North River Collaborative

2015 Annual Report

North River Collaborative
Joanne Haley Sullivan, Executive Director
198 Spring Street, Rockland, MA 02370
781-878-6056
www.northrivercollaborative.org
December, 2015
November 21, 2015

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

I am pleased to present to you the 2015 Annual Report for North River Collaborative. The report summarizes the highlights of the past school year, a year in which we focused our efforts on our core mission of providing high quality educational cost effective programs and services for students, school 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

In our ongoing effort to provide high quality programs in a cost effective way, North River Collaborative has had a highly successful year with several new initiatives. North River Collaborative has spearheaded the procurement of grant funding for our districts in the amount of $1,239,440. For example, North River Collaborative was awarded an Elementary Counseling Grant which placed 5.2 social workers in schools and provided mental health training for faculty. Also, North River Collaborative was awarded a District Determined Measure Leadership grant that supported districts through an innovative process for sharing of the development of Common Measures of student growth (DDMs). Additionally, North River Collaborative was granted a Title III Consortium grant to support school districts to improve services for English Language Learners. We provided support to Kindergarten classrooms through a Focus on K2 Early Literacy grant.

In our existing programs, North River made substantial gains in the provision of technology in our programs. We have focused professional development for North River School and Independence Academy staff on Project Based Learning and Assessment, 21st Century Skills, and College and Career Readiness. We have expanded enrollment in programs and services due to our reputation for high quality.

North River is a fiscally healthy organization. As you will see in the audited financial statement, the audit was clean and had no concerns. We have a fund balance that is below that allowable by statute, but one that is sufficient to support the collaborative’s needs. We have a Capital Fund to support the North River School and Conference Center.

On behalf of the entire North River Collaborative staff, I would like to thank you. Your support and positive comments keep us moving forward as an organization. It is our privilege to serve our member districts and every student we serve.

Sincerely,

Joanne Haley Sullivan
Executive Director

Serving the public school districts of

Ashington • Avon • Bridgewater • Raynham • East Bridgewater • Hanover • Rockland • West Bridgewater • Whitman-Hanson
Intentionally left blank
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Section 1: Governance and General Information

North River Collaborative is governed by the member school committees of Abington, Avon, Bridgewater-Raynham, East Bridgewater, Hanover, Rockland, West Bridgewater, and Whitman-Hanson. Each school committee has a representative member who serves on the Board of Directors at its monthly meetings. In addition, there are regular advisory meetings of the 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 2013-2014 school year. North River Collaborative is grateful for their service.

**Board of Directors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abington</th>
<th>East Bridgewater</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kathy Bailey</td>
<td>John Geary, Hanover</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathleen O’Reilly</td>
<td>Daniel Biggins, Rockland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan Prewandowski</td>
<td>Ann Ianitelli/Molly Smith, West Bridgewater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heather Graham/Theresa Maltz</td>
<td>Susan McSweeney, Whitman-Hanson, Chairperson</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Superintendents’ Advisory Committee**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abington</th>
<th>West Bridgewater</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peter Schafer</td>
<td>Matthew Ferron, Hanover</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Zinni</td>
<td>John Retchless, Rockland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacqueline Forbes</td>
<td>Patricia Oakley, West Bridgewater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Moretti</td>
<td>Ruth Gilbert-Whitner, Whitman-Hanson</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Special Needs Advisory Committee**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abington</th>
<th>West Bridgewater</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dympna Thomas</td>
<td>Beverly Shea, Hanover</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christine Godino</td>
<td>Linda Maniglia, Rockland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carla Thomas</td>
<td>Hope Hanscom, West Bridgewater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marie Grable</td>
<td>John Queally, Whitman-Hanson</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Curriculum Coordinators’ Committee**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abington</th>
<th>West Bridgewater</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dympna Thomas</td>
<td>Deborah St. Ives, Hanover</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christine Godino</td>
<td>Jan Sheehan, Rockland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derek Swenson</td>
<td>Patricia Oakley, West Bridgewater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Moretti</td>
<td>Ellen Stockdale, Whitman-Hanson</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**North River Collaborative Administrative Team**

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

Vision
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: Provide a continuum of high-quality, educational programs and services in response to identified needs.
Goal 2: To leverage existing, emerging, and innovative technologies to meet the needs of NRC and the districts it serves.
Goal 3: To expand opportunities for cross district collaboration through which resources and expertise can be shared.
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>39</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs/Services</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

Vocational Sites (for CBVS & NRS) 13 – Bridgewater, Brockton, East Bridgewater, Hanover, Marshfield, Pembroke, Raynham, Rockland, Weymouth, and Kingston

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Districts</th>
<th>BCES</th>
<th>Social Wk</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>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Bridgewater</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanover</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rockland</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Bridgewater</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitman-Hanson</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-member Districts</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Staff Demographics (June 30 count)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FY12</th>
<th>FY13</th>
<th>FY14</th>
<th>FY15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administrators/Coordinators</td>
<td>15.27</td>
<td>15.16</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>14.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>29.25</td>
<td>29.73</td>
<td>26.72</td>
<td>30.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational Therapists</td>
<td>10.53</td>
<td>10.83</td>
<td>10.88</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Therapists</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>4.63</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech Therapists</td>
<td>3.88</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>4.34</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aides</td>
<td>14.81</td>
<td>19.01</td>
<td>14.08</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior Consultants: Supervisors</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead Educators</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educators</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology Staff</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>.8</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Coaches</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselors/Social Workers</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.01</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurses</td>
<td>7.28</td>
<td>6.57</td>
<td>5.86</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Assistants</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>13.83</td>
<td>12.41</td>
<td>11.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitors</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drivers</td>
<td>49.0</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>59.7</td>
<td>62.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation &amp; Mobility</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Custodian</td>
<td>.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Staff (FTE)</strong></td>
<td>189.05</td>
<td>192.78</td>
<td>184.79</td>
<td>196.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DESE Licensure</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 1: Governance and General Information

