

# Central Massachusetts Special Education Collaborative

2013 – 2014  
Annual Report

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## MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Central MA Special Education Collaborative Members,

Having joined the Central MA Special Education Collaborative on October 1, 2013 following the retirement of Executive Director, Joan Dio, there was no question that we were moving forward in a climate of change to meet new legislative requirements from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

In concert with amended M.G.L. c. 40, § 4E, and after months of revisions, which began during the start of FY14, the amended collaborative agreement was finally approved and fully executed on November 19, 2014. Response to other regulatory compliance included the implementation of Chapter 77 § 38, an act relative to background checks which was signed into law by Governor Deval Patrick, requiring fingerprint-based state and national criminal record checks for all school employees; and preparation for the new student discipline regulations 603 CMR 53.00, which went into effect on July 1, 2014.

Throughout the school year, teachers and administrators received targeted training in order to fully apply the new educator evaluation system with fidelity. The new regulations not only provide a solid foundation for regenerating the evaluation process, but more importantly, support the framework of improved student learning and educator growth. In order to position CMSEC to fully embrace and meet state mandates, discussions ensued internally with program directors, among other collaboratives and with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to assist with the implementation of other elements of the educator evaluation system, such as District Determined Measures (DDMs). The addition of a Director of Curriculum, Data & Technology for CMSEC lead us to further analyze, and begin to develop the necessary framework to assist our educators in the examination of, a wide range of student data and the standardization of curriculum resources. Moreover, this new position enabled us to correct long standing issues with technology, thereby allowing program staff to operate efficiently and assist teachers in fully engaging and motivating students.

Whether it be through increased access to professional development, 21<sup>st</sup> century electives (online learning), or improved data collections through the use of a student information systems, the strength and status of CMSEC has risen to a level that embraces high standards of student achievement and community engagement as we move into the 2014-2015 school year.

Respectfully yours,

Mary A. Baker  
Executive Director

# MEMBER DISTRICTS, BOARD OF DIRECTORS & LEADERSHIP TEAM

## Member Districts

Webster Public Schools  
Worcester Public Schools

## 2013 - 2014 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  
Office Manager  
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 A. Baker  
Beverly Tefft  
Neil Trahan  
Jo Ann Sivazlian  
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 (1 WPS)
- 73 Instructional Assistants (17 WPS)
- .8 Business Office Assistant
- 57 Masters Level Clinicians (23 placed in WPS classrooms)
- 1 Guidance Counselor (WDS)
- 3 Nurses
- 7 Administrative Assistants
- 1 Office Manager
- 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 have the capacity to serve over 500 students, from both member and non-member 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 3-22, 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 3-22 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.

## Overall Objectives

The overall objectives of CMSEC include:

- providing a challenging academic experience to improve the academic achievement of enrolled students;
- offering a variety of quality professional development opportunities to general and special educators and related service providers; and
- offering all programs and services in a cost-effective manner.

## 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:**

In an effort to increase access to and utilization of technology, to ultimately improve student outcomes, the following enhancements to CMSEC's infrastructure were made:

At the June 12, 2013 Board Directors meeting, the Board approved a transfer of approximately \$300,000 "for the update of technology, capital equipment, instructional equipment, and curriculum". Therefore, many technology enhancements were implemented throughout the 2013-2014 school year.

Computers (both laptops and desktops) were purchased for many of CMSEC's programs increasing student access to online learning and web-based resources. Additionally, four new file servers were purchased in the fall of 2013. These servers were configured with a new Active Directory structure and installed at each of CMSEC's building locations, further allowing users to log in and access their files from any CMSEC computer at any site.

CMSEC replaced its outdated firewalls (located at each site) with one new Sophos UTM525. To ensure one secure seamless network across all CMSEC programs, a Sophos RED (Remote Ethernet Device) was installed at each of CMSEC's individual sites. These new devices provide both an added layer of network connectivity and security, east central management, and also provides for speedy CIPA compliant content filtering.

In December of 2013, because of a failing Microsoft Exchange server housed within one of CMSEC's facilities, CMSEC migrated to Google Apps for Education and began using Google's e-mail platform for all e-mail communications. Additionally, Google Vault was implemented to archive all user account e-mail correspondence and maintain compliance with regulatory requirements.

