

**CONCORD AREA SPECIAL EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE**  
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**TO:** Jeff Wulfson  
Acting Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

**cc:** Office of Regional Governance,  
Massachusetts Department of Education  
Board of Directors, CASE Collaborative

**FROM:** Sanchita Banerjee, Ed.M., C.A.G.S.  
Executive Director, CASE Collaborative

**DATE:** December 8, 2017

**RE:** FY17 CASE Collaborative Annual Report

The following report is being submitted pursuant to MGL Chapter 40, Section 4E. This report addresses the operation of the collaborative for the fiscal year beginning on July 1, 2016 and ending on June 30, 2017.

CASE Collaborative services continue to fall in three main areas: transportation; programs for low-incidence special education programming housed in member district schools; and an alternative high school (Colebrook High School) which is housed on the campus of the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District. In addition, our districts and programs are supported by our adaptive technology support team (CETT) as well as our professional development strand for special education offered in collaboration with the EDCO and LABBB Collaboratives.

An emphasis throughout DESE has been the promulgation of inclusive practices. The CASE model of the past forty years has been groundbreaking in its ability to provide exemplary programming for students with special needs within our public school facilities. Absent CASE, the majority of the students we serve would be placed in private placements where there would be little, if any, opportunity to interact with their mainstream peers. Further, because we are an agent of the districts, we are fully cooperative in working with our member districts in returning them to their home districts where practical and appropriate.

CASE special education classes are comprised of four separate strands: developmental disabilities; multiple developmental disabilities (including medically fragile); autism spectrum disorders; and the social/emotional disability strand.

A major component of our social/emotional strand is Colebrook High School, which serves

approximately twenty five to thirty students residing in both member and non-member communities. Colebrook is a therapeutic day program that integrates a counseling/therapy strand with small academic classes that have a highly individualized program. Many of the students attending Colebrook do so within the framework of a 45-day evaluation placement, while others spend multiple years there and eventually earn their high school diploma. Each semester a number of students take a course at Acton-Boxborough Regional High School as part of their course of study.

CASE has managed to keep its tuitions cost below comparable private programs even though our model of providing programs within member districts has some inherent fiscal inefficiencies. The isolation of our programs requires additional travel time between buildings for our therapists and minimizes the economies-of-scale that could otherwise be realized for staffing levels of professional and support staff. Also, in order to provide a continuum of services within a strand there is an occasional classroom that is under enrolled, but must remain in operation. In spite of the challenges, CASE programs remain a strong, cost-effective value as noted in our program comparison cost analysis later in this report.

The challenge of providing the students of our districts a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) while simultaneously addressing the challenges of providing services in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) is one that requires a focused and diligent effort within IEP teams, throughout the school community, across the school district and between districts through their collaboratives. The Executive Directors of collaboratives across the Commonwealth often testify that the students who are now referred to and serviced by collaborative programs are significantly more challenging and complex in their needs than they were in recent history. The reasons for this are both predictable and laudable.

As the number of students with previously low-incidence needs has dramatically increased, so to have the programs for those students initiated by districts. Within the CASE member districts, services that schools have provided for students with severe language needs, students on the autism spectrum, students who require life-skills programs and a host of other LRE initiatives.

As CASE looks to the future there are several areas where we are seeking to both support our districts and expand our program offerings. One of those areas is transitional services for students who have aged out of high school programming. At this point in time, we have opened a program to continue to serve those eligible students currently served by CASE who are aging out of high school programs.

During the 2016-17 school year, CASE Transportation, under the leadership of Mr. Martin Finnegan, provided special education van service to an average of approximately 500 students per day. By coordinating services across each of our ten member towns, CASE Transportation has created an efficiency and economy of scale not typically realized with private vendors.

As a service provider, CASE is incentivized to creatively combine routes that may include students from different towns within our collaborative. This is done regardless of whether the destination is within our CASE communities or beyond the boundaries of member districts. As a result, fewer vehicles and routes are needed than if each town was independently contracting or providing services.

Subsequently, our member districts spend significantly less on special education transportation than they would without the collaborative. Additionally, because the drivers are employees of the collaborative, and therefore indirectly of the districts themselves, there is a high level of accountability and responsiveness to our districts and families; this is the norm of our program.

