North River Collaborative
2017 Annual Report

North River Collaborative
Stephen Donovan, Ed.D.
Executive Director
198 Spring Street, Rockland, MA 02370
781-878-6056
www.northrivercollaborative.org
December 2017
Intentionally left bank.
November 30, 2017

Dear Members of the Board of Directors, School Committees, and Colleagues,

As the new Executive Director of the North River Collaborative (NRC), I am delighted to present to you the 2017 Annual Report. The report summarizes the highlights of the past school year, in which the collaborative focused its efforts on our core mission of providing high-quality, cost-effective educational programs and services for students, districts, partner organizations, and communities.

In this report, you will find:

• Information on the programs and services provided by the collaborative;
• Discussion of the cost-effectiveness of these programs and services;
• Discussion of the progress made toward achieving the objectives and purpose set forth in the collaborative agreement; and
• Audited financial statements and the independent auditor’s report.

North River continues to be a fiscally healthy organization as you will see in the audited financial statement. The North River Collaborative maintains a fund balance below the maximum allowable by statute, yet sufficient to support the collaborative’s needs. Our Capital Fund continues to support maintenance and improvements to the North River School and Conference Center facility.

On behalf of the entire NRC staff, I would like to thank member district administrators and staff for their input and involvement with the collaborative. The continued success of the collaborative depends on this participation as educational collaboratives exist to “bring school districts together to form partnerships that maximize efficiency by sharing costs and expertise” in order to enhance the lives and effectiveness of students, families, and educators. It is this work that we do on behalf of districts that keeps the North River Collaborative moving forward as an organization.

Lastly, on behalf of the collaborative and its staff, I would like thank Joanne Haley Sullivan, my predecessor, for her dedication, passion, and more than eleven years of service to the North River Collaborative and its member districts.

Sincerely,

Stephen Donovan, Ed.D.
Executive Director

North River Collaborative

Serving the public school districts of

Abington • Avon • Bridgewater–Raynham • East Bridgewater • Hanover • Rockland • Stoughton • West Bridgewater • Whitman–Hanson
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Section 4: Progress Toward Achieving NRC’s Purpose and Objectives

Purpose

Objectives

Objective 1: Provide programs for students with low-incidence disabilities

Programs

North River School

Learning Centers

Community-Based Vocational Program

Summer Work and Learning Program

Services

Therapy Services

Behavior Consultation and Education Services

Objective 2: Provide professional development opportunities

Professional Development

Instructional Technology Integration Specialist

Objective 3: Provide programs and services in cost effective manner

Objective 4: Explore and pursue grant and other funding

Objective 5: Cooperative programs and services

Teachers of English Language Learners

Independence Academy

NRC Family Network

Social Work Internship Program

Municipal Medicaid Reimbursement

Southeast Transportation Network

NRC Audited Financial Statement
The North River Collaborative is governed by the member school committees of Abington, Avon, Bridgewater-Raynham, East Bridgewater, Hanover, Rockland, Stoughton, West Bridgewater, and Whitman-Hanson. Each school committee appoints a representative member to serve on the North River Collaborative’s Board of Directors at its monthly meetings. In addition, there are regular advisory meetings of the superintendents, assistant superintendents/special education directors, and curriculum coordinators throughout the year to provide input and feedback about the programs and services as well as information about emerging needs in the districts. The tables below list the members of each of these groups for the 2016–2017 school year. The North River Collaborative is grateful for their service. Beginning with the 2017-2018 school year, the Board of Directors of the North River Collaborative will be made up of the superintendents of the member districts.

**Board of Directors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chairperson</th>
<th>Kathy Bailey, Abington</th>
<th>John Geary, Hanover</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Anne Hagberg, Avon</td>
<td>Richard Phelps, Rockland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Susan Prewandowski, Bridgewater-Raynham</td>
<td>Anita Hill, Stoughton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gordon McKinnon, East Bridgewater</td>
<td>Susan Sullivan, West Bridgewater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Steven Bois, Whitman-Hanson</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Superintendents’ Advisory Committee**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Peter Schafer, Abington</th>
<th>Matthew Ferron, Hanover</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Paul Zinni, Avon</td>
<td>Alan Cron, Rockland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Derek Swenson, Bridgewater-Raynham</td>
<td>Marguerite Rizzi, Stoughton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elizabeth Legault, East Bridgewater</td>
<td>Patricia Oakley, West Bridgewater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ruth Gilbert-Whitner, Whitman-Hanson</td>
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**Special Needs Advisory Committee**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Dympna Thomas, Abington</th>
<th>Joan Woodward, Hanover</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Christine Godino, Avon</td>
<td>Linda Maniglia, Rockland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carla Thomas, Bridgewater-Raynham</td>
<td>Heather Tucker, Stoughton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gina Williams, East Bridgewater</td>
<td>Hope Hanscom, West Bridgewater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>John Queally, Whitman-Hanson</td>
</tr>
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**Curriculum Coordinators’ Committee**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Dympna Thomas, Abington</th>
<th>Deborah St. Ives, Hanover</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Christine Godino, Avon</td>
<td>Jan Sheehan, Rockland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ryan Powers, Bridgewater-Raynham</td>
<td>Jonathan Ford, Stoughton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gina Williams, East Bridgewater</td>
<td>Hope Hanscom, West Bridgewater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ellen Stockdale, Whitman-Hanson</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**North River Collaborative Administrative Team**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Joanne Haley Sullivan, Executive Director</th>
<th>Moira Leon, Community-Based Vocational</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Edwin Walsh, Asst. Executive Director</td>
<td>Beth Litchfield - Social Work Internship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nancy Verseckes, Asst. Executive Director</td>
<td>Ryan Morgan, Independence Academy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Michael Laliberte, Director of Business</td>
<td>Leslie Reilly, NRC Family Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Diane Baxter, Technology</td>
<td>Annie Robinson, OT/PT Supervisor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Clarice Doliber, District Services</td>
<td>Kate Stevens, Learning Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stephen Folino, North River School</td>
<td>Ann Terrill, Transportation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Deni Howley, Behavioral Health Initiative</td>
<td>Deborah White, Professional Development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mission
The North River Collaborative cooperatively develops and delivers quality and cost-effective programs and services for students, school districts, partner organizations, and communities.

Vision
The North River Collaborative (NRC) provides innovative, flexible and diverse educational programs and services that engage students in participatory learning. Using state of the art technology, the collaborative provides educators and districts with the resources to increase student achievement and with the opportunities to collaborate.

Guiding Beliefs
- We believe that programs, services, and facilities should be of the highest quality and responsive to the changing needs of the member districts.
- We believe that all students should be provided with the opportunity and support to reach their potential for academic achievement and independent living.
- We believe that all students should be challenged to learn in a caring, inclusive, and flexible environment that appreciates diversity, values life-long learning, and prepares students to be successful citizens.
- We believe that high-quality professional development, combined with educator evaluation, is essential for improving educational practice and maximizing student achievement.
- We believe that supporting the social and emotional well-being of our students is essential.
- We believe that through collegiality and shared commitment, we accomplish more collectively than separately.
- We believe that to facilitate the educational process, we need to support families.
- We believe that a variety of opinions will stimulate innovative and creative ideas leading to effective solutions.
- We believe that student assessment and program evaluation are essential for continuous improvement.

Strategic Goals
Goal 1: To provide a continuum of high quality, educational programs and services in response to identified needs.
Goal 2: To expand and enhance support for the behavioral health of students by providing sustainable tools and resources to students, families, and staff for full access to learning.
Goal 3: To provide high-quality, cost effective professional development that is responsive to the needs of NRC programs and its member districts.
# Collaborative Statistics

## General Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years in Service</th>
<th>Member Districts</th>
<th>Districts Served</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Program Sites**

- 9 – East Bridgewater (2), West Bridgewater (1), Whitman-Hanson (3), and NRC sites (3)

**Vocational Sites**

- 14 – Bridgewater, Brockton, East Bridgewater, Hanover, Pembroke, Rockland, and Weymouth

## Service Locations

(There may be multiple services per location.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Districts</th>
<th>BCES</th>
<th>Social Work</th>
<th>NRCFN</th>
<th>BHI</th>
<th>Therapy &amp; ELL</th>
<th>Vision Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abington</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avon</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridgewater-Raynham</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Bridgewater</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanover</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rockland</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stoughton</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Bridgewater</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitman-Hanson</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-member Districts</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Staff Demographics