**Serving Students**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students Served in NRC Programs (FTE)*</th>
<th>FY14</th>
<th>FY15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multiple disabilities</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>24.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autism/developmental disabilities</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>22.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional disabilities</td>
<td>53.8</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance Abuse and Dependence</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>118.9</strong></td>
<td><strong>115.1</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students Served in NRC Services:</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Based Vocational</td>
<td>77.7</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Language Learners</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Therapies</td>
<td>688</td>
<td>553</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health Professionals</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>508</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Work Interns</td>
<td>394</td>
<td>444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Health Initiative</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>408</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>361</td>
<td>320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,607.7</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,984</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,726.6</strong></td>
<td><strong>2099</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>FY14</th>
<th>FY15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal Medicaid</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant Writing</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Health</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development (PD)</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Serving District Staff**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional Development – Total Participants</th>
<th>859 educators</th>
<th>982 educators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development – Total NRC-PD Sessions <strong>PD</strong></td>
<td>69 sessions</td>
<td>73 sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development – Class Hours Offered <strong>PD</strong></td>
<td>347 hours</td>
<td>321 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development – Total Training Hours <strong>PD</strong></td>
<td>8,811 hours</td>
<td>7,058 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Health Training – FY15</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>235 educators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior and Education Consultation</td>
<td>103 educators</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistive Technology Consultation</td>
<td>132 educators</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

**Serving Families**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FY14</th>
<th>FY15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family Network</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior and Education Consult (direct service &amp; consults)</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Support Group</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Work Program</td>
<td>394</td>
<td>444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Health Initiative</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>954 sessions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

North River Collaborative
Section 1: Governance and General Information

Financial Information

**FY15 Revenue: $14,323,513**

- **Transportation**: $4,307,093 (30%)
  - *Includes proceeds from loans of $1,170,897*
- **Instruction**: $6,476,218 (47.6%)
- **Other Educational Services**: $2,446,838 (18%)
- **Taxes/Fringe & Rent**: $2,392,348 (17.6%)
- **Grants**: $1,250,804 (8.7%)
- **District Staff**: $146,238 (1%)
- **Prof Dev**: $83,427 (6%)
- **Pension Benefits**: $1,121,104 (8%)
- **Medicaid, Interest & Donation**: $105,356 (0.7%)
- **Special Ed Programs**: $5,276,204 (37%)
- **Therapy**: $1,177,255 (8%)
- **Behavioral Consult**: $442,798 (3%)
- **ELL**: $413,234 (3%)

**FY15 Expenses: $13,601,280***

- **Instruction**: $6,476,218 (47.6%)
- **Other Educational Services**: $2,446,838 (18%)
- **Taxes/Fringe & Rent**: $2,392,348 (17.6%)
- **Grants**: $1,250,804 (8.7%)
- **District Staff**: $146,238 (1%)
- **Prof Dev**: $83,427 (0.6%)
- **Pension Benefits**: $1,121,104 (8%)
- **Medicaid, Interest & Donation**: $105,356 (0.7%)
- **Special Ed Programs**: $5,276,204 (37%)
- **Therapy**: $1,177,255 (8%)
- **Behavioral Consult**: $442,798 (3%)
- **ELL**: $413,234 (3%)

*Excludes refunds to member districts of $200,000.
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
- Teachers of English Language Learners (ELL)
- Family services
- Professional Development
- Collaborative Grant Applications
- Municipal Medicaid Reimbursement
- Transportation services
- General education supports and services
- Clinical Evaluations

The programs/services listed above are not all-inclusive; the Board, acting at the request of the Executive Director and/or Members may consider and approve other programs and 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**

North River School’s DESE 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 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. 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.

North River Middle School provides a caring environment where students can learn in a safe and comfortable setting. The schedule helps students earn academic credits including core curriculum, life-skills, health and physical education, art, vocational exploration, transition skills and 8th grade transition to high school.

NRS continued the success of the Transition Skills Enhancement Program with newly designed assessments including rubrics-based report card, in-depth narrative assessment, and individual student competency profile. The program is designed for students who have completed their senior year but for a variety of 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
Learning Center Programs

The Learning Center for Students with Multiple Disabilities serves students ages 3 to 22. Many of the students are in wheelchairs and require assistance with activities of daily living. Students frequently require communication programs to assist them with expressive and receptive language skills. Often, the students have visual or hearing impairments. Classrooms follow a functional, experiential curriculum based upon the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for Students with Significant Disabilities (2013). Classrooms are located in member district public schools allowing for placement of students in buildings with similarly aged peers and for access to age appropriate thematic materials. An Integrated Related Services Approach is used; therapists provide individual and small-group services as written in Individual Education Programs, and classroom staff apply recommended therapeutic strategies throughout the week in order to enhance learning.