Another avenue by which the collaborative serves our member districts is the aforementioned assistive technology team. They oversee Assistive Technology (AT) and Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) needs and services for students in CASE classrooms, provide AT and AAC evaluations and consultations to member and non- member districts, and consult as needed to support other member districts' technology needs.

This was also a year where the search for an Executive Directive was undertaken. The Board appointed an Executive Director in March 2017 to begin the role on July 1, 2017.

In closing, the purpose and overall objectives of the collaborative are clearly articulated in Section III of the CASE Agreement.

It reads:

*III. Purpose of Collaborative: The mission of the Collaborative is to maximize the full potential of students with disabilities by promoting academically enriching and supportive environments within inclusive school communities. CASE partners with families and districts in delivering high quality, customizable, efficient, and cost-effective educational programs and services tailored to each student. The purpose of CASE is to jointly conduct regional educational programs and services on behalf of the member school committees. The education programs and services provided by CASE complement and strengthen the school programs of the member school committees and increase educational opportunities for children. The focus of these programs and services includes, but is not limited to, preschool and early childhood programs, elementary and secondary school programs to address the needs of disabled children including, but not limited to, deaf/hard of hearing, blind and deaf/blind children, students on the autism spectrum and students with language- based disabilities, students with developmental disabilities, and programs to address students with emotional/social/behavioral disabilities. CASE also provides consultation services, professional development, and transportation and related services. The overall objectives of the Collaborative are to 1) improve the educational outcomes of students with low-incidence disabilities in the least restrictive environment, and 2) to offer all programs and services in a cost-effective manner.*

I'm pleased to report that the Collaborative has been successful in addressing each of these objectives as evidenced by the data which follows.

Once approved, this report along with our audit for the 2016-17 school year will be posted on our website ([www.casecollaborative.org](http://www.casecollaborative.org))

# **Contact Information**

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## **CASE Collaborative Annual Report 2017**

## **Purpose of CASE Collaborative**

CASE is a collaborative of 11 regional and municipal districts serving the Greater Boston metropolitan area and governed by a board of directors comprised of ten school superintendents representing each of its member school districts. CASE was formed in 1974 to meet regional needs of member school districts. The main, although not exclusive, focus of CASE Collaborative is children and young adults who require special education.

The most recent CASE Collaborative Agreement approved by the then Massachusetts Department of Education was approved by former Commissioner Mitchell Chester on November 20, 2015. At that time the stated primary purpose of CASE was to “jointly conduct regional educational programs and services on behalf of member school committees.”

For 42 years, CASE has been an organization that allows school districts to plan, develop and implement programs for students with special needs. It affords school districts the opportunity to augment local services and provide a continuum of special education programs through collaboration with member school districts. It provides a mechanism for people to share ideas and resources for the purpose of meeting a common need.

# CASE Board of Directors

Acton – Boxborough	William McAlduff (Interim)
Bedford	Jon Sills
Carlisle	James O'Shea
Concord	Laurie Hunter
Concord-Carlisle	Laurie Hunter
Harvard	Linda Dwight (Vice-Chairperson)
Lincoln	Rebecca McFall (Chairperson)
Lincoln- Sudbury	Bella Wong
Littleton	Kelly Clenchy
Maynard	Robert Gerardi, Jr.
Sudbury	Anne Wilson

## **Key Management and Program Staff**

Sanchita Banerjee	Executive Director
Sandra Daigneault	Assistant Director/Program Administrator
Regina Erickson	Director of Human Resources / Executive Assistant
Beverly Beno	Director of Finance and Operations
Deanne Cefalo	Program Administrator
Maureen Keegan	Program Administrator
Martin Finnegan	Transportation Administrator
Ian Rhames	Treasurer

# **Program Description: Developmental Disabilities**

## **Population Served**

The CASE Developmental Disabilities Program serves students ages 3-22, who present with a variety of developmental disabilities. The students are often delayed approximately one to three or more years in cognitive skills, communication, and academic skills and often have delays in fine and/or gross motor skills, as well. Some students may encounter difficulty with social skills and/or behavior. There are also classrooms for students with moderate disabilities who are struggling with reading and other academic areas. Any of these classes may include students with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder, when cognitive skills are consistent with those of the rest of the class and behaviors are compatible with the learning environment.

