North River Collaborative
2018 Annual Report

North River Collaborative
Stephen Donovan, Ed.D.
Executive Director
198 Spring Street, Rockland, MA 02370
781-878-6056
www.northrivercollaborative.org
December 2018
Intentionally left bank.
November 30, 2018

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

As the Executive Director of the North River Collaborative (NRC), I am delighted to present to you the 2018 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, I would like thank Paul Zinni, Superintendent of Avon Public School Schools, and Ruth Gilbert-Whitner, Superintendent of the Whitman-Hanson Regional School District, for their dedicated service as Board members to the North River Collaborative and wish them well in their future endeavors.

Sincerely,

Stephen Donovan, Ed.D.
Executive Director

North River Collaborative
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Section 1: Governance and General Information

The North River Collaborative (NRC) is governed by the superintendents of the member districts: Abington, Avon, Bridgewater-Raynham, East Bridgewater, Hanover, Rockland, Stoughton, West Bridgewater, and Whitman-Hanson. Each member district annually appoints its superintendent of schools to form the NRC Board who is vested with the authority given it by Chapter 40, Section 4E of the General Laws, and all acts amendatory or supplementary thereof, to take necessary action to oversee the operation of the collaborative. In addition, there are regular advisory meetings of the assistant superintendents/special education directors and the 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 2017–2018 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 has been comprised of the superintendents of the member districts for the first time.

Board of Directors

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

Special Needs Advisory Committee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abington</th>
<th>Avon</th>
<th>Bridgewater-Raynham</th>
<th>East Bridgewater</th>
<th>Hanover</th>
<th>Rockland</th>
<th>Stoughton</th>
<th>West Bridgewater</th>
<th>Whitman-Hanson</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dympna Thomas</td>
<td>Christine Godino</td>
<td>Carla Thomas</td>
<td>James Robbins</td>
<td>Joan Woodward</td>
<td>Linda Maniglia</td>
<td>Heather Tucker</td>
<td>Cory Mikolazyk</td>
<td>Kyle Riley</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Curriculum Coordinators Committee

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

North River Collaborative Administrative Team

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abington</th>
<th>Avon</th>
<th>Bridgewater-Raynham</th>
<th>East Bridgewater</th>
<th>Hanover</th>
<th>Rockland</th>
<th>Stoughton</th>
<th>West Bridgewater</th>
<th>Whitman-Hanson</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>North River School</td>
<td></td>
<td>Community-Based Vocational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Beth Litchfield - Social Work Internship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ryan Morgan - Independence Academy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Annie Robinson - OT/PT Supervisor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kate Stevens - Learning Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ann Terrill - Transportation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></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, NRC 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.
Goal 4: To ensure the financial stability and resources necessary for the continuation and development of programs, services, facilities, and resources.
Goal 5: To ensure that policies and procedures are updated and instituted to help ensure that the collaborative operates efficiently.
Section 1: Governance and General Information