In the fall of 2013, CMSEC purchased ten concurrent licenses of Edgenuity to provide its students with access to web-based learning opportunities. Edgenuity is an online "research-based video course curriculum, which offers more than 185 semester-equivalent core and elective online courses for students, grades 6-12. The program can be used at home or in school. It is used as core curriculum, for intervention, to recover credits, to prepare for standardized assessments and prep for some Advanced Placement programs. Course offerings include math, English, science, foreign languages, and career-oriented courses (business, IT, health sciences)". Teaching staff at CMSEC attended a training in the fall of 2013, with a refresher for key staff of each program in the early 2014.



In an effort to engage all learners through the use of digital media, provide appropriate accommodations and support to students in the area of reading, and assist teaching staff as well as students in accessing print resources both within and outside of school, CMSEC began purchasing e-books through Follett. Using Follett's content management platform, E-books purchased are perpetually available through Follett Shelf, are accessible on almost all mobile devices and computers, and can be utilized by all staff and students in throughout CMSEC's programs.

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

**Progress:**

To ensure understanding, continuity and integrity (particularly in light of a new executive director), CMSEC reexamined the implementation of the educator evaluation system designating the 2013-2014 school year as a pilot year. A modified timeline for the first year of the system was established and professional development was provided to both evaluators and teaching staff.

During the 2013-2014 school year all program directors and assistant directors attended specific trainings focusing on the required modules of the educator evaluation system. These sessions included:

- November 14, 2013 - (4 hrs) - Overview of the Evaluation Framework, Unpacking the Rubric and Self-Assessment
- November 21, 2013 - (4 hrs) - SMART Goals, Educator Plans and TeachPoint
- March 20, 2014 - (4 hrs) - Observations and Feedback
- April 10, 2014 - (4 hrs) - Gathering Evidence

Additionally, in the fall of 2013, all program directors, assistant directors and teachers were provided with the opportunity (in small group format with the assistance of a consultant) to develop and refine SMART goals for the year.

Finally, in preparation for the 2014-2015 school year, CMSEC developed an Educator Evaluation Protocol which defines focus elements from the educator rubric, details the requirements for each educator plan, and clearly articulates specific timelines.

Teaching staff at CMSEC attended a full-day workshop on Edgenuity (on-line learning platform) in the fall of 2013, with a refresher for key staff of each program held in the early 2014.

Following targeted training and quality conferences to understand best research-based practices, staff began to develop a PBIS leadership team aimed at a Tier I Implementation in the 2014 – 2015 school year.

CMSEC continued to offer and provide to all staff mandatory training in Crisis Prevention (CPI) to. Trained staff members from the Hartwell Learning Center offered three separate full course sessions and five refresher sessions in managing disruptive behavior through nonviolent interventions. These sessions included:

- Full Course 1 - 4:00 to 7:00 PM on October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup>
- Full Course 2 - 4:00 to 7:00 PM on January 28<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup> and February 3<sup>rd</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup>
- Full Course 3 - 4:00 to 7:00 PM on May 27<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> and June 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>
- Refresher 1 - 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM or 12:00 to 3:00 PM on October 11<sup>th</sup>
- Refresher 2 - 4:00 to 7:00 PM on December 9<sup>th</sup>
- Refresher 3 - 4:00 to 7:00 PM on March 4<sup>th</sup>
- Refresher 4 - 4:00 to 7:00 PM on May 7<sup>th</sup>
- Refresher 5 - 4:00 to 7:00 PM on July 10

***Offering all programs and services in a cost-effective manner***

**Progress:**

Specialized classrooms and services within CMSEC's programs have been created for students encompassing clinical and educational components. Wraparound services with outside providers are thus integrated into the educational process and the team works together to avoid costly outplacements. Please see *Cost Effectiveness of Programs and Services* section for more information.

## PROGRAM AND SERVICES

### CENTRAL MA ACADEMY

#### Program Administration

Ann Ortiz, Director

Michelle Klotz, Assistant Director

Brianna Carrion, Administrative Assistant

#### Location Information

15 Harlow Street

Worcester, MA 01605

Tel: 508-459-5426

Fax: 508-459-5448

Seven 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. CMAs 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

Administrative Assistant

4 Clinicians

8 Classroom Teachers

9 Instructional Assistants

School Nurse

Itinerant Art and Physical Education Teachers

## 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 change 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

**Edgenuity** - online middle and high school program providing a variety of core and enrichment classes to assist students with credit recovery and/or remain on a 4 year graduation track

**Rotating schedule** – a 6 period, rotating schedule was piloted during the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter, the success of which led to its adoption for the 2014 – 2015 school year.