## **Program Description**

The CASE Developmental Disabilities Programs provide instruction in a 1:1 or 1:2 staff to student ratio. If the students are older and/or more independent, the staff to student ratio will decrease. Some instruction could be in a small group, which might be the whole classroom. This is determined based on the needs of the students. Typically the younger students will be in a classroom of approximately six students and the older classroom approximately ten students.

Therapy services for students are per the IEPs, but can be delivered individually or in small groups. Therapy services are generally provided in the classroom to facilitate carryover by and consultation with the instructional staff. Speech and language therapy and occupational therapy are most common; physical therapy is provided when needed. Occupational therapy services address a range of areas, including fine-motor, perceptual-motor, and sensory-motor development. Although many of the students in these classrooms may be verbal, there are also students who communicate with the use of augmentative communication (e.g., pictures, sign, symbols, or speech generating devices). Applied Behavior Analysis is utilized as a methodology and services can be provided on a 1:1 basis as determined by the IEP Team. Social skills programming is an important component of this program for the older students. The students are in small groups to help them develop social skills such as making friends, expressing feelings constructively, and cooperating with others. Services are also available for students who have more significant behavioral issues.

## **Curriculum**

The curriculum for the class is determined by the students' IEPs and follows the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. In our preschool and elementary programs, monthly themes and special activities throughout the year are reflected in most aspects of the program, including therapies, as appropriate. Targeted areas include training in cognitive, communication, motor, oral motor, social,



play, sensory, and self-help skills. Individual and small group opportunities are available.

A total communication approach is used to facilitate language development in the context of direct teaching and the natural environment. This includes use of spoken language, vocalization, objects, pictures, sign language, gestures and aided forms of communication. Circle time, art, cooking, singing, symbolic play, snack/lunch, gym and science provide opportunities for generalization of concepts and group fun experiences.

As students reach our middle school programs, staff incorporate life skills throughout the day, taking time to focus on independence, self-reliance, responsibility, and social maturity. These skills help to build a foundation leading to high school programming. Some of the curriculum is implemented and practiced in the community setting. This may include activities such as grocery shopping, banking and other opportunities to practice social skills and functional academic skills. As students enter the high school and then transition-age programs, the focus is on functional academics, life skills and vocational skills, while spending increasingly more time in the community working on these skills.

For our students who are not accessing the general education in academics, the curriculum is rich in applied academics that offer the students new contexts for learning and consolidating basic skills. Students expand and generalize their school experience in a variety of areas. Examples include, but are not limited to: weekly community-based learning experiences, inclusion opportunities, use of the computer, and life skills, including fitness and adaptive physical education. Throughout the year units on various community resources are integrated into the curriculum, e.g., hospitals, post office, department stores.

### **Inclusion Opportunities**

All students are identified with an age-appropriate grade level. They are included in general education classes and activities with their grade level peers, as deemed appropriate by the Team. Students are always supervised and supported by a CASE staff member in any of the inclusionary classes. Inclusion programming most often occurs during activities such as field trips, or in “specials” e.g., art, music, physical education, library, and woodworking, or in social activities such as lunch and recess. At the preschool level there are a number of preschool programs at the school, providing rich opportunities for inclusion.

Some students are also included, per the students' IEPs, for academic classes, such as science and/or social studies. Students participate in their grade level field trips and school assemblies. Some of our schools offer programs such as a sixth grade student volunteer program. Through this effort, some of the older students volunteer to work with CASE students. These sixth graders participate in a yearlong seminar covering a variety of topics related to special education support, provided by CASE instructional staff. A fifth grade reading program is also in place whereby fifth graders in the building volunteer to read to students in the CASE classes on a regular basis. In many of the schools, there is an opportunity for reverse mainstreaming.

## **Home/School Connections**

Home/School communication is an important part of the CASE Developmental Disabilities Program. A daily notebook travels from home to school to home, to keep staff and parents current regarding students' progress. The notebook is also an important tool to help the adults at home and at school to elicit pragmatic language, "news" from the students. As the student gets older he/she may carry his/her agenda to and from school. Parents can also determine with the teacher if email is a good option for communication. At the preschool level there are parent clinics. Opportunities for parent involvement in school are available, such as attending Open House and special events or volunteering in the school. Annual IEP meetings, parent/teacher conferences and progress reports complete the range of options for parent/school communication.

CASE also provides a parent support group throughout the year. At times, speakers will be brought in to focus on particular topics.

