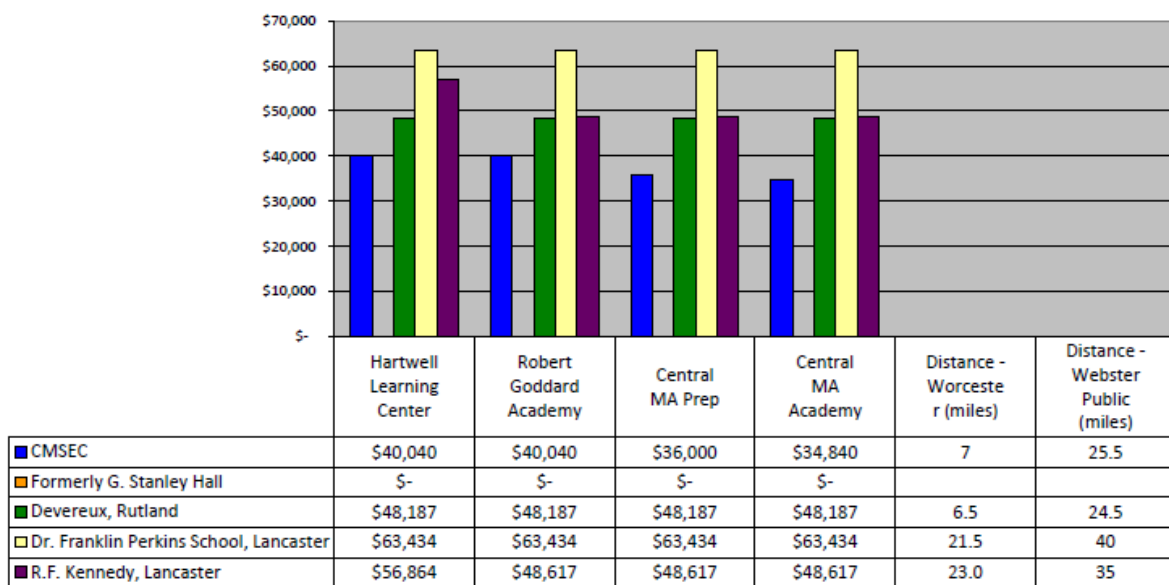
- Clinicians participated in a two-day training on Functional Behavioral Assessments (FBAs), and developed a data-driven FBA template based on empirical information from staff across the curriculum and school environment.
- Work with high school students to complete career interest inventories and outline steps to developing post-secondary vocational/educational plans.

- Group work with students included themes such as conflict resolution, preparation for young adulthood, wellness, and healthy social networking.
- Consultation to classroom teachers in effective use of sensory tools for students with coping
- Provided counseling, case management, and crisis intervention to over 500 students receiving special education services within fifteen Worcester Public Schools. These students were all placed in “STEP” programs for students with serious emotional disabilities ranging from kindergarten through high school.
- Provided counseling, case management, and crisis intervention to approximately 400 students placed in day schools operated by CMSEC.
- Provided clinical support to the approximately 50 students attending the ACT program (elementary-aged program)
- Provided counseling services to special education students in three Webster Public Schools. In addition, clinical consultation was provided to assist in the planning for substantially separate classrooms for students with serious emotional disabilities.
- Provided clinical consultation to the Special Education Department of Worcester Public Schools regarding complex cases. Consultation was also provided regarding system issues in the implementation of special education services for students with serious emotional disabilities.
- Provided expert witness services to Worcester Public Schools for students whose families have gone to mediation or hearings through the Bureau of Special Education Appeals.

COST EFFECTIVENESS OF PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Central MA Special Education Collaborative provides individualized and specialized services to approximately 500 students from kindergarten through age 22 in Central Massachusetts. Our central program locations, economies of scale and primary support from a large, member district, allows CMSEC to provide our services at a competitive cost. When analyzing costs of private day schools that offer comparable services and programs, it is clear that Worcester County school districts recognize significant savings in tuition and transportation.

FY15 Tuition Comparison by Program



The proximity of our programs to the homes of Worcester students presents a significant cost savings in that the District incurs minimal transportation expense. Additionally, CMSEC realizes a cost savings in both food and related therapy services subsequent to these services being fully supported by Worcester as well. Lastly, Central MA Academy is housed in a Worcester Public School building with the District covering all building-related expenses, including maintenance.

The success of our programming and our affordability has increased enrollment from non-member districts in recent years. In 2008, our non-member enrollment was 17, jumping to 37 in 2011, with an average of 30 students since then. This growth in student enrollment has increased revenues from our non-member districts, which helps to defray cost increases for our member districts.

CMSEC strives to continue to build capacity within all our programs and recognizes advantages that sets us apart and realizes cost effectiveness for member and non-member districts as a result. The following examples illustrate these qualitative measurements.

Professional Development

Throughout the year, CMSEC sponsors on-site training for teachers, clinicians, instructional assistants and administration. As a condition of employment, all staff must be CPI certified in order to understand and effectively manage difficult behaviors. The range of interventions span from de-escalation to physical restraint, and the only cost is the price of workbooks and instructor stipends (under \$2500 annually). Per quotes from the CPI Institute (10850 W. Park Place, Milwaukee, WI), without the benefit of having our own certified instructors, the cost to CMSEC to have CPI instructors provide the training would be \$200,000 per year minimally. Staff servicing Worcester and Webster public schools are trained as well, thus carrying that skill set into the public school environment.

Many students served by CMSEC carry a host of trauma-related challenges impacting their educational progress. Together with our member districts, ongoing training for staff is offered through the Worcester County District Attorney's office to help our educators understand the impact of trauma on academic performance, behavior and relationships. By preserving the importance of this training for CMSEC educators, sending districts are confident that we have the resources to serve this difficult population of students.

Staff availed themselves to participate in the DESE's Secondary Transition Capacity-Building Conference and as a result further developed a plan to include transitional and vocational resources as part of the life skills curriculum. Not only did the team attend at no cost to the collaborative, but subsequently became eligible for grant money which was earmarked for testing materials. Services within the program will now include this vocational assessment component for sending districts, which would otherwise result in a fee for service cost.

Other Determining Factors

We cannot underestimate that value of urban-based programs and the fact that over 90% of CMSEC students are from Worcester. The accessibility of community resources results in minimal expense for local field trips, but more importantly provides opportunities for students to acclimate to community resources, thereby increasing the likelihood that they would benefit from those resources in the future.

CMSEC prides itself on outreach to the community and developing mutually beneficial partnerships that would otherwise be unavailable in outlying districts. As an example, "Lowe's Heroes" awarded grant funds in the amount of \$2400 targeted for playground equipment and general school improvements. Grant monies such as this allow programs to meet building needs without an outlaying of funds.

Whether it be public school districts, collaboratives or private special education schools, there is an increased need to incorporate comprehensive vocational planning as part of students learning. CMSEC is again at a cost effective advantage due to geographic location and access to resources. Within our programs, students begin to develop self-determination and independent living/working skills that will better prepare them for post-secondary opportunities. The availability of practicing those skills within the community is heightened as partnerships with local businesses strengthen, ultimately leading to the potential of job training and coaching.

As we embark on a new fiscal year, CMSEC remains committed to address the needs of our member and non-member districts by ensuring our programs include the necessary resources to support the success of all students.