**Dress code** – A new dress code for the 2014 – 2015 school year was adopted following meetings between CMA homeroom representatives and administration. Student surveys resulted in a more formalized look of white, navy or grey polo shirts

### MCAS

The addition of two (2) additional English Language Arts, Math and Science/Biology classes per week proved beneficial for students as evidenced by: all students in grades 10, 11 and 12 successfully passing Gr. 10 English Language Arts test; all but 4 students in grades 10, 11 and 12 passing Gr. 10 Mathematics test; and all students in grades 10, 11 and 12 successfully passing Gr. 9/10 biology test

**Implementation of ELL Strategies** – teachers identified lesson objective and essential question for each lesson as well as the following strategies: Tiering of all vocabulary in each content area; following 7 steps to teaching vocabulary; and identifying content and concept language integration

**Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)** - following targeted training and quality conferences to understand best research-based practices, staff began to develop a PBIS leadership team aimed at a Tier I Implementation in the 2014 – 2015 school year

## **Community Involvement**

- Homeroom Projects Fair & Competition – presentations and showcased projects by students to panel of judges
- Thanksgiving Celebration – staff cooked and served students and parents
- Annual Holiday Drive to provide gifts for CMA students and their families
- Community outreach and service – Goodwill efforts for St. Bernard’s Church, including painting, construction, set up/break down and landscaping

## 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

Tel: 508-835-3570

Fax: 508-835-3509

Three years 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. 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.

CMA's mission is based on the principle that all students are responsible for their education and behavior, and students are encouraged to make the right choices as it applies to 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

7 Instructional Assistants

2 Clinicians

Administrative Assistant

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. At times, there are those with major psychiatric diagnoses as well. 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

- School-wide focus on PBIS – Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports promoting socially acceptable behavior while focusing on academic achievement through a token economy reward system
  - Two teachers completing C.A.G.S. in special education with a focus on Positive Behavior Supports
  - Targeted PBIS training to program staff
  - Operationally defined Safe, Respectful and Responsible behavior – the tenets of PBIS, and consistently reinforced same through posted materials and during all class and school activities
  - Initial SWIS training to help track and analyze behavioral data
- Instituted BrainWise curricula, led by clinicians, aimed at teaching critical thinking skills and behavioral strategies
- New member of Worcester Mini Special Olympics
- Community outreach efforts included turkey dinner baskets for 5 families in need during Thanksgiving and a “Get to Know your School” day where families had the opportunity to meet with teachers and view samples of student work
- Participated in A.C.E. (Adventure, Challenge, Experience) training to help facilitate student engagement in group therapy sessions

## 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

Six years in current location (in existence 14 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 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 Clinicians

10 Classroom Teachers

26 Instructional Assistants

School Nurse

Itinerant Art, Physical Education and Learning Disabilities Teachers, and related service providers



## 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 profile 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 disabilities 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 (\$3500) resulting in purchase of iPads
- Third 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 Cook-off
- Family and community partnerships
  - Open House
  - Special Olympics
  - Giving Tree Holiday Celebration
  - National Volunteer Week – Sutton Senior Center Yard Clean-Up
  - MDA’s Disability Awareness Program Hop-A-Thon
  - Goddard House – Community Service – Grounds Clean-up
- Professional development activities continue to support and strengthen educators and program staff through exposure to best practices.
  - Ongoing CPI training and recertification
  - EnVision Math
  - Understanding mental illness and the effects of behavioral interventions
  - PBIS
  - UbD – Understanding by Design, to assist teachers in guiding curriculum, assessment and instruction through a “backwards” design.

## ROBERT H. GODDARD ACADEMY

### Program Administration

Jacqueline Lake, Director  
Elizabeth Driscoll, Assistant 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

Six years in current location (in existence 10 years). Building leased.

Student Capacity: 140

### Staffing

Director  
2 Assistant Directors  
Administrative Assistant  
School Nurse  
5 Clinicians  
17 Classroom Teachers  
34 Instructional Assistants  
Itinerant Art, Physical Education and Health teachers, and related service providers

### 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.

## **BASICS**

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

Student Profile/Services: Students who attend the BASICS 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. BASICS provides an applied behavior analysis (ABA) 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. Extensive educational and behavioral data is collected and frequently reviewed to ensure that the learning process is dynamic. Behavior Concepts, Inc. (BCI) led by Director, Dr. Jeffrey Robinson provides staffing and consultation for BASICS.