## **Extended School Year & After School Program**

A five-week summer option is available for students whose IEPs call for an extended year program. The CASE Extended Year Program, which is currently held at the air- conditioned Russell St. Elementary School in Littleton, addresses the students' IEP goals and benchmarks over the summer in much the same manner as the regular school year program. Inclusionary programming is not available during the summer session.

At our middle school program there is an after-school activities component from 2:15 p.m. to 4:15 p.m. twice a month on Wednesdays. The after-school activity program is run by CASE staff, and is designed to enhance student recreational and leisure skills, as well as to provide students with an opportunity to generalize classroom-based skills to a more natural community setting.

## **Staffing and Services**

- DESE Certified Special Education Teachers
- Teaching Assistants
- Speech and Language Therapists
- Occupational Therapists
- Physical Therapists
- Teacher of the Visually Impaired
- Deaf/Blind Services
- Orientation & Mobility Services
- Consulting Teacher of the Deaf
- Nursing
- Reading Specialist
- Board Certified Behavior Analysts

- School Counselors
- CETT (Assistive Technology Team)

## **Referrals**

Placement in all CASE programs follows consensus by the sending school district, parent, and CASE staff. Current, signed IEP and placement pages are required for enrollment in all CASE classes. Referrals to a CASE program are initiated by the school district. Parents may obtain additional information about this or other CASE classes by contacting the special education office in their school district. District personnel may obtain additional information by contacting the CASE Office as noted below.

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# **Program Description: Developmental Disabilities - Intensive**

## **Population Served**

The CASE Developmental Disabilities Programs' Intensive Strand serves students grades Preschool-8 who exhibit significant delays in cognitive development, which may impact all or some of these areas: communication, oral motor, fine motor, gross motor, sensory, vision, hearing, social skills and health.

## **Program Description**

The CASE Developmental Disabilities – Intensive Programs are located in a number of our member district schools and typically provide placement in each location for three years. These programs provide individualized education programming for students preschool through grade eight using a model that focuses on the strengths and needs of the students in all developmental areas. Most instruction is delivered in a 1:1 staff to student ratio. Speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, and physical therapy are integrated into the student's daily schedules, as needed. Generally, therapy is provided within the classroom to enhance the opportunities for coordination of therapy services and classroom programming. For those students who are medically compromised, this program has the capability to serve students who require nursing services in the classroom. The room is air-conditioned to meet the medical needs of students in the class. A registered nurse is typically full time in the classroom.

Various service options are available, in formats ranging from individual to small group instruction. Activities include gross motor group, circle/meeting time, oral motor group, language group, communication activities, fine motor skill development, cognitive work sessions, symbolic or sensory play times, activities of daily living and/or life skills activities. A student may receive therapies such as speech/language therapy, physical therapy, and occupational therapy, as determined by the IEP.

## **Curriculum**

The curriculum for the class is determined by the students' IEPs and follows the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Monthly themes and special activities throughout the year are reflected in most aspects of the program, including therapies, as appropriate. As students enter our middle school program, their learning will also expand to the community.

## **Inclusion Opportunities**

All students are identified with age-appropriate grade levels. As appropriate, they may be included in general education activities with their grade level peers for "specials" (e.g., art, music,

physical education, and library). Students participate in all school activities and our classrooms often set up special jobs within the school that give them an opportunity to socialize and practice skills. A CASE staff member accompanies students to inclusionary activities. In many of the schools, there is an opportunity for reverse mainstreaming.

The Preschool Program is located in the same wing as the Bedford Integrated Preschool within Bedford High School. Activities with typically developing peers are incorporated into the schedule for CASE students, as deemed appropriate by the Team, to enhance the development of language and social skills, and to provide opportunities for the students to practice their skills in a more typical preschool setting.

### **Home/School Connections**

Home/school communication is an important part of the CASE programs. A daily notebook travels between home and school to keep staff and parents current regarding students' progress and to facilitate language use in both settings. Parents can also determine with the teacher if email is a good option. Opportunities for parent involvement include attending Open House and special classroom events, or volunteering in the school. Annual IEP meetings and progress reports also offer additional opportunities for parent/school communication.

The Home/School Component of the CASE Developmental Disabilities- Intensive Programs at the preschool level includes regular consultation with parents, called clinics, throughout the school year that focus on teaching/sharing school programming so that parents can carry over some of these ideas at home.