The Learning Center for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder has open enrollment to serve students who would benefit from an integrated, eclectic approach that includes Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) techniques, such as Discrete Trial Teaching and Behavior Support Plans, Picture Exchange Communication Systems, and a total communication approach. The goal of the program is to enhance academics, social skills, behavioral regulation, self-care, and play/leisure skills. Instruction, aligned with the Massachusetts Common Core Curriculum Frameworks, is provided to students at their instructional level. An ABA Specialist is an ongoing member of the classroom team. Home/school behavioral support and consultation is available and provided through a team approach that utilizes the skills of the specialist most familiar with the area of need.

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)
  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)
  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 Corthell 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
Independence Academy (IA) is an alternative multi-service secondary school serving adolescents with substance abuse and dependence issues. The program is one of only four recovery high schools in Massachusetts. We enroll students from the southeast region of Massachusetts that have struggled with substance abuse and who understand that their greatest opportunity for success is in an environment that understands and focuses on their recovery and emotional well-being.

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 in order to best meet the student’s needs while taking into consideration their strengths, abilities and interests. We aim to provide students an education which enables them to communicate effectively, empowers them to think critically and become well-informed, active members of society. Our 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). 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. We 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 and 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 the school districts and communities in the region for addressing issues related to adolescent substance abuse. 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 abuse and its impact on adolescents and families.

Completing its third full academic year in 2015, Independence Academy has enrolled over 50 students from almost 30 different communities. Since opening in January 2012 the school has now helped 15 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
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 opens new doors for students attending the program. For many, this is their first introduction to the work of work. Students are matched to appropriate community-based worksites for job training. Students work as interns one or more days per week, accompanied by a qualified job coach who remains on site throughout the day. Students are well supervised, but are encouraged to enhance their independence in their respective community-based vocational sites. The job coach oversees the quality of all work and expands responsibilities as students progress. Students are evaluated by their job coaches and program coordinator regarding work readiness skills and work performance skills. Vocational/Transitional Assessments include Interest Inventories, Adaptive Behavior Scales, Functional Skills Assessments, Work Assessments and Self Determination Scales. Transportation to and from the program is provided in NRC vehicles by NRC job coaches with 7-D licenses who are trained to work supportively with the students of the Community Based Vocational Program. Established sites for Vocational Exploration include: Animal Care, Warehouse Supports, Maintenance, Food Service, Collating, Customer Service and Television and Radio Production.

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 Summer Work and Learning Program remains an innovative summer program offering a broad range of transition services for students between the ages of 14-22 with intellectual impairments, developmental disabilities, behavioral challenges and autism. The program is designed for students to attend one or more summers and is differentiated for students ages 14-17 and 18-22. The program is located at Rockland Middle School and selected community-based vocational sites. 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.

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 common household tools/appliances; time management; personal health and safety; basic meal preparation; leisure/recreation activities; community experiences); social thinking skills; job exploration (e.g., exploring 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

North River Collaborative
Behavior Consultation and Education Services

Behavior Consultation and Education Services includes extensive training and ongoing support in the area of Developmental Disabilities, Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), Applied Behavior Analysis treatment and intervention approaches, community and school based support services. Staff has 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, Behavior Analysts on staff provide supervision and training to educators and lead educators 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 students’ 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.

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

Therapy Services

North River Collaborative provides Occupational, Physical and Speech Therapy Services within 41 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. Therapy staff are dedicated to excellence in student service, committed to facilitating optimal curriculum access to all in our care, and to providing 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 coordination of services. More than 30 licensed Physical, Occupational and Speech Therapists, most with advanced degrees and certifications, participate in monthly meetings and numerous professional development activities in order 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
Section 2: Programs and Services

**Services for Students who are Visually Impaired**

**Teachers of the Visually Impaired**
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**
North River Collaborative provides consultative and direct services to students with visual impairments from an Orientation and Mobility Instructor. NRC 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, spatial relationships) and life skills training (e.g., daily living skills, social interaction skills, recreation, and leisure).

**Summer Program**
North River Collaborative offers the only summer day program in a public school setting on the South Shore for students with visual impairments. Students in the program are legally blind and attend public schools during the school year. The VIP summer program addresses the goals outlined in each student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP) and the areas of the Expanded Core Curriculum for Children who are blind and visually impaired in order to prevent substantial regression. Staff and therapists (including an Orientation & Mobility specialist) provide direct services through individual and small group instruction.

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

**Social Work Internship Program**
NRC’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 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 referring teachers’ effectiveness related to social/emotional development of children, and facilitates a functional “bridge” relationship between home and school.

**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 Services

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. 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 programs are free and are held at the Family Center in Abington and at a variety of community locations in our member districts. 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; 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.