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>42</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Sites</th>
<th>Vocational Sites (for CBVS &amp; NRS)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 – East Bridgewater (2), West Bridgewater (1), Whitman-Hanson (2), and NRC sites (3)</td>
<td>18 – Abington, Brockton, East Bridgewater, Hanover, Marshfield, Pembroke, Rockland, and Weymouth.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Service Locations (There may be multiple services per location.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Districts</th>
<th>BCES</th>
<th>Social Work</th>
<th>BHI</th>
<th>Therapy &amp; ELL</th>
<th>Vision Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abington</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avon</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridgewater-Raynham</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Bridgewater</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanover</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rockland</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stoughton</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Bridgewater</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitman-Hanson</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North River School</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-member Districts</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Staff Demographics (June 30 count)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FY14</th>
<th>FY15</th>
<th>FY16</th>
<th>FY17</th>
<th>FY18</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administrators/Coordinators</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>26.72</td>
<td>30.2</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>31.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational Therapists</td>
<td>10.88</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Therapists</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech Therapists</td>
<td>4.34</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aides</td>
<td>14.08</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior Consultation (combined)</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology Staff</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Coaches</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>6.58</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselors/Social Workers, School Psychologist (combined)</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurses</td>
<td>5.86</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Assistants</td>
<td>12.41</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>11.58</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitors</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>14.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drivers</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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Custodian</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Staff (FTE)</td>
<td>184.79</td>
<td>196.65</td>
<td>207.63</td>
<td>205.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Serving Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students Served in NRC Programs (FTE)*</th>
<th>FY16</th>
<th>FY17</th>
<th>FY18</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multiple Disabilities</td>
<td>25.</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autism/developmental Disabilities</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Disabilities</td>
<td>51.1</td>
<td>48.2</td>
<td>48.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance Abuse and Dependence</td>
<td>17.65</td>
<td>44.0</td>
<td>53.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>116.5</strong></td>
<td><strong>136.2</strong></td>
<td><strong>140.9</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students Served in NRC Services:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community-Based Vocational</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Language Learners</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Therapies</td>
<td>498</td>
<td>497</td>
<td>532</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Work Interns</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>458</td>
<td>491</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Health Initiative</td>
<td>622</td>
<td>622</td>
<td>BHI*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>479</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Sub-Total **</td>
<td><strong>2,147</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,211</strong></td>
<td><strong>1668+</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Total **</td>
<td><strong>2,263.5</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,330.2</strong></td>
<td><strong>1808.9+</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE:** The totals & subtotals may include a duplicated headcount due to students participating in multiple services.

+ **NOTE:** FY18 totals do not include BHI students served in FY18, as in previous years.

### Serving Districts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Serving Districts</th>
<th>FY16</th>
<th>FY17</th>
<th>FY18</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal Medicaid</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant Writing</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Health</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development (PD)</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Serving District Staff

| Professional Development – Total Participants | 1,626 | 1,095 | 1,005 |
| Professional Development – Total NRC-PD Sessions PD | 111 sessions | 87 sessions | 107 sessions |
| Professional Development – Class Hours Offered PD | 532 hours | 347 hours | 445 hours |
| Professional Development – Total Training Hours PD | 11,624 hours | 7,498 hours | 8,769 hours |

| Behavioral Health Training (educators) | 480 | 475 | BHI* |
| Behavior and Education Consultation (educators) | 105 | 97 | 38 |
| Assistive Technology Consultation (educators) | 92 | 95 | 88 |

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

### Serving Families

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Serving Families</th>
<th>FY16</th>
<th>FY17</th>
<th>FY18</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Behavior and Education Consult (direct service &amp; consults)</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Support Group</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Work Program – families served</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>354</td>
<td>364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Health Initiative – consultations to families</td>
<td>2,030</td>
<td>1426</td>
<td>BHI*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** BHI* These BHI metrics were not collected during the FY18 school year. The Behavioral Health Initiative Grant ended in June 2017. In its place the Behavioral Health Initiative continued to provide school social workers, professional development, and consultations to member and non-member districts on a fee basis.
Section 1: Governance and General Information

Financial Information

**FY18 Revenue: $15,050,802**

- Transportation $4,888,898 (32%)
- Special Ed Programs $5,291,416 (35%)
- Medicaid, Interest & Donations $149,999 (1%)
- Therapy $1,271,170 (9%)
- Behavioral Consult $268,254 (2%)
- ELL $402,070 (3%)
- Prof Dev $162,883 (1%)
- District Staff $205,252 (1%)
- Grants & Special Revenue $1,247,762
- Pension Benefits $1,163,098 (8%)