(June 30 count)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FY13</th>
<th>FY14</th>
<th>FY15</th>
<th>FY16</th>
<th>FY17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administrators/Coordinators</td>
<td>15.16</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>29.73</td>
<td>26.72</td>
<td>30.2</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>31.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational Therapists</td>
<td>10.83</td>
<td>10.88</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Therapists</td>
<td>4.63</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech Therapists</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>4.34</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aides</td>
<td>19.01</td>
<td>14.08</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior Consultants: BCBAs</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Behavior Consultants</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior Service Providers</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology Staff</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Coaches</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>6.58</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselors/Social Workers</td>
<td>4.01</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Psychologist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nurses</td>
<td>6.57</td>
<td>5.86</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Assistants</td>
<td>13.83</td>
<td>12.41</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>11.58</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitors</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>14.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drivers</td>
<td>52.0</td>
<td>59.7</td>
<td>62.8</td>
<td>69.0</td>
<td>64.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation &amp; Mobility</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Custodian</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Staff (FTE)</strong></td>
<td><strong>192.78</strong></td>
<td><strong>184.79</strong></td>
<td><strong>196.65</strong></td>
<td><strong>207.63</strong></td>
<td><strong>205.3</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Serving Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students Served in NRC Programs (FTE)*</th>
<th>FY15</th>
<th>FY16</th>
<th>FY17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multiple disabilities</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>25.</td>
<td>21.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autism/developmental disabilities</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>22.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional disabilities</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>51.1</td>
<td>48.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance Abuse and Dependence</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17.65</td>
<td>44.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>115.1</strong></td>
<td><strong>116.5</strong></td>
<td><strong>119.2</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students Served in NRC Services:</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community-Based Vocational</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Language Learners</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Therapies</td>
<td>553</td>
<td>498</td>
<td>497</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Work Interns</td>
<td>444</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>458</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Health Initiative</td>
<td>408</td>
<td>622</td>
<td>622</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,984</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,147</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,211</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,099</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,263.5</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,330.2</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: this may include a duplicated headcount due to students participating in multiple services.

### Serving Districts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FY15</th>
<th>FY16</th>
<th>FY17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal Medicaid</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant Writing</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Health</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development (PD)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Serving District Staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional Development – Total Participants</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development – Total NRC-PD Sessions PD</td>
<td>982</td>
<td>1,626</td>
<td>1,095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development – Class Hours Offered PD</td>
<td>73 sessions</td>
<td>111 sessions</td>
<td>87 sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development – Total Training Hours PD</td>
<td>321 hours</td>
<td>532 hours</td>
<td>347 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Health Training (educators)</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior and Education Consultation (educators)</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistive Technology Consultation (educators)</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PD** Does not include use of NRCC by outside organizations.

### Serving Families

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FY15</th>
<th>FY16</th>
<th>FY17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family Network</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior and Education Consultation (educators)</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Support Group</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Work Program –families served</td>
<td>444</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Health Initiative – consultations to families</td>
<td>954</td>
<td>2,030</td>
<td>1426</td>
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Section 1: Governance and General Information

Section 2: Programs and Services

The North River Collaborative offers the following programs and services (described on subsequent pages) in accordance with its Collaborative Agreement:

- Day school placements (North River School) and other services for students with disabilities (Learning Center Programs)
- Alternative school programs for at-risk students (Independence Academy)
- Community-Based Vocational Services
- Behavior Consultation and Education Services
- Therapy Services
- Vision Services
- Social Work Internship Program
- Family services
- Teachers of English Language Learners (ELL)
- Professional Development
- Transportation services
- Collaborative Grant Applications
- General education supports and services
- Clinical Evaluations
- Municipal Medicaid Reimbursement

The programs/services listed above are not all-inclusive; the NRC Board of Directors, acting at the request of the NRC Executive Director and/or member districts may consider and approve other programs/services to be provided by the collaborative so long as such programs/services are in the best interest of the members, and are not inconsistent with M.G.L. c. 40, sect. 4E and 603 CMR sect. 50, et seq, as amended from time to time.

North River School

The North River School’s Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education approved public day program is a highly structured individualized therapeutic learning environment for students in grades 5-12, based on the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, small group instructional settings and multiple vocational school-to-work opportunities. The therapeutic milieu includes counseling services, a behavior management system based on the principles of collaborative problem solving and natural consequences, functional behavioral assessments, and behavior intervention.

A strong home-school relationship is also a critical and an essential part of the program’s success. The North River School assists students in developing the social/emotional, behavioral, and academic skills needed to successfully return to their sending schools. Students receive academic credits toward graduation from their own school districts by completing the course of studies provided at North River School and passing MCAS. North River School provides vocational programming to students in a number of career preparatory areas. These vocational programs provide school-to-work transition skills and build a strong work ethic.

The North River Middle School provides a caring environment where students can learn in a comfortable and safe setting. The middle school provides student learning through the core curriculum, life-skills, health and physical education, art, vocational exploration, transition skills, and eighth grade transition to high school.

The North River School continues to expand its technology capabilities building on its in-class internet access, Smart Boards, and staff professional development.

The North River School continues its Transition Skills Enhancement Program with assessments, including rubrics-based report cards, in-depth narrative assessments, and individual student competency profiles. The program is designed for students who have completed their senior year but, for team identified reasons, are deferring their diploma. This program enhances and develops transition skills necessary for life after high school. Past students have completed this program and received their delayed diploma.

North River Middle/High School
525 Beech Street, Rockland, MA  02370
Phone: 781/871-8320
Stephen Folino – Principal
Section 2: Programs and Services

Learning Center Programs

The Learning Center for Students with Multiple Disabilities serves students ages 3 to 22. This program is designed to meet the academic, medical, and therapeutic needs of students with disabilities in multiple areas. Communication, self-care, mobility, and vocational and leisure skill development are addressed throughout the day and guided by the teacher, classroom staff, and an extensive therapy and vision support team. Program nurses oversee promotion of overall student health. This program offers a summer program, as well as community field trips. Classroom locations within public schools allows students access to inclusive opportunities in order to help facilitate academic and social skill development.

The Learning Center for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder serves students ages 3 to 22. This program is within a structured ABA-based program where students are provided with the behavioral, social-emotional, and academic support to meet their unique needs. Communication, self-care, mobility, and vocational and leisure skill development are addressed throughout the day and guided by the teacher, classroom staff, and an extensive therapy and behavior support team. This program offers a summer program, as well as community field trips. Classroom locations within public schools allows students access to inclusive opportunities in order to help facilitate academic and social skill development.

Learning Centers for Students with Multiple Disabilities

Learning Centers for Students with Autism & Developmental Disabilities
Phone: 781/878-6056 (Ext. 103)
Kate Stevens – Coordinator

- Learning Center Multiple Disabilities (Early Childhood 1 & 2, Primary) and Learning Center Autism & Developmental Disabilities (Primary)
  Maquan Elementary School (Rooms 102, 104, 106, 108), 38 School Street, Hanson, MA 02341
  Phone: 781/618-7290
- Learning Center Multiple Disabilities (Elementary) Learning Center Autism & Developmental Disabilities (Elementary)
  Indian Head Elementary School (Rooms 101, 107), 726 Indian Head Street, Hanson, MA 02341
  Phone: 781/618-7065
- Learning Center Multiple Disabilities (Middle/High School)
  Gordon Mitchell Middle School (Room 310), 435 Central Street, East Bridgewater, MA 02333
  Phone: 508/378-0488
- Learning Center Autism & Developmental Disabilities Middle School
  Whitman Middle School (Rooms 100 and 101), 101 Correll Avenue, Whitman, MA 02382
  Phone: 781/618-7590
- Learning Center Autism & Developmental Disabilities High School
  East Bridgewater High School (Room 129), 43 Plymouth Street, East Bridgewater, MA 02333
  Phone: 508/378-8214 x1290
- Learning Center Autism & Developmental Disabilities High School
  West Bridgewater High School (Room 216), 155 West Center Street, West Bridgewater, MA 02379
  Phone: 508/894-1220 x1216
Independence Academy (IA) is an alternative multi-service secondary school serving adolescents who struggle with issues related to substance use and dependence. The program is one of only five recovery high schools in Massachusetts. IA enrolls students from the southeast region of Massachusetts that have struggled with substance use and who understand that their greatest opportunity for success is in an environment that understands and focuses on their recovery and emotional well-being. The mission of Independence Academy is to provide a customized educational experience in an environment that facilitates recovery by understanding and providing an integrated approach that respects substance use treatment, trauma-informed care, and mental health concerns. Students are empowered to exceed their academic potential, focus on their personal wellness, build confidence in their self-expression, and are inspired to lead great and giving lives.