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

Teaching of English Language Learners
North River Collaborative provides English Language Learner (ELL) services to its member districts. The teachers offer assistance to students whose first language is other than English in the development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in English. Referrals are made through the individual 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 2011 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 Collaborative’s English Language Learner Program currently has five ELL teachers. Our 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. NRC’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 (PD) offerings for North River Collaborative and district staff are determined based on ongoing and newly identified needs of our member districts, needs of low-incidence educational staff, state and federal mandates across the education landscape, emerging issues, and current educational best practice. Curriculum Coordinators and Special Education Directors from each member district and NRC 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 NRC 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 progress monitoring;
- Address the issues of mental health, behavioral issues, and student safety;
- Address the individual needs of students including students with disabilities and English Language Learners (ELLs); and
- Provide programs locally and 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
Section 2: Programs and Services

**Collaborative Grant Applications**

NRC 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 North River Collaborative’s “Behavioral Health Initiative” (BHI). BHI targets over 8,400 children (grades K–6), in 20 elementary schools across eight school districts in Massachusetts. The award of 1.2 million dollars will sustain this initiative over three years.

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. In this first year there was an improvement in school engagement, environment, and safety as well as family and community engagement. Teachers improved their skills in prevention and early identification of student’s social/emotional needs and caregivers also increased their ability to partner with schools to respond to these needs at home. BHI supported 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 North River Collaborative has with the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind.

**District Determined Measures Leadership Grant**

Through the support of a Professional Practice Innovation Grant, North River Collaborative convened 13 Specialized Instructional Support Personnel from the school districts of Avon, East Bridgewater, Rockland, Whitman-Hanson and North River Collaborative to improve student achievement in Social Skills. The project implemented an innovative process for the development of common assessments, tied to Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, and national standards for mental health and other school professionals. These districts cooperatively identified Core Course Objectives (CCOs) for four assessments.
Section 2: Programs and Services

Districts will use or adapt the assessments as their own Common Measures (formerly DDMs), thereby complying with the new state regulations for educator evaluation. By working on these documents collaboratively and sharing experts across districts and disciplines, the rigor of the work product was enhanced. The use of these common assessments across multiple districts will increase the validity of the resulting products.

Professional development enhanced participants’ knowledge of assessment practices including the use of pre/post assessments and repeated measures. District representatives worked on assessments collaboratively, both face-to-face and through a web-based, asynchronous discussion platform. Districts have new assessments with rubrics that can be adopted or adapted to serve as required common measures of student learning (DDM).

**Title III Consortium Grant**

Through the support of the Title III Consortium Grant, seven school districts with low-incidence ELL student populations are collaborating to improve services for Limited English Proficient (LEP) students. Participating districts are: Abington, Avon, Bridgewater-Raynham, Norwell, Rockland, West Bridgewater, and Whitman-Hanson. Funding supported three key strategies: supporting parent/family communication, tutoring for ELL students, and professional development for district educators.

- **Parent support.** ELL educators collaborated to enhance and implement parent meetings and workshops to promote home/school communication and family literacy. Parent Nights were presented in each district. A common ELL website is now accessible to support home/school communication; access is linked to each districts’ own webpage and includes common and district-specific information.
- **Tutoring.** ELL students receive individual and small-group tutoring before/after school.
- **Professional development.** ELL teachers developed web-based professional development modules to support educators in their work to shelter English instruction.

**Focus on Early Literacy**

North River Collaborative led districts from the Southeast Region to partner together and implement a curriculum developed by Boston Public Schools (BPS) called *Focus on K2*© through support from DESE’s Focus on Early Literacy grant (over $100,000). Eleven full-day kindergarten teachers from four school districts participated in 26 hours of professional development and implemented a seven-week *Habitats* unit with their students. The project promoted a comprehensive, developmentally-appropriate approach to early literacy through professional development, technical assistance and classroom resources associated with the curriculum. The curriculum 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.
**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. North River Collaborative offers online document and reporting applications for Medicaid billing customers. Administrative Activities Claiming allows school districts to be reimbursed for participating in activities that support the administration of the state’s Medicaid program. NRC 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.

**Participating Districts**

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<th>Abington</th>
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**Southeast Transportation Network**

The Southeast Transportation Network serves more than 350 students in 24 school districts of North River Collaborative, Pilgrim Area Collaborative, and South Shore Educational Collaborative. 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, NRC began providing transportation with the opening of school in September 2007.

**Participating Districts**

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<tr>
<th>Abington</th>
<th>Halifax</th>
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Section 2: Programs and Services

General Education Supports and Services

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 kindergarten instruction (Early Literacy Grant)
- Development of common measures (Professional Practice Innovation Grant)
- Professional Development

Clinical Evaluation Services

Clinical Evaluation Services were not offered in FY15 due to discontinuation of the program at this time.
Section 3: Cost Effectiveness of Programs and Services

The following tuition comparisons represent programs in the geographic region of North River Collaborative which member districts typically use when out-of-district placements are needed for students of a particular disability. The daily rate for private schools is the approved OSD rate. The daily rate is then multiplied by 180 days to establish an equivalent tuition across programs, regardless of days of operation of the program. 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 $23,639 less than the average private school tuition which member districts typically use for a similar student profile.
Section 3: Cost Effectiveness of Programs and Services

Learning Center for Students with Multiple Disabilities
The Learning Center for Students with Multiple Disabilities’ tuition is $12,330 less than the average private school tuition which member districts typically use for a similar student profile.