**FY18 Expenses: $14,860,791**

- Instruction $6,203,251 (42%)
- Other Educational Services $3,478,162 (23%)
- Debt Service $619,629 (4%)
- Operations and Maintenance $515,487 (3%)
- Taxes/Fringe & Rent $2,745,670 (19%)
- Administration $1,298,592 (9%)
- Capital Outlay $0 (0%)
- Pension Benefits $1,205,252 (1%)
- Prof Dev $162,883 (1%)
- District Staff $205,252 (1%)
- Grants & Special Revenue $1,247,762
- Medicaid, Interest & Donations $149,999 (1%)

FY18 Revenue: $15,050,802

FY18 Expenses: $14,860,791
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. Courses are aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and instruction takes place in small group settings. 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. The 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, interactive whiteboards, 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 allow 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 allow 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, Primary)** and **Learning Center Autism & Developmental Disabilities (Primary)**
  Maquan Elementary School (Rooms 102, 106, 108),
  38 School Street, Hanson, MA 02341
  Phone: 781/618-7290

- **Learning Center Multiple Disabilities (Middle)**
  Hanson Middle School
  111 Liberty Street, Hanson, MA 02341
  Phone: 781/618-7575

- **Learning Center Multiple Disabilities (Middle/High School)**
  **Learning Center Autism & Developmental Disabilities (Elementary)**
  Gordon Mitchell Middle School (Room 310, 309),
  435 Central Street, East Bridgewater, MA 02333
  Phone: 508/378-0488

- **Learning Center Autism & Developmental Disabilities Middle School**
  **Learning Center Autism & Developmental Disabilities High School**
  East Bridgewater High School (Room 337, Room 129),
  43 Plymouth Street, East Bridgewater, MA 02333
  Phone: 508/378-8214 x1290 and x1337

- **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 strive 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 sixth full academic year in 2018, Independence Academy has enrolled over 150 students from over 40 different communities. Since opening in January 2012, the school has now helped more than 50 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 from 16–22 years old with unique learning styles who need vocational and transitional training. For many, this is their first introduction to the world of work. Students are matched to community-based worksites for on-the-job training with supervision from a job coach one or more days per week. The job coach’s role is to teach transferable skills which can be applied in a variety of settings as well to develop strategies in tandem with students in site specific situations. As students become proficient at community-based sites, responsibilities are increased to match their progress. In-depth vocational assessments are provided for each student by the program coordinator. This program supports students who wish to transition to community college/technical program, work, and/or adult services. Transportation to and from work sites 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, recreational activities, and retail.

Community-Based Vocational Services
Frolio School, 1071 Washington Street, Abington MA 02351
Phone: 781/871-1589
Moira Leon – Coordinator
Section 2: Programs and Services

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 select 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 horticulture, 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) principles and strategies including discrete trial instruction (DTI) and incidental teaching within the natural environment. 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 incidental 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
Section 2: Programs and Services

Therapy Services

The North River Collaborative provides occupational, physical, and speech therapy services within 35 public school buildings in eleven 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 that 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 ongoing professional development activities to enhance knowledge and maintain an evidence-based practice. Therapists provide each student with service guided by the current developments in therapeutic, rehabilitative, and educational research.

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/guardians, 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
Section 2: Programs and Services

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, lessons, and consultations with parents and teachers. These services enhance teacher effectiveness related to social/emotional development of children and facilitate a functional “bridge” relationship between home and school. The interns attend Bridgewater State University, Boston University, Simmons University, and Boston College.

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

Behavioral Health Initiative

The North River Collaborative Behavioral Health Initiative offers on-site behavioral health consultation to districts, professional development on social and emotional learning strategies, and facilitates development of student support teams. Contracted school social workers and wrap-around service support for students and their families are also available to districts. During FY18, through ESE grant funding, NRC offered a Graduate-level course titled “Integrating Social and Emotional Learning into Tier One Instruction.” Teams of school leaders from eight districts each established a school-wide tiered system of behavioral interventions and supports which are based on current research on child development and the impact of trauma on learning. Participants developed implementation plans for sharing with others and building capacity in their districts.