CASE also provides a parent support group throughout the year. At times, speakers will be brought in to focus on particular topics.

### **Extended School Year**

A five-week summer option is available for students whose IEPs call for an extended year program. The CASE Extended School Year Program, which is currently held at the air- conditioned, Russell St. Elementary School in Littleton, addresses the students' IEP goals and benchmarks over the summer in the same manner as the school year program. Integrated activities with children who do not have special needs, however, are not available during the summer session.

### **Staffing and Services**

- DESE Certified Special Education Teachers
- Teaching Assistants
- Speech and Language Therapists
- Occupational Therapists
- Physical Therapists

- Teacher of the Visually Impaired
- Deaf/Blind Services
- Orientation & Mobility Services
- Consulting Teacher of the Deaf
- Nursing
- Reading Specialist
- Board Certified Behavior Analysts
- School Counselors
- CETT (Assistive Technology Team)

## **Referrals**

Placement in a CASE program follows consensus by the sending school district, parent, and CASE staff. Current, signed IEP and placement pages are required for enrollment in all CASE classes. Referrals to a CASE program are initiated by the school district. Parents may obtain additional information about this or other CASE classes by contacting the special education office in their school district. District personnel may obtain additional information by contacting the CASE Office as noted below.

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# **Program Description: CASE Developmental Preschool**

## **Population Served**

The CASE Developmental Preschool Program at Bedford High School serves children ages 3-5 who have been diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Disorder, including PDD, or other developmental disabilities. These children present with delays in several or all of the following areas:

- Communication development
- Social interaction and adaptive behavior
- Sensorimotor integration
- Self-help and daily living skills
- Gross motor development
- Fine motor development
- Cognitive development
- Oral motor development

## **Program Description**

The Developmental Preschool Program provides individualized special education programming for children 3-5 years old, using a model that focuses on the strengths and needs of the children in all developmental areas. Instructional strategies include a structured teaching approach with a heavy reliance on visual supports, data collection, communication and social skill development, as well as parent/guardian consultation and training.

The Developmental Preschool Program services may include any or all of the following: Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), intensive 1:1 teaching, Floortime, social skills groups, and a Total Communication approach, in addition to speech/language therapy, occupational therapy, and physical therapy, per the students' IEPs. Generally, therapy is provided at a workstation in the classroom to enhance the opportunities for coordination of therapy services and classroom programming, and to promote generalization of skills; however, instructional spaces for 1:1 therapy are available in close proximity to the classroom for children who may benefit from some of their instruction in smaller settings with limited distractions.

Various service options are available, in formats ranging from individual to small group instruction to inclusion in a local preschool class adjacent to the CASE program. Activities include gross motor group, circle time, oral motor group, language group, communication programs, fine motor skill development, cognitive/academic work sessions, symbolic or sensory play times, music, and self-help training. Behavioral consultation services are incorporated into the program, as needed, as are other specialty services, for example, the services of a teacher of the visually impaired or a teacher of the deaf. The CASE Consultation and Education Technology Team (CETT) provides individualized

consultation and training in the area of assistive technology and/or AAC for students in this class as well as other CASE programs.

## **Curriculum**

The curriculum for the Developmental Preschool is determined by the students' IEPs and follows the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks with appropriate modifications and accommodations. Monthly themes and special activities throughout the year are reflected in most aspects of the program, including therapies, as appropriate. Targeted areas include teaching of cognitive, academic, communication, motor, social, sensory, adaptive behavior, and self-help skills.

Individual and small group opportunities are available. A total communication approach is used to facilitate language development in the context of direct teaching and the natural environment. This includes use of spoken language, vocalization, objects, pictures, sign language, gestures and aided forms of communication. Circle time, art activities, cooking, singing, symbolic play, and snack/lunch provide opportunities for application of skills and generalization of concepts.

## **Inclusion Opportunities**

The CASE Developmental Preschool Program is located in the same area of Bedford High School as the local district's preschool programs. Our preschool students may join a preschool class for activities such as morning circle, choice time, or snack time. Activities with typically developing peers are incorporated into the schedule for many CASE students to enhance the development of language and social skills, and to provide opportunities for students to practice their skills in a more typical preschool setting.