Independence Academy offers a full, rigorous academic program leading to high school graduation as well as numerous service components that support a student’s commitment to recovery and healthy living. Some of those components include an on-site recovery counselor, peer-recovery support groups, health and wellness curricula and activities, and a comprehensive summer program. Existing partnerships with the Old Colony YMCA, Massasoit Community College, High Point Treatment Center, as well as other community service agencies allow for program enhancements and provide unique opportunities for students enrolled at IA. The staff at Independence Academy works closely with the sending school district staff to ensure that each student meets the local graduation requirements for their respective district. As a result, students are awarded a diploma from their sending school district upon completion of all requirements.

In accordance with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, Independence Academy provides an education that is individualized to best meet student needs while taking into consideration their strengths, abilities, and interests. IA aims to provide students an education which enables them to communicate effectively and empowers them to think critically and become well-informed, active members of society. IA’s small class sizes provide an environment that encourages students to be highly motivated, accept the challenge of an academically rigorous curriculum, work independently, and meet the pace of a technology-rich world. Students are encouraged to seek educational opportunities outside of the traditional school day (i.e. independent study, internships, etc.). The daily academic schedule focuses on interdisciplinary units that are co-taught by a team of teachers. Utilizing current research, teachers provide a learning environment that capitalizes on student strengths and allows students to focus on areas that need development. The staff actively work on goal setting with students and assist them with academic opportunities that allow them to explore areas of interest and prepare them for post-secondary education and training.

Independence Academy staff strives to provide students with positive adult role models and social supports in and out of school. Our school provides recovery programming and education that is interwoven into their daily routine. Students participate in both group and individual recovery work during the school day. Our counseling staff works closely with each student and their family/support network to educate, support, and cultivate resources within the community with the ultimate goal of continued and lifelong sobriety.

In addition to providing students with a comprehensive educational experience, Independence Academy is also determined to become the primary resource for school districts and communities in the region to address issues related to adolescent substance use. Through strong community partnerships, after school programming, and outreach work, IA is committed to working with the surrounding communities to better address the growing concerns of substance use and its impact on adolescents and families.

Completing its fourth full academic year in 2016, Independence Academy has enrolled over 120 students from over 30 different communities. Since opening in January 2012, the school has now helped more than 25 students realize their goal of obtaining their high school diploma.

Independence Academy
460R Belmont Street, Brockton, MA 02301
Phone: 508/510-4091
Ryan Morgan, Principal
Section 2: Programs and Services

Community-Based Vocational Program

The North River Collaborative Community-Based Vocational Program serves students 16-22 years old who are in need of vocational and transitional training. The Community-Based Vocational Program is designed to provide training in various vocational areas for students with special needs. For many, this is their first introduction to the world of work. Students are matched to appropriate community–based worksites, one or more days per week, for job skills training with supervision from a job coach, unless otherwise determined. The job coach oversees the quality of all work and expands responsibilities as students’ progress. In-depth vocational assessments are provided for each student by the program coordinator who works with the team to determine work-site readiness and work performance skills. This program offers assistance and support to students who wish to transition to community college, work, and/or adult services. Transportation to and from worksites is provided by the collaborative. Established sites for vocational exploration include: animal care, warehouse supports, maintenance, food service, collating, customer service, television and radio production, childcare, office work, and retail.

Community-Based Vocational Services
East Bridgewater Junior/Senior High School
143 Plymouth Street, East Bridgewater, MA 02333
Phone: 781/871-1589
Moira Leon – Coordinator

Summer Work and Learning Program

The North River Collaborative’s Summer Work and Learning Program remains an innovative summer program offering a broad range of transition services for students with intellectual impairments, developmental disabilities, behavioral challenges, and autism. The program is differentiated for students ages 14-17 and 18-22 who may attend one or more summers. The program is located at Rogers Middle School and selected community-based job sites. A broad range of transition services are tied to academic support and remediation for students through hands on instruction and opportunities for daily work experiences such as horticultural, building maintenance, shipping and receiving, office practices, and food service.

Students participate each day in a variety of activities offering instruction in life skills for independent living including: daily living skills (e.g., managing money; use of household tools/appliances; time management; health and safety; basic meal preparation; health and fitness leisure/recreation activities; community experiences); social thinking skills; job exploration (e.g., training opportunities and job placement; developing/maintaining appropriate work skills and behavior); and functional academics.

Summer Work and Learning
The Almshouse, 198 Spring Street, Rockland, MA  02370
Phone: 781/878-6056 (Ext. 114)
Edwin Walsh – Assistant Executive Director
**Behavior Consultation and Education Services**

The North River Collaborative’s Behavior Consultation and Education Services (BCES) includes extensive training and ongoing support in developmental disabilities, autism spectrum disorders (ASD), applied behavior analysis treatment and intervention approaches, and community and school-based support services. BCES staff members have extensive experience in service delivery to students with ASD, other disabilities, and typical students experiencing difficulties with behaviors that interfere with learning and social relationships. In addition to responsibilities of assessments and program design, Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs) provide supervision and training to behavior service providers and assistant behavior consultants working directly with students, staff, families and community partners.

With input from other professionals, staff members focus on facilitating the development of each student’s skills in the area of communication, social/emotional, academics, receptive and expressive language, leisure/play, adaptive behavior, and activities of daily living. A strong emphasis is placed on the use of research-based applied behavior analysis (ABA) strategies including discrete trial instruction (DTI) and natural environment teaching. Strategies and techniques incorporated may include: visual supports, social stories, and behavior support plans. When needed, home-based services provide parents and other caregivers training in techniques to teach, promote, and manage skills and behaviors at home and in the community.

Using a tiered staff support model, NRC professionals train classroom staff in all aspects of ABA services in order to best meet student needs and expand the districts’ ability to support students in the least restrictive environment. Rapid generalization of learned skills and behaviors is accomplished when staff is trained to provide consistent instruction during both DTI and natural environment teaching times.

One BCBA is certified to teach the Safety-Care™ Behavioral Safety program for North River staff, providing the skills and competencies necessary to effectively prevent, minimize, and manage behavioral challenges with dignity, safety, and the possibility of change.

**Behavior Consultation and Education Services**  
The Almshouse, 198 Spring Street, Rockland, MA  02370  
Phone: 781/878-6056 (Ext. 107)  
Clarice Doliber – Coordinator

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**Therapy Services**

North River Collaborative provides **occupational, physical, and speech therapy services** within 36 public school buildings in nine school districts and to its Learning Center for Students with Multiple Disabilities, and Learning Center for Students with Autism and Developmental Disabilities programs. The collaborative’s therapy staff is dedicated to excellence in student service, committed to facilitating optimal curriculum access, and provides high-quality consultation services to parents and educational staff in order to maximize student success. At each location, therapists are integral members of a multidisciplinary team which facilitates student progress through a coordination of services. More than 20 licensed physical, occupational and speech therapists, most with advanced degrees and certifications, participate in monthly meetings and numerous professional development activities to enhance knowledge and stay current with the latest research. Therapists provide each student with service guided by the latest developments in therapeutic, rehabilitative, and educational practice.

**Therapy Services**  
The Almshouse, 198 Spring Street, Rockland, MA 02370  
Phone: 781/878-6056 (Ext. 107)  
Clarice Doliber – Coordinator
Services for Students who are Visually Impaired

Teachers of the Visually Impaired

The North River Collaborative contracts with teachers of the visually impaired to provide program-based consultative and direct services to students with visual impairments. The collaborative also works with member/non-member district towns to provide itinerant vision services to students with visual impairments who are attending district schools.

Teachers of the visually impaired provide: functional vision assessments, technology assessments and instruction, consultation to staff and parent/guardian, Braille Instruction, compensatory skill development (e.g., large print, optical devices, etc.), life skills (e.g., daily living skills, social interaction skills, recreation and leisure), and production and ordering of materials.

Orientation and Mobility

The North River Collaborative provides consultative and direct services to students with visual impairments from an orientation and mobility instructor. The collaborative works with member/non-member school districts to provide itinerant orientation and mobility services to students with visual impairments who are attending district schools.

Services provided by the orientation and mobility instructor may include: functional travel assessments, consultation to staff and parent/guardian, travel instruction in school and community settings, compensatory skill development (e.g., low vision aids, use of other senses, and spatial relationships) and life skills training (e.g., daily living skills, social interaction skills, recreation, and leisure).

Vision Services

The Almshouse, 198 Spring Street, Rockland, MA 02370
Phone: 781/878-6056 (Ext. 107)
Clarice Doliber – Coordinator

Social Work Internship Program

The North River Collaborative’s Social Work Internship Program provides school-based social work services to help students and their families face a complexity of challenges in order to foster competency in all areas central to children’s lives – academic, social-emotional and behavioral. The consultation process establishes and implements interventions to meet students’ needs. Services include: individual and group counseling, crisis interventions, whole-class presentations, and consultations with teachers. This enhances the teachers’ effectiveness related to social/emotional development of children, and facilitates a functional “bridge” relationship between home and school. The interns attend Bridgewater State University, Boston University, Simmons College, Wheelock College, and Boston College.