Behavioral Health Initiative
The Almshouse, 198 Spring Street, Rockland, MA  02370
Phone: 781/878-6056 (Ext. 301)
Deni Howley – Coordinator
Section 2: Programs and Services

**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. ELL teachers provide 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, ELL teachers coordinate 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 Collaborative’s 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 classroom teachers 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

**Clinical Evaluation Services**

The North River Collaborative’s school psychologist is available to complete psycho-educational evaluations for students enrolled at the North River School or in public school districts upon request.

**Municipal Medicaid Reimbursement**

School-based Medicaid billing has become a way for cities and towns to recoup dollars for funds 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 recordkeeping required by districts, towns, and the Office of Medicaid. An annual cost report reconciles 12 months of direct service and administrative 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
Section 2: Programs and Services

Professional Development

NRC 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 the Massachusetts Department of Secondary and Elementary Education.

Professional development offerings for the 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 the 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 served 479 students in 31 school districts, most 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, the 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 for all staff on topics such as: disability awareness, first aid/CPR, behavior management, defensive driving, securing wheelchairs, bus evacuation, and winter driving.

Southeast Transportation Network
The Almshouse, 198 Spring Street, Rockland, MA 02370
Beaver Brook School, One Ralph Hamlin Way, Abington, MA 02351
Jones School, 137 Walnut Street, Stoughton, MA 02072
Phone: 781/878-6056 (Ext. 160)
Ann Terrill – Coordinator
Section 3: 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. The North River Collaborative has been successful in achieving this purpose during FY18 as outlined below.

**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**

- **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 programs and services for students with low-incidence disabilities in the least restrictive environment including: social-emotional, multiple disabilities, autism, English learners, behavioral health, and substance abuse.

- The Learning Center programs are provided in age-appropriate public school buildings with inclusion opportunities provided.
- The 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.
- 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.
Section 3: Progress Toward Achieving NRC’s Purpose and Objectives

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

- The 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; vision services including orientation and mobility, teacher of the visually impaired, Braille-trained aides; ELL; and social work services.

- The North River Collaborative also provides cooperative services to school districts including Municipal Medicaid reimbursement and special education transportation.

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

### NRC Programs

#### North River School

**Program Enhancements**

- Twelve (12) students earned their high school diploma from nine different school districts.
- Fifteen (15) interim alternative educational settings (IAES) were completed.
- On-going professional development was provided to teachers, counselors, vocational instructors, and the nurse in project-based learning, student assessment, and topics related to behavioral health and social-emotional learning.
- The North River School continues as a community eligibility program allowing all students to receive free breakfast and lunch through the DESE National School Lunch Program.
- A therapeutic process intervention was implemented to reduce suspensions for behaviors at school.
- A successful DESE Coordinated Program Review was completed with no findings for correction.
- The North River School students continue to use Google Expeditions to take them on virtual field trips all over the world including Egypt and the pyramids.
- A Lulzbot Taz 6 3-D Printer was purchased for the graphic arts program through a grant from the Mass Mechanics Association.
- A student support team was developed to comprehensively address social-emotional needs of students.
Section 3: Progress Toward Achieving NRC’s Purpose and Objectives

- A new schedule was implemented in December 2017 to enhance student success and participation. The schedule changed from one-week academic/one-week vocational to a daily alternating academic/vocational schedule.
- Curriculum course descriptions were updated for all courses. Course guides and curriculum maps are being developed.