Learning Center for Students with Autism
The Learning Center for Students with Autism tuitions are $15,844 and $12,924 less than the average private school tuition which member districts typically use for a similar student profile. It should be noted that NRC has two levels of tuition for students with autism based on staffing needs. Where similar variances in rate were observed in comparable programs, the comparable rate was used.
Section 3: Cost Effectiveness of Programs and Services

**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 by 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.

**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 10 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 highly 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 through a combined staffing model. 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 highly enhanced.
Behavior Consultation and Education Services

The design of the Behavior Consultation and Education Services program is to support districts to address the needs of their students with autism or other disabilities that require ABA services. As a result of the program, district capacity is increased and they report savings from including students in their own school programs rather than placing them in out of district programs.

The hourly rate comparisons include private agencies that provide services to the geographic region of North River Collaborative. The rates are provided by special education directors as costs they incurred. In some cases, the comparative rates date back to 2013 as no updated data was available. As can be seen below, the hourly rate for behavioral consultation services is considerably below that of the average of other providers. In addition, there is considerable administrative support given to the district to ensure that services match the needs of the students.

The Behavioral Consultation and Education Services hourly rate is $48 less than the average private agency rate which member districts typically use for a similar student profile.
Section 3: Cost Effectiveness of Programs and Services

**Therapy Services**

The hourly rate comparisons include private agencies that provide services in the geographic region of North River Collaborative. 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, NRC provides considerable administrative support to the districts to ensure that services match the needs of the students but are not excessive to that need.

**Occupational Therapy Services**

The Occupational Therapy Services hourly rate is $4.09 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 NRC for 5 days/week for the year, there is a savings of $5,153 per year.

![OT Therapy FY15 Hourly Rate Comparison](chart)
Section 3: Cost Effectiveness of Programs and Services

Physical Therapy Services

The Physical Therapy Services hourly rate is $6.20 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 NRC for 5 days/week for the year, there is a savings of $7,812 per year.

Speech Therapy Services

The Speech Therapy Services hourly rate is $1.44 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 NRC for 5 days/week for the year, there is a savings of $1,814 per year.
Vision Services

The hourly rate comparisons include private agencies that provide services in the geographic region of North River Collaborative. The Vision Services hourly rate is $37.00 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 NRC for 1 day/week for the year, there is a savings of $46,620 per year.

The Orientation and Mobility Services hourly rate is $42.00 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 NRC for 1 day/week for the year, there is a savings of $52,920 per year.
Section 3: Cost Effectiveness of Programs and Services

**NRC Family Network**

North River Collaborative provides services to families with children birth through age four, at no cost. 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 sub-contract with Self Help Inc.

**Municipal Medicaid Reimbursement**

NRC 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 $27 million has been returned to the participating cities and towns. In FY15, approximately $1.0 million dollars were returned to 18 districts.

**Southeast Transportation Network**

The Southeast Transportation Network provides transportation for special needs and other students as a cost-effective service for districts. In most cases, NRC’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 which continues each year. Overall, North River’s average cost per vehicle per day for in-district and out-of-district is $168.44 for FY15, compared with the $215 state-wide average\(^1\). 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.

**General Education Supports and Services**

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.** Many school districts in North River Collaborative have low numbers of students for whom English is not their first language. Additionally, the population is often transient, with students moving in and out of districts on a frequent basis. It is difficult for districts to maintain qualified teachers on their staff to address these less than predictable needs when there is no reasonable assurance of a job from year to year due to this fluidity of need. Because the North River staff is shared in an itinerant nature, school districts can be relieved of the costs of staff if needs change through the year(s). By contracting this service through North River, the districts can maintain that year-to-year fluidity and do not incur unneeded costs. In addition, the cohort of teachers who work through the Collaborative, along with their program coordinator, provide combined oversight and administrative support saving the districts some of the administration and coordination costs for these services.

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\(^1\) Cavanaugh, Colleen A., Pupil Transportation Consulting, Inc., “Special Education Transportation Report 2012-13”

North River Collaborative 25
Section 3: Cost Effectiveness of Programs and Services

**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 an LICSW for supervision of school based graduate level interns, the schools are able to 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 PD for district and NRC staff. During FY15 a total of 321 hours of training were offered; 58.8% of the hours were supported through grant funding and other support (e.g., DDM Leadership, BHI, Focus on K2, Williams Syndrome Foundation).
- 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, 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).
- District capacity is expanded by NRC 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.** 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 FY15, the Collaborative was awarded funding from US 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 equals $1,239,440. Specific grants include: Recovery High School (Independence Academy), Elementary Counseling Grant (Behavioral Health Initiative), Family Network, Mass Commission for the Blind, District Determined Measurements Leadership Grant, Focus on Early Literacy, and Title III Consortium Grant. As a result, districts received the following grant funded supports and services:

- 5.2 Mental Health professionals (Behavioral Health Initiative Grant);
- Professional Development in mental health;
- Professional Development, coaching and materials for Early literacy kindergarten instruction;
- Professional Development for the support of the development of common measures for Specialized Instructional Support Personnel; 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; to provide professional development to educators; to provide related services to students with disabilities in member and non-member districts, and to provide 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 FY15 as outlined below.**

**Coordinated Program Review.** The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education reviewed NRC’s compliance with education requirements through a Coordinated Program Review (CPR) in 2015 which addressed 49 selected requirements: 20 special education criteria, 11 civil rights criteria, and 18 public day criteria. These criteria cover the areas of special education (20 criteria) and civil rights (11 criteria) as well as Approved Public Day Program Standards (18 criteria), necessary to determine that special education and civil rights are being provided in accordance with applicable state and federal laws and/or regulations.