Social Work Internship Program
The Almshouse, 198 Spring Street, Rockland, MA 02370
Phone: 781/878-6056 (Ext. 302)
Beth Litchfield – Coordinator
Section 2: Programs and Services

**Family Network**

**NRC Family Network**
The NRC Family Network recognizes that parents are their child’s first and most influential teacher. All of the activities are offered with the goal of helping parents build a warm, nurturing family that will support the child’s social and emotional growth. The NRC Family Network helps parents enrich their child’s “learning through play” experiences by providing opportunities for parents and children to engage in creative play endeavors. Education workshops and information about local resources are provided to help parents understand the developmental needs of their children and enhance their ability to meet those needs. Additionally, family recreational activities and discussion and support groups help parents build connections with other parents so they can support each other in their parenting journey.

All of the network’s programs are free and are held at the Family Center in Abington and at a variety of community locations in our member districts, including local libraries, the Maquan Elementary School in Hanson, and the Central Square Congregational Church in Bridgewater. Our bi-monthly newsletter includes parenting tips, information about local resources, and a calendar of events. Newsletters are emailed directly to families on the e-mail list, and paper copies are available at local libraries, Head Start programs, and WIC offices. The NRC Family Network is funded by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care’s Coordinated Family and Community Engagement grant program through a contract with Self Help Inc. and Triumph Inc.

**NRC Family Network**
North School, 171 Adams Street, Abington, MA 02351
Phone: 781/681-9736
Leslie Reilly – Coordinator

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**Teachers of English Language Learners**
The North River Collaborative provides **English Language Learner (ELL)** services to districts. The teachers offer assistance to students, whose first language is not English, in the development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in English. Referrals are made through the district’s ELL Coordinator.

When a district determines that a student requires English language instruction, it is provided in alignment with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) English Language Development Standards. The ELL teacher provides appropriate instruction in language variations, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. Instructional methods are employed that are appropriate for the maturity and skill level of students. Student assessment is conducted regularly, with written quarterly progress reports and other reports completed as needed.

Since carryover in the classroom is imperative for student success, the ELL teacher coordinates instruction with classroom activities and provides consultation to classroom teachers to ensure a comprehensive service delivery program for each student. Our teachers also confer with parents to help them better understand the school program and their student’s progress toward accomplishing stated goals.

The North River Collaboratives’ dedicated staff members keep current with knowledge in their field by participating in high-quality professional development. ELL teachers participate in monthly staff meetings to facilitate communication and assist the classroom teacher in meeting the needs of students.

**English Language Learning (ELL) Services**
The Almshouse, 198 Spring Street, Rockland, MA 02370
Phone: 781/878-6056 (Ext. 107)
Clarice Doliber – Coordinator
Section 2: Programs and Services

**Professional Development**

North River Collaborative is committed to providing high-quality professional development programs based on current research and best practices that focus on improving the learning of all students. The collaborative’s decisions about the selection/identification of programs and courses, audience, scheduling, duration, and implementation factors are driven by research-based standards for professional learning, such as those identified by *Learning Forward* and the Massachusetts Department of Education.

Professional development offerings for North River Collaborative and district staff are determined based on ongoing and newly identified needs of our member districts, the needs of low-incidence educational staff, state and federal mandates, emerging issues, and current educational best practice. Curriculum coordinators and special education directors from each member district and the collaborative’s program coordinators work to collaboratively plan programs that address collective needs. Programs are designed to focus on knowledge and skill development to impact student learning. When educators from many school districts participate in professional development training together, they have the opportunity to share with and learn from one another, often discovering a synergy that results in understanding, growth, and solutions that were unanticipated.

Professional development training and support are provided to North River Collaborative and district educators in order to:

- Continue to improve educational practice and maximize student achievement;
- Support supervision and evaluation to improve instruction;
- Improve curriculum and content knowledge, and address pedagogy with a specific emphasis on differentiation, practices regarding assessment, and instructional technology integration;
- Address the issues of mental health, behavioral issues, and student safety;
- Address the individual needs of students including students with disabilities and ELLs; and
- Provide programs locally that are convenient for district staff to attend.

**North River Conference Center**

525 Beech Street, Rockland, MA 02370
NRCC Phone: 781/616-6086
Almshouse Office PD Phone: 781/878-6056 (Ext. 102)
Deborah White – Coordinator

**Southeast Transportation Network**

The Southeast Transportation Network serves more than 450 students in 22 school districts, the large number of which are from the North River Collaborative, Pilgrim Area Collaborative, and South Shore Educational Collaborative regions. Given the fiscal challenges and the growing concern for student safety, North River Collaborative is coordinating this program to obtain cost effective, quality transportation for students with special needs who attend public and private special education programs in the greater Boston/Southeastern Massachusetts region. Through the Network, the North River Collaborative began providing transportation with the opening of school in September 2007. In-service training is provided annually for all staff on topics such as: disability awareness, first aid/CPR, defensive driving, securing wheelchair, bus evacuation, and winter driving.

**Southeast Transportation Network**

The Almshouse, 198 Spring Street, Rockland, MA 02370
North School, 171 Adams Street, Abington, MA 02351
Jones School, 137 Walnut Street, Stoughton, MA 02072
Phone: 781/878-6056 (Ext. 160)
Ann Terrill – Coordinator
The North River Collaborative has spearheaded the procurement of grant and foundation funding through agencies such as the Massachusetts Departments of Public Health, Massachusetts Department of Education, Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care, the United States Department of Education, the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind, the Massachusetts Mechanics Charitable Association, and other public/private foundations and organizations. Below is a list of successful grants written and implemented by North River Collaborative on behalf of member districts:

**Elementary Counseling Grant**
An USED Elementary and Secondary Counseling Grant to support the collaborative’s “Behavioral Health Initiative” (BHI). BHI targets over 8,400 children (grades K–6), in 20 elementary schools across eight school districts.

In response to critical needs for increased mental health services, behavioral interventions, and teachers’ mental health knowledge and skills, BHI provides a comprehensive three-tiered system of school-based services through three primary goals for targeted schools.

1) Increase the number of school social workers from 2.5 to 7.7 thereby increasing from 23% to 70% of the recommended social worker ratios;

2) Improve the school learning environment and increase safety by decreasing the number of disciplinary referrals by 25% through educator training and student interventions; and

3) Provide training and consultation to educators in the targeted schools to increase their capacity to meet the mental health needs of students.

Outcomes of BHI include increased access to mental health services for students to improve social-emotional functioning, and decreased disciplinary referrals. BHI supports schools to become places where positive behavioral strategies proactively address safety and disciplinary issues, where students have access to counseling by social workers, and where parents and teachers work together to benefit students. For the most complex issues, BHI staff help students resolve issues in a proactive, flexible manner, extending case consultation, case management, and supports linked with community agencies to support families.

**Mass Commission for the Blind**
The VIP After-School Program serves South Shore students ages 5-14 who are legally blind and registered with Massachusetts Commission for the Blind. This program provides opportunities for students to socialize with other visually impaired peers. Activities such as horseback riding, swimming, and exercise, as well as special events (concerts, theater, and museums), are scheduled for after school, school vacations, and weekends. Professional staff (teacher of the visually impaired) and volunteers provide a staff-to-student ratio of 1:4, maintaining a safe learning experience. The program is provided at no cost to school districts, and the students they serve, thanks to a contract that the North River Collaborative has with the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind.

**Focus on Early Literacy**
The North River Collaborative led districts from the Southeast Region of Massachusetts to partner together and implement a curriculum through the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s Focus on Early Literacy grants (nearly $170,000). During FY17 the Early Literacy Initiative included 33 kindergarten teachers and expanded to also include 71 grade one, and grade two teachers in the seven schools in five districts. Teams of educators participated in three state-wide literacy institutes, three corresponding regional networking meetings, and additional embedded coaching in schools. Other local educators were invited to participate in regional trainings. The project promoted a comprehensive, developmentally-appropriate, child-centered approach to early literacy through professional development, technical assistance/coaching, and curriculum materials. This program features a balance of active and teacher-directed learning of academic content and skills; integration of subject areas; authentic assessments based on observation; and a collaborative approach to planning by classroom staff, specialists, and administrators.
Title III Consortium Grant
Through the support of the Title III Consortium Grant, districts are collaborating to improve services for Limited English Proficient students. Funding supported three key strategies: supporting parent/family communication, tutoring for ELL students, and professional development.