## Program Changes/Accomplishments

- The purchase and implementation of 6 iPads along with the communication App Proloquo2Go to support and enhance the functional communication of students
- A pediatric cardiology nurse practitioner provided a lesson on the functions of the heart on-site at the Heart Hospital. In appreciation, students presented her with shamrocks and heart-shaped boxes of candy for the patients. A poster-sized drawing of the heart by one of our students was given as a gift to the practice.
- A new vocational landscaping job site was established at the Manor Restaurant.

## WOODWARD DAY SCHOOL

### Program Administration

Evelyn Marrone, Site Coordinator, Hartwell Street

Teresa O'Neill, Site Coordinator, Fremont Street

Lisa Roberts, Site Coordinator, McKeon Road

Robin Pingeton, 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

21 years in current location

19 years in current location

14 years in current location

Student Capacity: 40

Student Capacity: 40

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 MGL 37H1/2. 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 Assistants

1 Guidance Counselor

16 Teachers

Itinerant Art, Physical Education, 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

- MCAS:
  - 61% of high school students passed Biology with 10% scoring proficient
  - 88% of 10th grade students passed ELA with 50% scoring proficient or above
  - 75% of 10th grade students passed Math 25% scoring proficient or above
- Graduation/Promotion Rates
  - Out of 9 seniors, 7 met graduation requirements
  - 39 middle school students were promoted to the 9th grade
  - After in-depth staff training on Edgenuity, staff and students successfully utilized this online application for credit recovery (10 students) as well as a blended learning model within the
- Throughout the school year, 110 new students were enrolled with an ending census of 76 students
- Top point earners embarked on field trips related to content instruction in the classroom, such as Math Madness Basketball game at WPI.
- Presentation by the Secret Service on Managing Threatening Situations/Creating Safe School Climates. Offered by the Worcester District Attorney's Office and Worcester Public School's safety office.
- Trauma Forum, presented by the Worcester Education Collaborative "Not Present, Not Accounted For, School Suspension in Worcester".

## 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 M. 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.

As goals are set for the 2014-2015 school year, clinicians are identifying students who have been showing aggression or who have been identified as at risk for violence. These students will be taught skills to manage their anger and learn to decrease their aggression. Additionally, clinicians are learning additional skills to teach students how to better manage their anger, including training on Restorative Justice, and presentations from the Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center.

### Staffing

Director

22 School-based clinicians

## 2013 - 2014 DEMOGRAPHICS DATA

Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity (2013-14)		
Race	% of Collaborative	% of All Collaboratives
African American	12.6	7.1
Asian	1.8	3.0
Hispanic	42.5	14.4
Native American	0.0	0.2
White	39.7	72.7
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	0.0	0.2
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic	3.5	2.4

Enrollment by Gender (2013-14)		
	Collaborative	All Collaboratives
Male	299	3,096
Female	99	1,198
Total	398	4,294

Title	% of Collaborative	% of All Collaboratives
First Language not English	32.4	9.9
English Language Learner	26.6	3.3
Low-income	79.9	29.7
Students With Disabilities	95.5	97.8
Free Lunch	77.4	27.9
Reduced Lunch	2.5	1.9
High Needs	99.5	98.9



## 2013 - 2014 MCAS PERFORMANCE DATA

<b>ALL GRADES - ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS</b>																		
Student Group	Central Massachusetts SPED Collaborative									All Collaboratives								
	Stud. Incl.	Part. Rate	% at Each Level				CPI	SGP	Incl. in SGP	Stud. Incl.	Part. Rate	% at Each Level				CPI	SGP	Incl. in SGP
	#	%	A	P	NI	W/F				#	%	A	P	NI	W/F			
All Students	130	86	1	5	27	68	41.2	30.5	78	1,916	91	1	16	24	60	61.2	29.0	963
Students w/disabilities	129	86	1	5	27	67	41.3	30.0	77	1,874	92	1	15	24	61	60.9	29.0	929
Moderate or High Level of Need	129	86	1	5	27	67	41.3	30.0	77	1,808	91	1	15	23	61	60.9	29.0	892
<b>Other Subgroups</b>																		
Male	99	84	1	5	24	70	39.9	32.0	61	1,432	91	1	14	26	59	59.8	29.0	769
Female	31	92	0	3	35	61	45.2		17	478	92	1	19	18	62	65.5	31.5	194