The process included a review of documentation about the operation of the collaborative programs; interviews of administrative, instructional, and support staff across all selected programs and grade levels; interviews of parent representatives and other telephone interviews as requested by other parents or members of the general public; review of student records; surveys of parents of students with disabilities that solicits information regarding their experiences with the collaborative; and observation of classrooms and other facilities.

**The onsite team found NRC to be fully in compliance with all regulations reviewed; all criteria were found to be Implemented.**

**Financial Review.** The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education reviewed NRC’s compliance with financial best practices through a review in 2015 which addressed 21 selected areas, through 230 questions/elements.

The process included a review of documentation about the operation of the collaborative’s finances; interviews of administrative staff; and review of documentation, policies and procedures.

**The onsite team found NRC to be fully in compliance with all best practices reviewed with the exception of a policy for political activity by staff.** Subsequently, a new policy for this area was approved by the Board.
North River Collaborative has been successful in achieving this purpose during FY15 as outlined below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Type</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intensive educational programs and services for students with disabilities</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development to educators</td>
<td>NRC continued to provide professional development to member and non-member districts (see pages 13, 20 and 33).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Related services to students with disabilities in member and non-member districts | NRC provided therapy services to over 553 students from 7 member and 3 nonmember districts (see pages 10, 22, and 32).  
NRC provided vision services to 27 students from 3 member and 7 non-member districts (see pages 11, 24, and 32).  
NRC provided behavior consultation and education services to 107 educators and 106 families, in 2 member and 3 non-member districts (see pages 10, 21, and 32).  
NRC provided transportation services for over 320 students in 24 districts (see pages 16, 25, and 39). |
| Other high quality cost effective services to meet the changing needs of member districts | NRC provided teachers of English Language Learners (ELL) services to 87 students in 5 districts (see pages 17, 25, and 37).  
NRC provided LICSWs who supervised 15 masters-level social work interns to 5 districts, supporting 444 students (see pages 11, 26, and 38).  
NRC provided a recovery high school (Independence Academy) for 16 students with diagnosed substance abuse and dependence (see pages 8, 20, and 37).  
NRC continued to seek grant-funding on behalf of NRC and member districts. NRC received federal, state, and private funding in the amount of $1,239,440 to serve the districts and $7,005 in support of NRC programs (see pages 14, 25, and 36).  
NRC continued to provide Municipal Medicaid Reimbursement billing for 18 school districts, returning approximately $1.1 million (see pages 16, 25, and 39). |
Objectives

The overall objectives of North River Collaborative Agreement include:

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.
NRC Programs

North River School

Program Enhancements

- Served an average of 52 students. Four students successfully returned to their sending school districts. Eight students earned high school diplomas. Twenty-four school districts enrolled students at NRS.
- Trained all staff trained in Nonviolent Crisis Intervention (CPI) and CPR/First Aid.
- Piloted Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) for a second year. This assessment program in math and English grade 5-12 connects teachers with the power of growth data and instruction.
- Completed seventeen (17) Interim Alternative Educational Settings (IAES)
- Completed the annual student profile – a document that provides essential information regarding the students at NRS including length of stay, gender, enrollment, sending districts, ethnicity, grade, diagnosis, hospitalizations, medication and much more.
- Conducted on-going professional development of teachers, counselors, nurse and vocational instructors in staff evaluation system, project based learning, student assessment and data gathering.
- Continued DESE National School Lunch Program to support our students and school
- Initiated therapeutic process intervention to reduce suspensions for behaviors at school
- Hosted presentations by Post Graduate Programs: Peterson School, ITT Tech, and Porter and Chester.
- Received grant award from Massachusetts Mechanics, for a convection oven and food warmer in our culinary program
- Completed a successful DESE Coordinated Program Review
- Completed a successful DESE Coordinated Program Review
- Updated website page with multi-language availability

Learning Centers

Program Enhancements

- The Parent Support Group for Learning Center programs continues partnership with the BAMSI Director of Family Support Services, and meets monthly at their Family Support Center in Hanover, MA. Some of the activities provided to parents this year included an in-service on SSI/Public Benefits presented by Gail Havelick from the Department of Public Health, Division for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs, and Special Needs Trusts, presented by Jeffrey W. Roberts, Esq. Nutter, McClennen and Fish, LLP. Kenna Liatsos, Social Worker for Learning Center programs, also provided a sibling group during the Learning Center Summer Program, 2014.
- Technology upgrades have been provided for Learning Center programs. These include: professional development on instructional technology BoardMaker Studio Curriculum Integration, presented by Linda Cullen, SLP, from South Coast Educational Collaborative.
- Safety-Care, a training program for staff working with children, adolescents, or adults who may exhibit challenging or dangerous behavior, was implemented this year. ABA principles and procedures are embedded throughout the training, including a strong focus on de-escalation using Functional Communication Training, Behavior Momentum and Differential Reinforcement. Staff members learn how to prevent many behavioral incidents, as well as what to do if an incident occurs. All staff working in Learning Center Autism programs participated in Quality Behavioral Solutions Safety-Care training.
- Learning Center teachers participated in Cardboard Carpentry training through Perkin’s School for the Blind. Teachers learned to design and construct instructional materials and/or assistive devices through Cardboard Carpentry strategies, and to apply UDL principles using corrugated and other inexpensive materials.
Community Based Vocational

Program Enhancements

- Added four new touch screen computers to the classroom.
- Established new job sites including: Subway, WATD Radio Station, PetSmart, Retail Store at the New England Wildlife Center, Bridgewater Television Station, and Texas Longhorn Steakhouse.
- Explored competitive employment with students when appropriate.