- **Parent support.** Parent support was provided in the format of a multicultural parent/child playgroup for families of young children for whom English was not the first language. In addition, parents were offered an opportunity to develop English language to support the development of their son/daughter’s English language learning.
- **Tutoring.** ELL students receive individual and small-group tutoring before/after school.
- **Professional development.** Teachers and administrators received the following training:
  - Introduction to the WIDA ELD Standards
  - Building Academic Language and Competencies in Non-core, Elective, and Specialty Courses
  - Overview of Next Generation ESL Model Curriculum Units – for ELL Teachers

General Education Supports and Services
The North River Collaborative offered the following general education supports and services which are described in other sections of this document:

- Teachers of English Language Learners (ELL)
- Mental Health professionals (Behavioral Health Initiative Grant)
- Social Work Interns
- Early literacy instruction (Early Literacy Grant)
- Professional Development
- Instructional Technology Integration Specialist

Clinical Evaluation Services
The North River School’s school psychologist enhances the quality of functional behavioral assessments provided by the school to assist teachers to understand student needs, leading to effective behavior intervention plans. In addition, the psychologist is able to complete psycho-educational evaluations for students enrolled in the program upon request.

Municipal Medicaid Reimbursement
School-based Medicaid billing has become a way for cities and towns to recoup dollars for money spent on special education programs if a student is receiving special education services and is eligible for Mass Health. Direct services claiming provides school districts an opportunity to be reimbursed for furnishing medically necessary services to eligible Mass Health students pursuant to an eligible IEP. The North River Collaborative is familiar with both school and town governance and aware of confidentiality and privacy issues, including HIPAA and FERPA, as well as the necessary record keeping required by districts, towns, and the Office of Medicaid. An annual cost report reconciles 12 months of direct service and administrative actual cost.

Municipal Medicaid Reimbursement
The Almshouse, 198 Spring Street, Rockland, MA 02370
Phone: 781/878-6056 (Ext. 105)
Michael Laliberte – Director of Business and Finance
Tuition comparisons below represent programs in the geographic region of the North River Collaborative that member districts typically use when out-of-district placements are needed for students of a particular disability. The daily rate for private schools is multiplied by 180 days to establish an equivalent tuition across programs, regardless of days of operation. Additionally, there are savings to districts in transportation to program locations that are closer to their town which are not reflected in the charts below.

**North River School**

North River School’s tuition is $22,379 less than the average private school for a similar student profile.

**Learning Center for Students with Multiple Disabilities**

The Learning Center for Students with Multiple Disabilities’ tuition is $14,544 less than the average private school tuition for a similar student profile.
Section 3: Cost Effectiveness of Programs and Services

Learning Center for Students with Autism

The Learning Center for Students with Autism tuitions are $15,774 less than the average private school tuition for a similar student profile.

Independence Academy

North River Collaborative’s Independence Academy allows multiple school districts to provide a comprehensive recovery high school alternative program to at-risk students with substance abuse and dependence diagnoses. This school is a regional program and allows school districts to access services that would not otherwise be available to their students. Funding for this program is provided through shared contributions of the Department of Public Health (DPH) and the local school districts. The DPH provides funding in the amount of $500,000 annually; the school districts’ contribution is the average per pupil expenditure as determined by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. For a portion of this fiscal year, North River received $49,564 of additional funding from the Department of Public Health which partially supported transportation to/from school and extended day/year programming for students.

Community-Based Vocational Program

North River Collaborative’s Community-Based Vocational Program allows multiple school districts to provide a comprehensive program to students with disabilities by pooling resources and students in this program. A broad range of transition services are provided to each student and placement is available in 14 different job sites. If each district provided this program on its own, the range of job sites would need to be less extensive, student choice would be reduced, and options would be limited. By bringing these students into one collaborative program, the ability to place a student in a job site that matches his/her interest and skill level is greatly enhanced.

Summer Work and Learning Program

North River Collaborative’s Summer Work and Learning Program allows multiple school districts to provide a comprehensive summer program to students with disabilities. A broad range of transition services are tied to academic support and remediation for students through hands-on instruction and opportunities for work experiences, such as: animal services, horticultural, building maintenance, shipping and receiving, office practices, and food service. If each district provided this program individually, the range of job sites would need to be narrower, student choice would be reduced, and options would be limited. By bringing these students into one regional program, the ability to place a student in a job site that matches his/her interest and skill level is greatly enhanced.
Section 3: Cost Effectiveness of Programs and Services

**Behavior Consultation and Education Services**

The North River Collaborative’s Behavior Consultation and Education Services Program supports districts to address the needs of students with autism or other disabilities that require ABA services. The program increased district capacity and realized cost savings by including students in their own schools rather than placing them out of the district.

The hourly rate comparisons include private agencies that provide services to the North River Collaborative districts. The rates are provided by special education directors as costs they incurred. Some comparative rates date back to 2013 as no updated data was available. As shown below, the hourly rate for behavioral consultation services is $36 less than that of the average of other providers. In addition, there is considerable administrative support to the district to ensure that services match the needs of the students.

**Therapy Services**

The hourly rate comparisons include private agencies that provide services in the NRC region. As it was challenging to gather these rates, the chart below includes comparisons to rates that go back as far as 2011. The hourly rate for therapy services is considerably below that of the average of other providers even when older rates are compared. In addition, the North River Collaborative provides considerable administrative support to the districts to ensure that services match the needs of the students.

**Occupational Therapy Services**

The collaborative’s occupational therapy services hourly rate is $2.16 less than the average private agency rate which member district typically use for a similar student profile. Thus, if a district purchased the service from the collaborative for 5 days/week for the year, there is a savings of $1,462 per year.
Section 3: Cost Effectiveness of Programs and Services

Physical Therapy Services

The collaborative’s physical therapy services hourly rate is $2.11 less than the average private agency rate which member districts typically use for a similar student profile. Thus, if a district purchased the service from the collaborative for 5 days/week for the year, there is a savings of $2,659 per year.

Speech Therapy Services

The collaborative’s speech therapy services hourly rate is $0.85 less than the average private agency rate which member districts typically use for a similar student profile. Thus, if a district purchased the service from the collaborative for 5 days/week for the year, there is a savings of $1,071 per year.

Vision Services

The hourly rate comparisons include private agencies that provide services in the geographic region of North River Collaborative. The hourly rate for vision services is considerably below that of the average of other providers. One comparative rate is from 2014 as no updated data was available. The collaborative’s vision services hourly rate is $20.00 less than the average private agency rate which member districts typically use for a similar student profile. Thus, if a district purchased the service from the North River Collaborative for 1 day/week for the year, there is a savings of $5,040 per year.
The collaborative’s orientation and mobility services hourly rate is $26.00 less than the average private agency rate which member districts typically use for a similar student profile. Thus, if a district purchased the service from the collaborative for 1 day/week for the year, there is a savings of $6,552 per year.

**NRC Family Network**

The North River Collaborative provides services to families with children birth through age five, at no cost. The NRC Family Network is funded by the MA Department of Early Education and Care’s Coordinated Family and Community Engagement grant program through a sub-contract with Self Help Inc. and Triumph Inc.

**Municipal Medicaid Reimbursement**

The North River Collaborative coordinates the School-Based Municipal Medicaid Reimbursement Program for member districts and many non-member school districts. Since the Collaborative began providing this service in 1994, more than $30 million has been returned to the participating cities and towns. In FY17, approximately $1.5 million dollars were returned to 18 districts.

**Southeast Transportation Network**

The North River Collaborative’s Southeast Transportation Network provides transportation for special needs and other students as a cost-effective service for districts. In most cases, the collaborative’s prices are given to districts on individual routes, and the districts choose to contract for only the routes which are cost effective when compared with prices from other providers. In other cases, North River has provided entire portions of districts’ transportation programs such as all in-district special education services, or all pre-school services. Thus, consolidated administrative and other supports are provided for the districts, resulting in efficiencies within their administration. For example, when North River Collaborative assumed responsibility for in-district special needs transportation in Whitman-Hanson, the district reported a savings of over $100,000. The North River Collaborative assumed responsibility in FY16 for more than half of Stoughton’s special needs transportation, the district reported a savings of over $50,000. Overall, North River’s average cost per vehicle per day for in-district and out-of-district is $198.00 for FY17, compared with the $215 state-wide average. By providing appropriate ridership on vehicles (average 6.0 students per day), economies of scale are achieved. North River’s enrollment has continued to increase each and every year since inception in 2007, providing solid market driven evidence that school districts find its transportation cost efficient and highly reliable.