![Image](image1)

**Learning Centers**

**Program Enhancements**

- Teachers evaluated current curriculum and identified commercially available curriculum, appropriate for students in the Learning Center programs. As a result of this research, several new curriculum programs were purchased and will be fully implemented during the 2018-2019 school year, including:
  - Equals Mathematics (Ablenet) – a pre-readiness math curriculum for students at any age who need the most basic starting point (e.g., attending to instruction, cause and effect, and everyday patterns); foundational math skills (e.g., numbers and operations); problem solving – making connections in meaningful ways
  - Equals STEM Digital Edition – e-library developed to support literacy instruction using non-fiction topics in math and science; designed for students with mild to severe disabilities; connects math and science concepts with real-life math and science examples
  - Accessible Literacy Learning Program (Mayer Johnson) – specially designed to meet the needs of students who require AAC, as well as students with complex communication and physical access challenges
  - The Brigance Assessment was also updated to include the Brigance Transition Assessment.

- Learning Center teachers and therapy staff transitioned to a new monthly curriculum format. The new format includes the Massachusetts Curriculum Standards that are addressed within each activity period and allows OT/PT/SLP/Vision to indicate which skill blocks they provide these services. The curriculum maps were made accessible on SharePoint for team members to collaborate on monthly thematic units based on the Unique Learning System curriculum.

- In addition to Music therapy added to Learning Center classrooms, a swimming program was also introduced. Learning Center students had the opportunity to participate in a swimming program offered through the Swim with a Special Child Program at the William Connell Pool in Weymouth. The SWASC program is designed for students to receive group swim instruction and also work independently with a 1:1 assigned volunteer. Learning Center classrooms participated on a weekly rotating basis.
Section 3: Progress Toward Achieving NRC’s Purpose and Objectives

- Professional development trainings included: Brittany Lehane, Speech and Language Pathologist, who presented the topic “Social Skills in Action.” A Social Skills training curriculum that correlated to the training was purchased and implemented in the Learning Center Autism High School program at West Bridgewater High School. Learning Center teachers had the opportunity to participate in professional development training provided by Joni Magee on the topic “Intersections & Instruction for English & Special Needs Learners.” The training included specific considerations for English learners who have a disability or are suspected of having a disability, and interventions that emphasize active learning and language development.

- In addition to a 10-passenger van supplied for the Learning Center Autism High School classroom located at West Bridgewater High School, a second passenger van was provided for the Learning Center Autism High School program located at East Bridgewater High School. Staff, trained in Safety Care and in possession of a 7D license, facilitated student participation in a variety of community vocational experiences, including Crown Automotive, PetSmart, Savers, Papa Gino’s, Stone Forge Restaurant, and Meals on Wheels. Students at East Bridgewater High School had the opportunity to provide a laundry service, with delivery, to the Learning Center classrooms, as well as recycling at the NRC Administrative Office in Rockland.
Independence Academy

Program Enhancements

- During FY18, Independence Academy enrolled 34 new students and a total of 53 students throughout the year (19 students returned from the previous year).
- Eight seniors graduated from Independence Academy this year and two students returned to their sending district during the year to graduate with their class at their sending high school.
- IA continued to serve 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 worked closely with state legislators for increased support for recovery high schools. Students, families, and IA staff presented testimony at the Massachusetts State House at a legislative event for senators and representatives.
- IA students continued to be 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.
- UMass Boston partnered with IA to run a six-week Koru Yoga/Mindfulness workshop.
- The IA staff continued to meet monthly with a trauma consultant to continue working towards being a trauma-informed school.
- Over the summer, students went camping, to the beach, hiking, kayaking, rock climbing, and to a ropes course as part of IA’s efforts to expose students to social and substance-free activities.
- Independence Academy hosted its second annual, “Coffee with a Cause” event which highlighted the self-expressive, artistic, and wellness activities that students engage in at IA to help them in their recovery. The “storytelling” style event had 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.
Community-Based Vocational