Summer Work and Learning

Program Enhancements

- DESE ‘Essential Competencies for Workplace Readiness’ and ‘Life and Career Skills’ were embedded across curriculum and job experiences. Prior to job site and community trip visits, there was a group review of ‘Workplace Readiness Skills.’
- Parents received daily communication regarding the experiences of their child.
- Job site performances were assessed daily.
- Final academic and job site performance assessments were forwarded to each district’s Special Education Director.
- A health and fitness curriculum was introduced.
- Fitness for Life Programming introduced at East Bridgewater YMCA.
Section 4: Progress Toward Achieving NRC’s Purpose and Objectives

**NRC Services**

**Therapy Services**

**Program Enhancements**

- First year data for District Determined Measures was gathered with positive results.
- Occupational Therapy Masters level student from Quinnipiac University completed 3 month fieldwork with our OT staff.
- Several graduate level OT and PT students spent time observing therapists in preparation for longer fieldwork/clinical rotations.
- Speech Therapist successfully supervised Speech Therapy candidate in Clinical Fellowship Year.
- OT/PT staff began using Schoology, an online community, to share therapy ideas, research articles, resources, documents as well as interactive discussions to improve practice.
- OT/PT staff revised evaluation format to better address participation based student needs.
- Speech therapists upgraded Bluetooth switch technology which enhanced practice.
- Therapists working with students with behavioral challenges in our programs became Quality Behavioral Solutions (QBS) Safety Care Certified.
- Summer services were streamlined to more effectively meet students’ needs; therapists improved their knowledge of classroom curriculum (Unique Learning System) in order to develop more classroom-based lessons.

**Vision Services**

**Program Enhancements**

- Staff meetings initiated to review practice and improve cohesiveness of service.
- TVI and O & M Specialist provided several professional development trainings for general education teachers of students with Visual Impairments.
- O & M Specialist increased number of screenings thereby lessening need for full evaluations for students with minor visual issues. Able to support districts by sharing knowledge of O & M strategies.

**Behavioral Consult and Educational Services (BCES)**

**Program Enhancements**

- Guidelines for Home Services developed to provide parents with details about home service provision.
- Added additional full time BCBA for program and district support.
- BCBA provided three 10-hour Quality Behavioral Solutions (QBS) Safety Care trainings for staff.
- Added 1 FTE Lead Educator in January 2015 to address increasing behavior needs at secondary level.
- BCBA staff provided mentoring hours to Lead Educator who is pursuing BCBA.
- First year data for District Determined Measures was gathered with positive results.
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 FY15 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 982 educators participated in one or more training sessions. There were a total of 321 hours of instruction over 73 individual sessions. This calculates to a total of 7,058 hours of training received. In addition, the Behavior and Education Consultation staff provided training to 107 staff, and Assistive Technology Consultation was provided to 110 staff across multiple districts.

Administration, Leadership, & Evaluation

- Analyzing Teaching for Student Results
- Administrative Seminar: Legal Issues and Difficult Conversations
- Responsive Classroom for Administrators
- Educator Evaluation Mandated Training
- Marshall Memo Group

Instructional Strategies, Pedagogy & Curriculum

- NRS/IA Curriculum and Assessment Project
- Curriculum-Based Assessment Development Teams (DDMs) (*funded through DDM Grant*)
- Responsive Classroom I Course
- Focus on K2: An Integrated Approach to Teaching and Learning (*funded through ESE Grant*)

Special Education

- Assessment and Reporting in Special Education
- Williams Syndrome: Extraordinary Gifts and Unique Challenges
- Visual Strategies
- Boardmaker Studio: Overview and Strategies (*funded by 274 Grant*)
- Special Education Webinars (CEC Series)

English Language Learning (*funded through Title III Grant*)

- ELL Resources

Behavior Management

- Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) – Initial Certification and Refresher Certification
- Safety Care Behavioral Safety Specialist Training
- Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Behavior Plans
- Time-Out for PreK and K
- Responsive Classroom: Responding to Misbehavior

Mental Health & Wellness

- Positive Psychology
- Handling Difficult Conversations
- Mental Health in the Classroom
- Mental Health – Bullying
- Mental Health Issues: Identifying and Responding to Anxiety/Depression, Mood-Bipolar Disorders, and School Phobia
- Case Consultation related to Social, Emotional & Behavioral Development
- Tiered System of Intervention for Students with Behavioral/Emotional Issues – Panels
**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 NRC 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 18 through page 25. 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 NRC program. The total savings from NRC programs is $2,876,392.
**Program Savings by Member District**