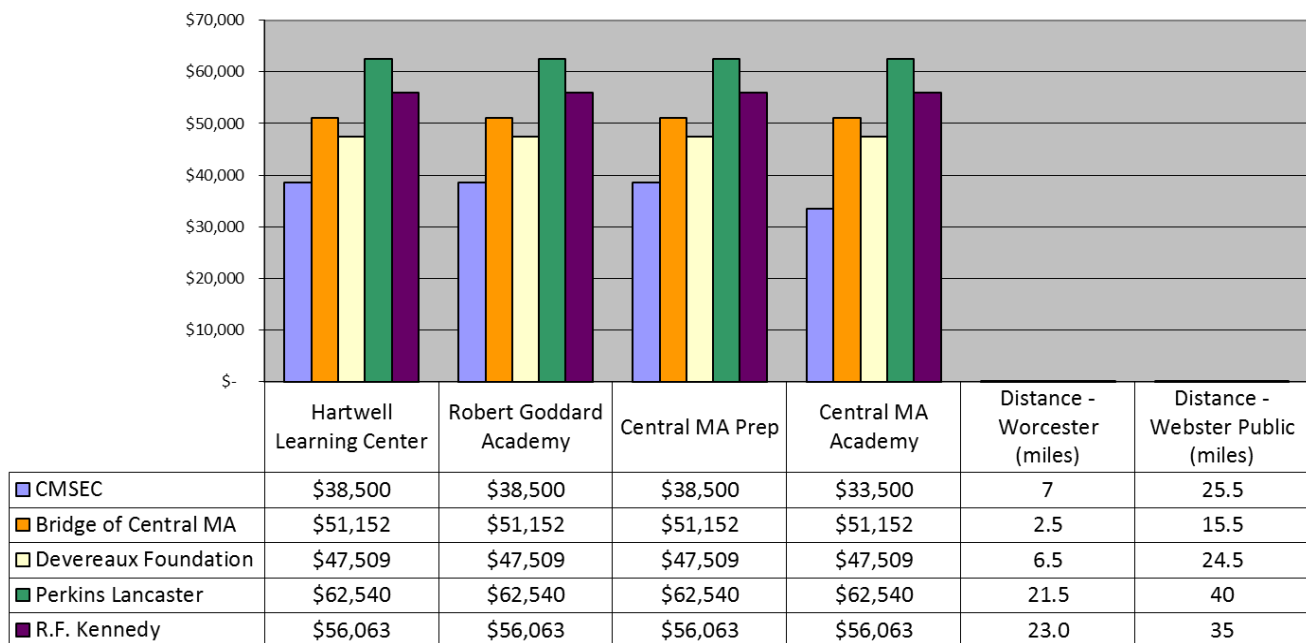
<b>ALL GRADES - MATHEMATICS</b>																		
Student Group	Central Massachusetts SPED Collaborative									All Collaboratives								
	Stud. Incl.	Part. Rate	% at Each Level				CPI	SGP	Incl. in SGP	Stud. Incl.	Part. Rate	% at Each Level				CPI	SGP	Incl. in SGP
	#	%	A	P	NI	W/F				#	%	A	P	NI	W/F			
All Students	134	90	0	1	9	90	29.1	30.0	76	1,957	92	3	5	15	78	50.2	28.0	992
Students w/disabilities	133	90	0	1	9	90	29.1	30.0	75	1,906	93	2	5	14	79	50.3	28.0	956
Moderate or High Level of Need	133	90	0	1	9	90	29.1	30.0	75	1,837	92	2	5	14	79	50.3	28.0	916
<b>Other Subgroups</b>																		
Male	105	90	0	1	11	88	28.8	30.5	64	1,477	93	3	5	16	76	49.3	30.0	801
Female	29	90	0	0	0	100	30.2		12	473	91	2	5	12	82	53.2	22.0	191