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1 Cavanaugh, Colleen A., Pupil Transportation Consulting, Inc., “Special Education Transportation Report 2012-13”
Section 3: Cost Effectiveness of Programs and Services

General Education Supports and Services

The North River Collaborative offered the following general education supports and services which are described in other sections of this document:

**Teachers of English Language Learners.** This year, North River provided a total of 6.03 ELL teachers to meet the needs of English Language Learners in 4 districts. ELL teachers provided instruction in alignment with MA Common Core and World-class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA). The collaborative’s ELL teachers assisted districts in ongoing development of ELL procedures and preparation for the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s Coordinated Program Review in the area of English Language Education.

**Social Work Internship Program.** North River’s Social Work Internship Program provides school districts with low-cost counseling services for students who are at-risk. By pooling resources to provide LICSW supervision of school-based graduate level interns, the schools can offer counseling to students who would otherwise not be able to receive it. Coordination and interface with colleges and universities, families, and school staff are all included in the program.

**Professional Development.** Professional development offered through the collaborative is cost effective for districts.

- Grant funding supports professional development for district and NRC staff. During FY17, a total of 346.5 hours of training were offered; 32.5% of the hours were supported through grant funding (e.g., BHI, ELL/SEI, Focus on K2).
- High-quality programs are offered that would be cost prohibitive for districts to offer individually. North River Collaborative programs allow districts to share the expense and enroll the number of staff they need to send, thus controlling their costs.
- Specific needs of local districts are addressed through the design and selection of programs (e.g., mental health, technology integration, educator evaluation, ELL/SEI, etc.).
- District capacity is expanded by the collaborative organizing appropriate and responsive training that is easily accessible for their staff members, usually at a lower rate than other public offerings.

**Collaborative Grant Applications.** The North River Collaborative has a history of successfully implementing major federal/state programs to expand the capacity of member school districts at no cost. During FY17, the collaborative was awarded funding from U.S. Department of Education; the Massachusetts Departments of Public Health, Early Education and Care, Elementary and Secondary Education, and private foundations. The total amount awarded on behalf of districts was $1,547,927. Specific grants include: Recovery High School (Independence Academy), Elementary Counseling (Behavioral Health Initiative), Family Network, Massachusetts Commission for the Blind, Focus on Early Literacy, and Title III Consortium grants. As a result, districts received the following grant funded supports and services:

- Transportation and extended day/year programming for students in recovery;
- 5.2 mental health professionals (Behavioral Health Initiative Grant);
- Professional development in mental health;
- Parent support for families with young children;
- After school/weekend recreational program for students with visual impairment;
- Professional development, coaching and materials for early literacy instruction; and
- Tutoring, professional development and parent support for English language learners.
Section 4: Progress Toward Achieving NRC’s Purpose and Objectives

**Purpose**

The purpose of the collaborative is to provide: intensive educational programs and services for students with disabilities, professional development to educators, related services to students with disabilities in member and non-member districts, and other high quality, cost effective services to meet the changing needs of member districts. **North River Collaborative has been successful in achieving this purpose during FY17 as outlined below.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intensive educational programs and services for students with disabilities</th>
<th>NRC continued to provide specialized programs as noted in the sections of this report describing programs beginning on page 6. Student enrollment in programs is provided on page 4.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional development to educators</td>
<td>NRC continued to provide professional development to member and non-member districts (see pages 13, 21, and 28).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Related services to students with disabilities in member and non-member districts | NRC provided therapy services to over 497 students in 7 member and 8 non-member districts (see pages 18-19, and 27).  
NRC provided TVI services to 19 students in 11 districts. NRC provided OTM services to 20 students in 8 districts. (see pages 11 and 19-20).  
NRC provided behavior consultation and education services to 97 educators and 96 families, in 2 member and 3 non-member districts (see pages 10, 18, and 27).  
NRC provided transportation services for over 450 students in 8 member and 14 non-member districts (see pages 13, 20, and 34) |
| Other high quality, cost effective services to meet the changing needs of member districts | NRC provided teachers of English Language Learners (ELL) services to 127 students in 4 districts (see pages 12, 21, and 32).  
NRC provided LICSWs who supervised 15 masters-level social work interns to 3 districts; supporting 458 students (see pages 11, 21, and 33).  
NRC provided a recovery high school (Independence Academy) for 44 students with diagnosed substance abuse and dependence (see pages 8, 17, and 32-33).  
NRC continued to seek grant-funding on behalf of NRC and member districts. NRC received federal, state funding in the amount of $1,256,494 to serve the districts and $5,611 in support of NRC programs (see pages 14-15, 21, and 31).  
NRC continued to provide Municipal Medicaid Reimbursement billing for 18 school districts, returning approximately $1.5 million (see pages 15, 20, and 34). |
Section 4: Progress Toward Achieving NRC’s Purpose and Objectives

Objectives

The overall objectives of the North River Collaborative Agreement are to:

1. Provide programs for students with low-incidence disabilities in the least restrictive environment;
2. Offer a variety of quality professional development opportunities to general and special education teachers and administrators, and related service providers;
3. Provide programs and services in a cost-effective manner;
4. Explore and pursue grant and other funding to support identified needs of the districts; and
5. Offer cooperative programs and/or services to help districts maximize cost efficiency and program effectiveness through a collaborative effort.

Objective 1: Provide programs for students with low-incidence disabilities in the least restrictive environment

North River Collaborative provides programs for students with low-incidence disabilities in the least restrictive environment including: social-emotional, multiple disabilities, and autism. These programs are provided in age-appropriate public school buildings with inclusion opportunities provided. North River School is an alternative setting within the local district and works closely with school districts to align curriculum with that of sending districts to allow students to transition back to local schools when appropriate.

North River Collaborative provides services in member and non-member school districts that allow students to remain in their local community schools while receiving essential services to enhance access to the curriculum. In this way, instead of students leaving their districts, the services are brought to them and the educators that support their learning. These services include: occupational, physical and speech therapy; behavior consultation; and vision services including orientation and mobility, teacher of the visually impaired, and Braille-trained aides.

For transition-age students, North River Collaborative provides supports for students within community-based job sites through the Community-Based Vocational program and Summer Work and Learning program.

Each of these programs strives for continuous improvement in meeting student needs. This section includes a discussion of the progress of North River Collaborative through program enhancements made throughout the school year.
Section 4: Progress Toward Achieving NRC’s Purpose and Objectives

**NRC Programs**

**North River School**

**Program Enhancements FY17**

- The curriculum was enhanced to accommodate students who have a wider range of cognitive ability in all content areas.
- Thirteen (13) interim alternative educational settings (IAES) were completed.
- The North River School annual student profile provides essential information regarding the students at NRS including: length of stay, gender, enrollment, sending districts, ethnicity, grade, diagnosis, hospitalizations, medication, and more.
- On-going professional development was provided to teachers, counselors, vocational instructors, and nurse in project-based learning, student assessment, common measures, and topics related to behavioral health.
- The North River School is now a community eligibility program allowing all students to receive free lunch and breakfast through the DESE National School Lunch Program.
- A therapeutic process intervention was implemented to reduce suspensions for behaviors at school.
- The Massachusetts Mechanics grant provided equipment for the horticulture program.
- A successful DESE Coordinated Program Review was completed.
- Computer-based MCAS testing began in the middle school.
- The North River School received a MassCUE Grant for technology in the classroom for virtual field trips.
- A new middle school teacher was hired who brought more technology and project-based learning to our middle school.
- The North River School website was updated and now also includes multi-language availability.
- A North River School student Facebook page was started to communicate with former students.
Learning Centers

Program Enhancements

- Learning Center classrooms better utilized an integrated related services approach to adequately address and provide for the prerequisite skills of students. Additional time was also allotted for Learning Center teams to meet monthly for joint planning of curriculum maps using the Unique Learning System curriculum. Therapists work within the functional context of the educational program in order to work collaboratively with classroom staff to modify and facilitate optimal access to the curriculum.

- Music therapy was added to Learning Center classrooms with activities correlated to monthly thematic units when appropriate.

- Two additional iRover Smart Board systems were added at the Learning Center Early Childhood and Autism Middle programs. The Learning Center Speech Therapy Department provided professional development training on augmentative literacy using core vocabulary in order to provide consistency of vocabulary across Learning Center classrooms.

- Kenna Liatsos, a NRC social worker, presented training to staff on “Trauma Matters: A Review and Strategies for Trauma Sensitive Practices.” This was the second part of professional development provided by Kenna Liatsos (“Trauma Sensitive Classroom: The Brain, Neural Development and Trauma” was presented in the previous year). The impact of each discipline was highlighted, and references were made to report and policy agenda text “Helping Traumatized Children Learn” by Massachusetts Advocates for Children.