The chart below shows the savings to member districts by using NRC 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 18 through page 25. 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 from NRC programs to member districts is $1,131,193.
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 FY13-FY15. 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>FY13</th>
<th>FY14</th>
<th>FY15</th>
<th>Grant continues through…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recovery High School (Independence Academy)</td>
<td>$500,000</td>
<td>$500,000</td>
<td>$500,000</td>
<td>June 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DSAC</td>
<td>$59,500</td>
<td>$59,900</td>
<td>$59,900</td>
<td>June 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Network</td>
<td>$53,420</td>
<td>$50,423</td>
<td>$46,364</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mass Commission for the Blind</td>
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<td>$35,928</td>
<td>$35,929</td>
<td>June 2023</td>
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<td>Title III Consortium Grant</td>
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<td>$36,078</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Literacy Grant</td>
<td>$115,067</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DDM Leadership Grant</td>
<td>$29,999</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Health Initiative Grant</td>
<td>$366,605</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>August 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Grants for Districts</strong></td>
<td>$1,482,758</td>
<td>$896,198</td>
<td>$1,189,942</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants to support NRC programs:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Ed Program Grant</td>
<td>$1,450</td>
<td>$1,630</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mass Mechanics</td>
<td>$5,300</td>
<td>$3,058</td>
<td>$5,375</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Grants for NRC</strong></td>
<td>$51,600</td>
<td>$12,360</td>
<td>$7,005</td>
<td></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

North River Collaborative provides a variety of cooperative programs to support low-incidence needs of students including: English language 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.

North River Collaborative also provides cooperative services to school districts including municipal Medicaid reimbursement and transportation.

Each 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**
- Expanded ELL teacher to Hingham Public Schools in September 2014.
- Added .5 FTE ELL teacher to Abington Public Schools in January 2015.
- ELL teachers participated in Title III grant which supported tutoring, parent outreach and development of professional resources for Sheltered English Immersion teachers.
- First year data for District Determined Measures was gathered with positive results.

**Independence Academy**

**Program Enhancements**
- Six students received their diplomas from North Attleboro, Somerset-Berkeley, Brockton, Bridgewater-Raynham, Oliver Ames and Plymouth North in June 2015.
- Over 20 students participated in the after-school P.A.S.S. (Positive Alternative to School Suspension) program which services students who have alcohol/drug related offenses at school.
- Sixteen students enrolled during 2014-2015. Ten students remain enrolled, two have graduated, two have transitioned to other placements, and two have re-enrolled in their sending high school.
- Staff and students were both utilized as resources to school districts on multiple occasions to assist with students identified as “high risk” for issues with substance abuse and to raise awareness of the issues associated with substance abuse.
- A partnership with High Point Treatment Center was re-established to allow for outside therapists to work one-on-one with our students during the school day at Independence Academy.
- A comprehensive summer program was developed and fully funded that will allow students to stay connected with the school, engage in outdoor activities (hiking, kayaking, rock climbing),
Section 4: Progress Toward Achieving NRC’s Purpose and Objectives

take advantage of credit recovery and academic enrichment opportunities and continue to work their recovery throughout the summer.

- Independence Academy played an integral role in drafting and testifying in support of legislation at the State House that would allow for students to be transported at no cost to the student from their home to Independence Academy.
- We took several field trips including a hike to Blue Hills, a Boston Celtics game, a trip to George’s Island, the Museum of Science, Battleship Cove, and the movies to see The Hobbit.
- Two seniors participated in the dual enrollment program through Massasoit Community College and completed a total of seven courses.
- Five new students at IA joined The 84, a youth group fighting tobacco in Massachusetts. Several students participated in grant work that focused on banning the sale of e-cigarettes to minors in the city of Brockton. Students also took part in a rally with other 84 members at the State House in Boston to voice their concerns over big tobacco targeting youth.

**Social Work Internship Program**

**Program Enhancements**

- Fifteen interns were placed in 13 schools in four districts; two schools are new to the program and returned to one former school. An additional LICSW Supervisor was hired part-time.
- Interns were from Bridgewater State University, Boston College, Boston University, Simmons College and Wheelock College that provides competency based education. Interns are in placement from mid-September to mid-May completing a 34 week commitment to their placement resulting in a range of 472-720 hours of field work per intern.
- Interns received a total of 444 referrals for services, averaging 30 referrals per intern.
- Interns continued to increase the visibility of their role, and moved into the classroom to implement whole classroom activities including Second Step and character building wellness classes. In addition interns spent time in classrooms providing assistance with students who benefited from the support.
- Interns worked with students and parents around mutually identified treatment goals and plans in order to include the parent in the change process, engage and empower the student and to evaluate and modify interventions and treatment successes.
- Interns provided 2,591 documented individual, group and whole classroom interventions and 1,516 parent, teacher and outside collateral contacts for 2014-15.

**NRC Family Network**

**Program Enhancements**

- Staff developed curriculum for parent/child activities that are specifically linked to the Massachusetts Early Learning Guidelines for Infants and Toddlers and the Guidelines for Preschool Learning Experiences.
- Offered a 6-week series of a parenting education program.
Municipal Medicaid Reimbursement

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. Currently 14 districts are utilizing this software.

NRC currently serves 18 school districts through NRC’s dedicated School Based Medicaid staff in the Business Services Division.

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 your staff
- Ensures program compliance

Southeast Transportation Network

Program Enhancements
- Prepared to provide services for Stoughton Public Schools
- In-Service training: 8 hours per year for all Staff
  - First Aid / CPR
  - Defensive Driving
  - Securing Wheel Chairs
  - Bus Evacuation
  - Winter Driving
- System developed for replacing aging vehicles
  - Bids
  - Direct fleet purchase from factory