<b>ALL GRADES - SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY/ENGINEERING</b>																		
Student Group	Central Massachusetts SPED Collaborative									All Collaboratives								
	Stud. Incl.	Part. Rate	% at Each Level				CPI	SGP	Incl. in SGP	Stud. Incl.	Part. Rate	% at Each Level				CPI	SGP	Incl. in SGP
	#	%	A	P	NI	W/F				#	%	A	P	NI	W/F			
All Students	68	92	0	3	31	66	36.8	N/A	N/A	970	94	2	9	33	56	58.0	N/A	N/A
Students w/disabilities	67	92	0	3	31	66	36.9	N/A	N/A	937	94	2	9	33	57	58.1	N/A	N/A
Moderate or High Level of Need	67	91	0	3	31	66	36.9	N/A	N/A	911	93	2	9	32	57	58.3	N/A	N/A
<b>Other Subgroups</b>																		
Male	55	91	0	4	35	62	38.6	N/A	N/A	725	93	2	10	33	55	57.8	N/A	N/A
Female	13	94	0	0	15	85	28.8	N/A	N/A	245	95	0	7	32	60	58.6	N/A	N/A

## 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.

**FY14 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 meals and related therapy services, both of which are provided by the Worcester public schools. Lastly, Central MA Academy is housed in a Worcester Public School building with the District covering all building-related expenses, including maintenance.

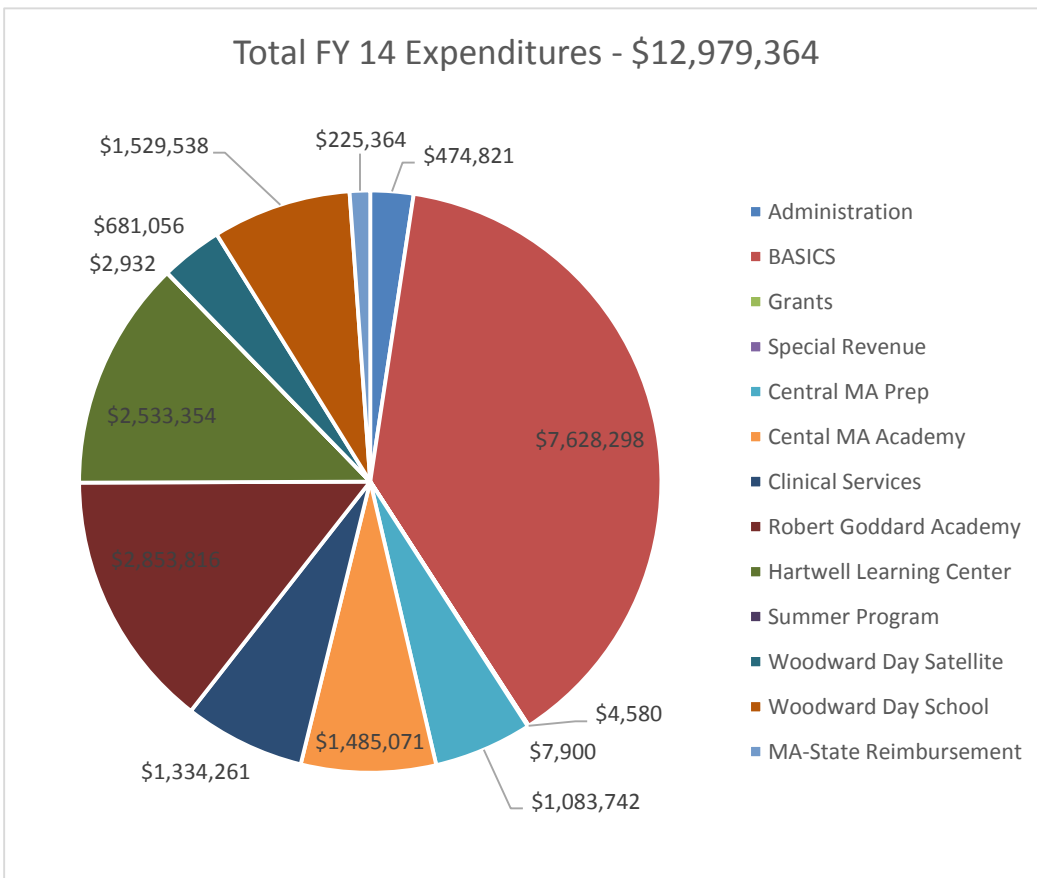
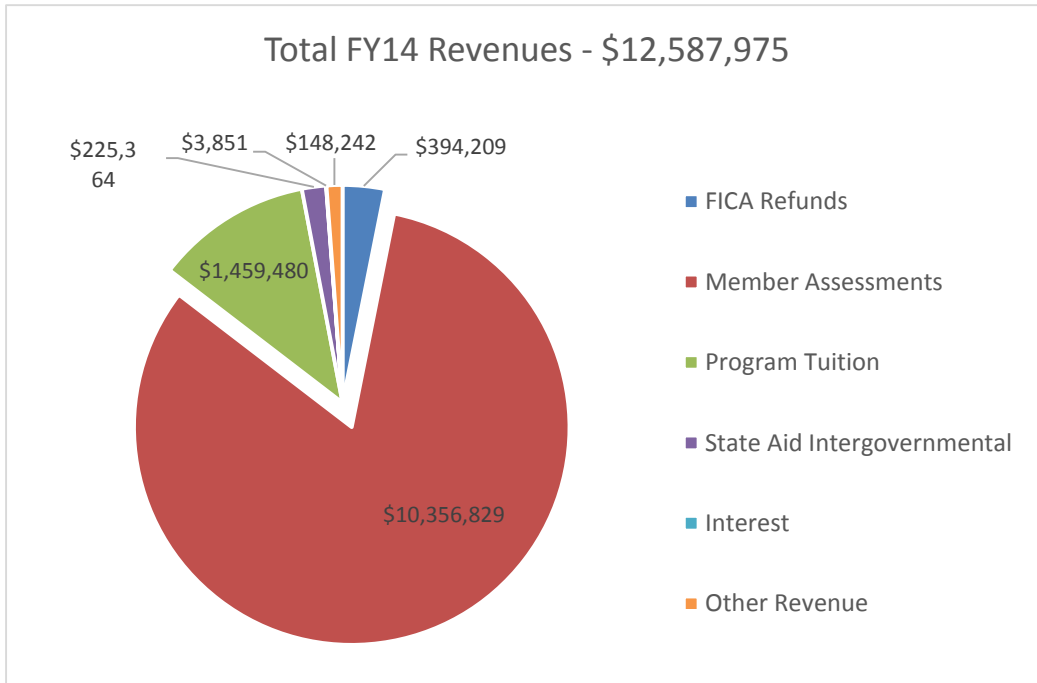
Student enrollment from our non-member districts increased by over 20% from the previous fiscal year, reinforces the cost effectiveness of our programs. With subsequent increase in revenue, CMSEC members can realize savings while at the same time recognizing the growth potential as we continue to build capacity within all our programs.