- A job coach, trained in Safety Care and in possession of a 7D license, was hired for the Learning Center Autism High School classroom located at West Bridgewater High School. A 10-passenger van was also supplied for the program. This allowed for students to participate in a variety of community vocational experiences, including Crown Automotive, PetSmart, Savers, and Meals on Wheels.
Community-Based Vocational

Program Enhancements

- ServSafe Food Handling Course/Certification was provided to students, which is highly recognized in the food service industry.
- The use of comprehensive assessment tools was increased, such as the Vineland III, ABAS III, and Strong Interest Inventory to be utilized for transitional assessments and CBV students in classroom settings.
- Three students were supported to obtain competitive employment within their communities.
- CBV collaborated with the South Shore Vocational Technical High School to provide courses for our students in auto body and graphic arts.
- A fundraiser at Subway raised money for a field trip. Students practiced executive functioning and organizational skills while planning the event.
- An open house for families, teachers, and administrators included student presentations and a tour of the classroom.
- The South Shore Housing Authority provided a training for parents, students, teachers, and administrators where housing options were discussed in detail.
- New job sites were established at Papa Gino's and Bobby's Auto Detailing.
- A student was supported during the college application process including: placement testing, course selection, and campus familiarity in preparation for the 2017/2018 school year at a local college.

Summer Work and Learning

Program Enhancements

- A new BASIC (Balance, Agility, Strength & Individual Competence) approach was introduced into all health, fitness, and recreation activities.
- New job sites were utilized within walking distance of Rogers Middle School.
- A student-centered highlight video was produced for all stakeholders of the collaborative.
- New job sites were established, including: Old Navy, 99 Restaurants, Savers, Rogers Middle School, and Rockland Athletic Supplies.
- A rock garden at Rogers Middle School was designed and built.
- A video of the summer program highlights was made available on the summer program’s website.
Therapy Services

Program Enhancements

- The OT’s and PT’s enhanced the contextual persistence of evaluations with the use of the OT and PT Teacher Report of Function and Participation that was developed last year. This improves decision making and goal setting.

- The OT’s and PT’s continue to develop a webpage for parent-teacher information about therapy provided in schools and tips for home activities.

- The speech therapists continue to enhance a systematic approach to core vocabulary development and increase continuity of language systems between classrooms.

- The speech therapists developed a programmatic guideline for use of communication devices for home-school messages.

- The therapy staff covered assorted therapy needs in multiple districts during the summer of 2016 and the school year, including: OT summer coverage in Scituate and Hingham; PT summer coverage in Scituate; and school year FMLA coverage for the Rockland OT, NRC OT, NRC COTA, and Scituate OT (24.5 hrs./week full year).

- The therapy staff used OneDrive for data sharing and team notes. They also continued to use Schoology to post curriculum/resources to enhance therapists’ participation in the curriculum, improve behavior management, and increase collaboration in NRC programs.

- Job description revisions were completed for OT, PT, and SLP.

- NRC therapists supervised university students who completed fieldwork experiences, including: three OT students from Tufts University, one student from Worcester State University, and two PT experiences.

Behavior Consult and Educational Services (BCES)

Program Enhancements

- The BCBA staff provided one initial and five recertification Quality Behavioral Solutions (QBS) Safety Care trainings for a total of 48 staff.

- The BCBA staff provided mentoring hours to three staff members that are pursuing BCBA certification.

- Two staff members completed BCBA coursework, supervision, and are in the process of certification.

- Transportation staff completed training regarding positive behavior interventions and supports.
Objective 2: Offer a variety of quality professional development opportunities to general and special education teachers and administrators, and related service providers

Professional Development Program Offerings

A wide variety of professional development was scheduled during FY17 from workshops through graduate-level courses. Major initiatives included educational leadership and evaluation, curriculum content and pedagogy, behavior management, instructional technology integration, mental health, and safe schools. A total of 1,095 educators participated in one or more training sessions. A total of 347 hours of instruction were provided, which included over 87 individual sessions. This calculates to a total of 7,498 hours of training. In addition, the behavior and education consultation education (BCES) staff provided training to 97 staff, and assistive technology consultation was provided to 95 staff across multiple districts.

Administration, Leadership, & Evaluation

- Administrative Seminar: Legal Issues Update and Characteristics of High Performing Digital Learning Environments
- Educator Evaluation Mandated Training
- Marshall Memo Group

Instructional Strategies, Pedagogy & Curriculum

- Responsive Classroom Course
- Focus on Early Literacy: An Integrated Approach to Teaching and Learning (*funded through ESE Grant*)
- Job-Alike Study Group: Reading, ELA, and Writing in Elementary Grades

Special Education

- Introduction to Executive Function Skills: Addressing the Challenges of Written Expression, Time Management, and Homework
- Differentiating Instruction in the Inclusive Classroom
- Differentiating Instruction in the Inclusive Classroom: Train-the–Trainer
- Working the Core

English Language Learning

(*some funded through Title III Grant*)

- Introduction to WIDA ELD Standards
- Building Academic Language and Competencies of ELLs in Non-core, Elective, and Specialty Content Courses
- Overview of Next Generation ESL Model Curriculum Units – for ELL Teachers
- RETELL – Teacher SEI Endorsement Course

Behavior Management

- Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) – Initial Certification and Refresher Certification
- Safety Care Behavioral Safety Specialist Training
- Responsive Classroom: Responding to Misbehavior

Mental Health & Wellness

(*most funded with Elementary Counseling Grant*)

- Helping Traumatized Children Learn
- Trauma Sensitive Classroom
- Impact of Trauma on Learning
- Communicating with Parents
- The Opioid Epidemic and its Impact on Students in Grades K–6
- Tools for Responding to Social Emotional Behaviors in the Classroom: How do we build a strong Tier–1 foundation?
- Suicide Prevention and Postvention
- Mental Health First Aid
- CPR and First Aid

Instructional Technology Integration

(*see list on the next page*)
Section 4: Progress Toward Achieving NRC’s Purpose and Objectives

**Instructional Technology Integration Specialist**

North River continued offering the support and services of an instructional technology integration specialist whose services were tailored to match the needs of participating districts.

**Job-Alike:** The district technology directors met during the year. In addition, some meetings were scheduled to bring the technology directors, technology teachers, and library/media specialists together to discuss common topics, including *Implementing the New Digital Learning (DL) & Computer Science (CS) Standards.*

**Professional Development:** A variety of professional development sessions were provided which included a mixture of full-day and hybrid multi-week sessions. In the hybrid sessions, participating teachers joined a weekly online session in the evening using Google Hangout; they completed several weekly online assignments using a learning management system.

Topics included:
- Google Camp
- Flipping Your Classroom
- Google Classroom
- Google Apps in Education
- Digital Storytelling
- Technology Tools for Formative Assessment
- Implementing the New Digital Learning (DL) & Computer Science (CS) Standards

In addition to providing technology training offered to several districts, focused trainings were also provided to districts as requested during staff professional development days for teachers and additional times for administrative staff.

**Objective 3: Provide programs and services in a cost-effective manner**

**Savings by NRC Programs Compared to Others**

The chart below shows the savings by program to all districts by using North River Collaborative programs compared to other programs for which comparable rates were available. A discussion of how the savings were determined for each program begins on page 16 through page 21. For the analysis represented below, the amount saved per student or per hour was multiplied by the number of students served or hours contracted to determine the total savings for each collaborative program. The total savings from North River Collaborative programs is $2,396,618.

![FY17 Savings by NRC Programs](chart.png)
Section 4: Progress Toward Achieving NRC’s Purpose and Objectives

**Program Savings by Member District**

The chart below shows the savings to member districts by using North River Collaborative programs compared to other programs for which comparable rates were available. A discussion of how the savings were determined for each program begins on page 16 through page 21. For the analysis represented below, the amount saved per student or per hour, was multiplied by the number of students enrolled or hours contracted by each district, to determine the total savings for each member district. The total savings for all member districts is $999,053.

![Chart showing program savings by member district](image-url)
**Objective 4: Explore and pursue grant and other funding to support identified needs of the districts**

The following chart details the grant funding awarded to by North River Collaborative on behalf of school districts in FY15-FY17. Please see specific details of these grants on pages 14-15.