Program Enhancements

- Students toured a local bank and obtained debit cards as a budgeting exercise.
- Four Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission Counselors, one from each district presented information related to transition to CBV students and families on four separate occasions.
- Two Department of Developmental Service Coordinators, one from each district, presented information related to transition to CBV students and families on two separate occasions.
- Old Navy sponsored CBV’s field trip to the New England Aquarium. All students traveled into Boston utilizing the MBTA transit system, watched the Panda movie at the IMAX Theater, enjoyed the Aquarium, and had lunch as part of the experience.
- Students obtained REAL ID’s at the Registry of Motor Vehicles.
- One student was competitively employed within his community.
- One student started classes at Massasoit Community College.
- Housing Solutions provided training for parents and students where housing options were discussed in detail.
- Resume development software was purchased for all students.
- Work Based Learning Plans were created for all CBV students; the documentation was provided in October and in June.
- Five new job sites were developed: Marshfield Animal Shelter, Boston Bowl in Hanover, Marshfield Subway, Wingate in Kingston, and Talking Information Center in Marshfield.

Therapy Services

Program Enhancements

- The OTs and PTs enhanced the contextual/school-based relevance of evaluations with the use of the *OT and PT Teacher Report of Function and Participation*. This improves decision making throughout the evaluative and goal setting process.
- The OTs and PTs continued to edit a webpage link for parent-teacher information regarding therapy provided in schools and tips for home/community activities.
- The physical therapists developed a “Physical Therapy in the School Setting” document to share with parents and school staff.
- The speech therapists implemented a previously developed programmatic guideline for use of communication devices for home-school messages. They provided parents with the “Promoting Student Communication through Daily Messages” handout.
- The therapy staff enhanced their use of SharePoint as a collaborative tool to facilitate data sharing and team notes in real time as well as to post curriculum resources, improve behavior management, and increase collaboration in NRC programs.
- NRC therapists supervised university students who completed fieldwork experiences, including: three OT students [UNH (2), Springfield College (1)] and one SLP student (BSU).
- Software was updated including the purchase of Clicker-7, Clicker Sentences, and Snap Type.
**Behavior Consult and Educational Services (BCES)**

**Program Enhancements**

- The BCBA staff provided five recertification Quality Behavioral Solutions (QBS) Safety Care trainings for a total of 38 staff.
- The BCBA staff provided mentoring hours to staff members who are pursuing BCBA certification.
- Transportation staff were trained in the area of positive behavior interventions and supports.
- The OneDrive system was setup for classrooms to record and track behavioral data to increase real-time knowledge of issues/trends.

**English Language Learners (ELL)**

**Program Enhancements**

- The Title III grant provided funding for tutoring, transportation of ELL students after tutoring, professional development, curriculum enhancement, work in professional learning communities (PLCs), literacy materials, and a parent/ELL student kick-off or culminating event. Multicultural family nights were conducted by several ELL teachers.
- The ELL teachers assisted several districts in compiling 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.

**Social Work Internship Program**

**Program Enhancements**

During 2017-18, North River’s MSW Intern Program placed 13 interns across 3 districts within 12 schools serving students in grades pre-K-12. The interns provided a trusted, safe place for children to process feelings and issues related to a variety of psychosocial factors while they explored and developed healthy coping strategies and problem-solving skills. This allowed students to succeed in school academically, socially, and behaviorally. Interns engaged and communicated with parents, teachers, and outside providers as part of their systemic perspective while developing treatment plans and collaboratively sharing treatment progress. The MSW interns brought passion, energy, and a strong commitment to their learning while supporting students, families, and school staff to address potential barriers to the learning process.

- The program was successfully introduced to one new school in West Bridgewater providing for a rich clinical social work experience in Grades 1–3. Also, the program successfully transitioned the MSW intern role into the Abington Early Childhood Center for students ages 3–5.
- Interns solidified their role and function within the schools and increased their visibility and presence by responding to the needs of the schools, children, and parents. They provided individual and group counseling, crisis interventions, whole classroom lessons, interventions, and in class assistance designed to meet the social emotional learning needs of students. Interns were active participants in student support team meetings, IEP/504’s, and transition meetings.
- Interns received a total of 364 referrals for individual and group counseling services. This averages to 28 referrals per intern, an increase from last year by 4 referrals per intern.
- A total of 77% of referrals were made on behalf of general education students, a slight decrease from 82% from the year before.
Section 3: Progress Toward Achieving NRC’s Purpose and Objectives