As we continue to move toward a strategic planning platform, we have come closer toward achieving our goals of bringing our technology and curriculum integration to a level whereby teams can effectively look at components of student data to identify priority areas needing attention, while at the same time aligning the curriculum and encouraging a standardization of materials and resources across all CMSEC programs.

Partnerships with our member and non-member districts have strengthened through targeted meetings between CMSEC and special education stakeholders, thereby providing a platform to define program parameters consistent with the needs of students being referred. In addition, a collaborative-wide intake and referral packet ensures consistency in information collected and continuity for districts referring students to our programs. As a result of this outreach and identification of program need, CMSEC put plans in place for the development of its own educational program for behaviorally-challenged students on the autism spectrum, previously coordinated through an outside agency, projecting even greater savings for our members.

Whether it be through increased family and student engagement, targeted professional development opportunities, or partnerships with our community stakeholders, reinforced by our dynamic new website ([www.cmsec.org](http://www.cmsec.org)), CMSEC has expanded our visibility and capacity to serve the young people of Worcester County, while increasing marketing opportunities to our neighboring districts.

## REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES



## FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

CMSEC's FY14 budget was developed with an anticipated excess of expenses over revenues of \$1,013,932 to reduce CMSEC's surplus, while crediting member districts proportionately for their prior years' contribution to this balance. At the end of 2013, the balance in CMSEC's surplus account was \$2,165,284. During the 2014 fiscal year, CMSEC used \$391,389 of this balance, and ended the fiscal year with \$1,773,895 in its surplus account.

In FY14, actual revenues were \$12,587,975 and actual expenses were \$12,979,364, resulting in a deficit of \$391,389. The increase in revenue over budget was due to increased non-member student enrollment and the receipt of refunds for FICA contributions for active employees for calendar years 2010, 2011 and 2012. The increase in expenditures over budget was due to the reciprocal payment to employees for the balance of FICA contributions and the continuing investment in curriculum and technology upgrades.