### Funded Grants and Contracts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grants on Behalf of Districts:</th>
<th>FY15</th>
<th>FY16</th>
<th>FY17</th>
<th>Grant continues through</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recovery High School (Independence Academy)</td>
<td>$500,000</td>
<td>$640,000</td>
<td>$546,149</td>
<td>June 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DSAC</td>
<td>$59,900</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>annual</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family Network</td>
<td>$46,364</td>
<td>$46,364</td>
<td>$37,000</td>
<td>June 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title III Consortium Grant</td>
<td>$36,078</td>
<td>$61,305</td>
<td>$39,422</td>
<td>annual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Literacy Grant</td>
<td>$115,067</td>
<td>$349,668</td>
<td>$169,680</td>
<td>June 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>DDM Leadership Grant</td>
<td>$29,999</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>June 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Behavioral Health Initiative Grant</td>
<td>$366,605</td>
<td>$364,661</td>
<td>$391,147</td>
<td>August 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Grants for Districts</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,189,942</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,547,927</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,256,494</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grants to support NRC programs:</th>
<th>FY15</th>
<th>FY16</th>
<th>FY17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Special Ed Program Grant</td>
<td>$1,630</td>
<td>$1,060</td>
<td>$2,194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass Mechanics</td>
<td>$5,375</td>
<td>$31,270</td>
<td>$3,417</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DESE Nutrition Grant</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$6,620</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Grants for NRC</strong></td>
<td><strong>$7,005</strong></td>
<td><strong>$38,950</strong></td>
<td><strong>$5,611</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Grants</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,196,947</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,586,877</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,262,105</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Objective 5: Offer cooperative programs and/or services to help districts maximize cost efficiency and program effectiveness through a collaborative effort**

The North River Collaborative provides a variety of cooperative programs to support low-incidence needs of students including: English Learners, behavioral health, and substance abuse. North River Collaborative provides ELL and social work services in member and non-member school districts that allow students to remain in their local community schools while receiving essential services to enhance access to the curriculum. Independence Academy is an alternative setting for students with diagnosed substance abuse disorders, which works closely with school districts to align curriculum with that of sending districts to allow students to transition back to local schools when appropriate.

The North River Collaborative also provides cooperative services to school districts including instructional technology integration consultation, Municipal Medicaid reimbursement, and special education transportation.

Each one of these programs strives for continuous improvement in meeting student or district needs. This section includes a discussion of the progress of North River Collaborative through program enhancements made throughout the school year.
English Language Learners (ELL)

Program Enhancements

- A student progress report based on WIDA was updated and improved.
- The Title III grant provided funding for tutoring, professional development, and literacy materials. The grant also supported implementation of 681 hours of two 10-week literacy playgroups for young children and parents for whom English is not their first language, and a 14-hour series of adult English classes to facilitate English literacy skills of the parents of students in participating districts.
- The ELL teachers assisted several districts to compile documentation to complete CPR reports, including the revision of procedures and forms.
- Teachers continued to improve alignment of ELL curriculum with building-based grade-level curricula by increasing ELL teacher participation in classrooms, faculty meetings, and curriculum review committees.
- Title III Consortium members met target growth percentiles (AMAO’s) on state mandated ACCESS testing and target proficiency levels of English Language Learners.

Independence Academy

Program Enhancements

- During FY17, Independence Academy enrolled 28 new students and enrolled 44 students throughout the year (16 students returned from last year).
- Five seniors graduated from Independence Academy this year and one student returned to their sending district at the end of last year to graduate with their class this year.
- For the third straight year, we served over 20 students from surrounding districts in our after-school program (PASS Program) for students who have been suspended from school for drug-related offenses or who have been identified as “high-risk” by their district.
- Independence Academy applied for and was awarded additional funding through the Massachusetts Department of Public Health to provide after school programming, transportation, and other social events and activities for students.
- Independence Academy hosted a legislative breakfast for state legislators and community leaders in support of legislation that was written providing reimbursement to school districts for transportation costs associated with getting students to and from recovery high schools. Students, families, and IA staff presented testimony to the Joint Committee on Education in support of that bill.
- IA students continue to be utilized as resources for many area school districts. IA students spoke at numerous schools including Tabor Academy, Stonehill College, Rising Tide Charter School, and Mashpee Middle/Senior High School this year. Additionally, students continue to provide outreach services to the youth stabilization/detox facility run through HighPoint Treatment Centers.
- Our recovery counselor worked with the Brockton Public Schools to provide substance use education to students who had been suspended from school.
- The IA staff received training through MaeBright in order to evaluate and improve our services to LGBTQ youth.
- The IA staff met monthly with a trauma consultant to continue working towards being a trauma-informed and trauma-sensitive school.
- Over the summer, we took students camping, to the beach, hiking, kayaking, rock climbing, and to a ropes course as part of our efforts to expose students social, substance-free activities.
- Independence Academy hosted an event, “Coffee with a Cause” which highlighted the self-expressive, artistic, and wellness activities that students engage in here to help them in their...
Section 4: Progress Toward Achieving NRC’s Purpose and Objectives

recovery. It was a “town hall” style event with resource tables, guest speakers, live student and staff performances and refreshments. The event was open to the public.

- IA worked closely with Health Imperatives (DPH) and the students completed a 6-week workshop program on adolescent sexual health.
- This year, IA hosted two graduate level interns (one clinical and one instructional) as well as three undergraduate interns. The interns were from Lesley University, Bridgewater State University, Stonehill College, Massasoit Community College, and Eastern Nazarene College.
- IA partnered with the West Bridgewater Junior/Senior High School to establish a “transition model” for our students to return to a “traditional” high school setting. A hybrid schedule was created for one IA student to attend IA in the morning and then commute over to West Bridgewater to take two elective courses.

NRC Family Network

Program Enhancements

- Two literacy-focused playgroups were offered for families with young children who speak English as a second language.
- Five "PJ Story Time & More" literacy hours were restored for children ages two-to-five.
- The “Let’s Get Messy” art program was offered.

Social Work Internship Program

Program Enhancements

- For 2016-2017, The MSW Intern Program placed 15 interns across three districts within 13 schools serving students in grades K-12.
- The program was successfully introduced to one new school in West Bridgewater providing for a rich experience within a grade four through six setting. In addition, the program continued to expand at the middle school level by providing four internships within these busy and challenging settings.
- The program focus was on the integration of classroom learning into the field to include the exploration of the social worker’s role, engagement, assessment, intervention, and evaluation, while developing solid ethical practice skills and boundaries and the application of critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgements.
- MSW interns received a total of 354 referrals for individual and group counseling services – an average of 24 referrals per intern, which is a slight increase from last year.
- Eighty-two percent of referrals were made for general education students, an increase from 69% for the previous year.
- The number of referrals for students for crisis and adjustment issues increased from 165 referrals to 265, which is a 60% increase from last year. We also saw a large increase in requests to assist students in need of academic and organizational support.
- In total, the interns provided 2,500 documented individual, group, in-class and whole classroom interventions; 272 observations for assessment purposes; and 1,569 parent, teacher and, outside collateral contacts. Collateral contacts increased and included coordination and consultation with outpatient therapists, therapeutic mentors, and DCF caseworkers.
- Interns continue to have positive learning experiences within our schools while responding to the social-emotional and mental health needs of students. They provide meaningful and effective therapeutic relationships and a variety of psychological factors, with a goal of increasing self-awareness, facilitating growth and change, and improving problem solving skills. Interns engage with parents, teachers, and outside providers as part of their systemic perspective and work collaboratively to best serve the needs of the students.
Municipal Medicaid Reimbursement

The North River Collaborative coordinates the School-Based Municipal Medicaid Reimbursement Program for 18 member and many non-member school districts. Since the collaborative began providing this service in 1994, more than $28 million has been returned to the participating cities and towns. In FY17, approximately $1.5 million dollars were returned to 18 districts.

The North River Collaborative uses an internet-based Medicaid billing enhancement that reduces the burden on districts’ administrative and direct care staff, and provides the potential to increase Medicaid reimbursement. The software allows easy access for direct care providers to assess student history and keep up-to-date with student caseloads. Additionally, administrative staff can monitor services and ensure reimbursement is maximized.

The North River Collaborative:
- Coordinates enrollment agreements
- Identifies eligible students
- Helps obtain parental permission
- Enters services provided by private facilities
- Submits electronic claims
- Reconciles paid and unpaid claims
- Verifies amounts paid to towns
- Trains and works closely with district staff
- Ensures program compliance

Southeast Transportation Network

Program Enhancements

- The network provided special education transportation to about 100 in-and-out of district students in the Stoughton Public Schools.
- The network provided all out-of-district special education transportation for West Bridgewater.
- The transportation administrators increased and enhanced road observations of the transportation program.
- The North River Collaborative included monitoring cameras in select vans (video/audio) and implemented a system for replacing aging vehicles.
- The North River Collaborative purchased 15 new 7D vehicles in FY17.