- The interns continued to provide whole classroom presentations, interventions, and lessons and were creative in providing services within classrooms as a result of classroom teacher requests to meet classroom needs and dynamics. Themes included classroom management, behavior, self-awareness, and social awareness. Interns provided 340 whole classroom lessons and interventions this year allowing for additional students to be served. The whole classroom lessons were designed to promote student social-emotional learning skill development and were well supported by classroom teachers. An afterschool group for 8th grade girls was developed and implemented.
- The number of referrals for behavior and anger management doubled to 128 (from 64 referrals) when compared to last year. Referrals for social skills, anxiety, trauma, and academic support/organization skills all increased while referrals for crisis and adjustment decreased from 255 to 151.
- Boys continue to be referred more than girls, with 197 boys referred vs. 167 girls.
- In total, the interns provided 2,670 documented individual, group, in-class, whole classroom and recess lessons/interventions. Interns provided 2,388 indirect services to include observations, data collection, teacher and parent consultations, assessments, meetings, and collaboration with outside providers. This is a 10% increase in interventions and parent/teacher contacts since last year.

**Municipal Medicaid Reimbursement**

The North River Collaborative coordinates the School-Based Municipal Medicaid Reimbursement Program for 18 member and non-member school districts. Since the collaborative began providing this service in 1994, more than **$31 million** has been returned to the participating cities and towns. In FY18, approximately **$1.9 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 to 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 479 students (354 out of the Rockland and Abington Offices and 125 out of the Stoughton Office) in FY18.
**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 FY18 from workshops through graduate-level courses. Major initiatives included educational leadership and evaluation, curriculum content and pedagogy, behavior management, mental health, and safe schools. A total of 1,005 educators participated in one or more training sessions. A total of 445 hours of instruction were provided, which included 107 individual sessions. This calculates to a total of 8,769 hours of training. In addition, the behavior and education consultation education (BCES) staff provided training to 38 staff and the transportation department.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Administration, Leadership, &amp; Evaluation</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Administrative Seminar: Legal Issues for School and District Administrators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Analyzing Teaching for Student Results (ATSR)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Educator Evaluation Mandated Training</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Mentoring New Teachers</td>
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<td>- Marshall Memo Group</td>
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<tr>
<th>Instructional Strategies, Pedagogy &amp; Curriculum</th>
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<tr>
<td>- Content Overview of Physical Science Standards (PS1 – PS4)</td>
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<td>- Keep Calm and Love Fractions</td>
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<tr>
<th>Special Education</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Executive Function Skills to Increase Student Independence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Creating Inclusive Schools and Classrooms While Embracing Co-Teaching and Higher Learning Standards for ALL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Creating Differentiation in Inclusive Classrooms Using Current Strategies, Universal Design for Learning, and Technology</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English Language Learning (some funded through Title III Grant)</th>
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<tr>
<td>- Introduction to WIDA ELD Standards in MA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Supporting English Learners in Specialty Subjects and Support Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Intersections &amp; Instruction for English &amp; Special Needs Learners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Development of ESL Model Curriculum Units – PLC for ELL Teachers</td>
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<tr>
<td>- RETELL – Teacher SEI Endorsement Course</td>
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<tr>
<th>Behavior Management</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) – Initial Certification and Refresher Certification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- QBS Safety Care Behavioral Safety Specialist Training</td>
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<tr>
<td>- The Great Paraprofessional: Behavior Management Skills</td>
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<tr>
<th>Mental Health &amp; Wellness</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Social Skills in Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Integrating Social and Emotional Learning into Tier One Instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The Impact of Trauma on Learning – Focus on Middle &amp; High School Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Restorative Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- “I’m Positive I Want to be Happy” Positive Psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Tools for Responding to Social-emotional Behaviors in the Classroom: How do we build a strong Tier–1 foundation?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Calm Classroom</td>
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<tr>
<td>- CPR/AED/First Aid Certification</td>
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<tr>
<th>Instructional Technology Integration</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Google Classroom</td>
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<td>- Google Sites</td>
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</tbody>
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Section 3: Progress Toward Achieving NRC’s Purpose and Objectives

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

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**

![FY18 NRS Day Rate Tuition Comparison](chart1.png)

**Learning Center for Students with Multiple Disabilities**

![Multi Disabilities FY18 Tuition Comparison](chart2.png)
Section 3: Progress Toward Achieving NRC’s Purpose and Objectives

Learning Center for Students with Autism

Independence Academy

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 $149,999 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’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 16 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’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, horticulture, 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: Progress Toward Achieving NRC’s Purpose and Objectives

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 $31 million has been returned to the participating cities and towns. In FY18, approximately $1.9 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. In addition, the Network allows for an opportunity to maximize ridership on vehicles resulting in an economy of scale and a savings to participating districts. 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.

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 4.4 ELL teachers to meet the needs of English Language Learners in 3 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 Massachusetts 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 FY18, a total of 445 hours of training was offered; 19.7% of the hours were supported through grant funding (e.g., ELL/SEI, CommBuys SPED Contract for SEL course).
- High-quality programs are offered that would be cost prohibitive for districts to offer individually. NRC programs allow districts to share the expense and enroll the number of staff they need to send, which helps to control cost.
- Specific needs of local districts are addressed through the design and selection of programs (e.g., mental health, 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.
Section 3: Progress Toward Achieving NRC’s Purpose and Objectives

**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 the North River Collaborative on behalf of school districts in FY16-FY18. Please see specific details of the FY18 grants and their prior-year’s awards.

**Funded Grants and Contracts**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grants on Behalf of Districts:</th>
<th>FY16</th>
<th>FY17</th>
<th>FY18</th>
<th>Grant continues through</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recovery High School (Independence Academy)</td>
<td>$640,000</td>
<td>$546,149</td>
<td>$649,999</td>
<td>June 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>DSAC</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>$80,565</td>
<td>annual</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mass Commission for the Blind</td>
<td>$35,929</td>
<td>$23,096</td>
<td>$19,955</td>
<td>June 2023</td>
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<tr>
<td>Title III Consortium Grant</td>
<td>$61,305</td>
<td>$39,422</td>
<td>$40,071</td>
<td>annual</td>
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<tr>
<td>CommBuys (SPED-SEL)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$21,500</td>
<td>June 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Health Initiative Grant</td>
<td>$364,661</td>
<td>$391,147</td>
<td>$32,895</td>
<td>August 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Grants for Districts</td>
<td>$1,151,895</td>
<td>$1,049,814</td>
<td>$844,985</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Grants to Support NRC Programs:**

| Mass Mechanics | $31,270 | $3,417 | $3,799 | annual |
| Total Grants for NRC | $31,270 | $3,417 | $3,799 | |

**Total Grants** | $1,183,165 | $1,053,231 | $848,784 | |

**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. NRC has spearheaded the procurement of grant and foundation funding through agencies such as the Massachusetts Departments of Public Health, Massachusetts Department of Education, the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind, the Massachusetts Mechanics Charitable Association, and other public/private foundations and organizations. During FY18, the total amount awarded on behalf of districts was **$844,985**. Specific grants include: Recovery High School (Independence Academy), CommBuys SPED Contract, Massachusetts Commission for the Blind, and Title III Consortium grants. Districts received the following grant funded supports and services:

- Transportation and extended day/year programming for students in recovery;
- Professional development in special education & tiered SEL interventions (CommBuys);
- After school/weekend recreational program for students with visual impairment; and
- Tutoring, professional development and parent support for English language learners.