## **Home/School Connections**

Parents/guardians are involved in their child's program in a variety of ways:

### **Clinics**

The home/school component of the CASE Developmental Preschool Program includes "clinics" for parents/guardians on a regular basis. Clinic meetings provide the opportunity for parent/guardian training, as well as coordination between home and school programming.

### **Notebooks**

Notebooks are sent home on a daily basis to communicate with parents/guardians. Parents/guardians are encouraged to write in their child's notebook regularly. Notebooks provide a vehicle for at-home training, as well as coordination between home and school programming.

### **Progress Reports and IEP Review Meetings**



Tri-annual progress reports and annual Team meetings for IEP review occur during the school year to update the progress that each child has made toward achieving the specific objectives delineated on his/her IEP.

### Support Group

CASE provides a parent/guardian support group throughout the year. This group is facilitated by our Program Specialist who sets agendas based on parent/guardian interests and needs. At times, speakers will be brought in to focus on particular topics.

### Extended School Year

Preschool students whose IEPs specify extended school year programming may continue in the CASE Preschool beyond the normal close of school in June. CASE provides a five-week extension of the program each summer, which is held at the air-conditioned Russell Street Elementary School in Littleton. The extended school year program addresses the students' IEP objectives in much the same manner as the regular school year program. However, formal parent/guardian -teacher meetings do not take place in the summer, and inclusionary programming is not available during the summer session.

For some students, extended school year services beyond the five-week summer school program are necessary. "Intercession" services are provided for students for whom the break in services between the school year and summer program would result in substantial regression of skills. The need for Intercession is determined by the student's Team, and Intercession services are provided by ABA Tutors, under the supervision of the BCBAs.

### Staffing and Services

- DESE Certified Special Education Teacher
- Board Certified Behavior Analysts
- Autism Program Specialist
- ABA Tutors
- Speech and Language Therapists
- Occupational Therapists
- Physical Therapists
- Adjustment Counselor/Social Worker
- Teaching Assistants
- Registered Nurse
- CETT (Assistive Technology Team)
- Others as required by students' IEPs (such as Teacher of the Visually Impaired, Teacher of the

Deaf, Orientation and Mobility Services)

### **School Calendar and Hours**

The CASE Developmental Preschool Program follows a calendar that closely aligns with the Bedford Public Schools. A parent/guardian-child open house is also scheduled prior to the first day of school. The preschool program runs from 8:15 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, and from 8:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. on Tuesdays, comprising a 30-hour instructional week. There is no scheduled naptime or recess; specialized activities are scheduled for the children in 30-minute modules throughout the day.

### **Referrals**

Placement in all CASE programs follows consensus by the sending school district, parent/guardian, and CASE staff. Current, signed IEP and placement pages are required for enrollment in all CASE classes. Referrals to a CASE program are initiated by the school district. Parents/guardians may obtain additional information about this or other CASE classes by contacting the special education office in their school district. District personnel may obtain additional information, including a referral form, by contacting the CASE Office as noted below.

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# **Program Description: Autism Spectrum Disorder**

## **Population Served**

The Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) Program serves students with developmental disabilities who are either on the PDD/Autism spectrum, or who require many of the same instructional strategies that students on the autism spectrum require. They may show deficits in any or all of the following areas:

- Communication skills including social pragmatics
- Social skills
- Adaptive behavior
- Sensory regulation or modulation
- Cognitive and/or academic skills
- Gross and/or fine motor skills
- Self-help and daily living skills

## **Program Description**

Students from preschool through high school are enrolled in self-contained classes which are housed in member school districts. The CASE ASD Program includes a preschool class, a primary grade class, an upper elementary class, a middle school class, a high school class and transition-age class.

The CASE ASD classes typically provide individualized programming with instruction in a 1:1 or 1:2 staff to student ratio. If the students are older and/or more independent, the staff to student ratio will decrease at which point some instruction might be delivered in a small group setting.

This is determined based on the needs of the students. Typically the younger students will be in a classroom of approximately six students, and older students may be in a classroom of approximately ten students. Therapy services for students are per the IEP but can be delivered both individually or in small groups. Therapy services are generally provided in the classroom to facilitate carryover by and consultation with the instructional staff. Although many of the students in these classrooms may be verbal, there are also students who communicate with the use of augmentative communication (e.g., pictures, sign, symbols, or speech generating devices). Common instructional strategies include:

- Structured teaching approach using the methodologies of Applied Behavior Analysis including

- discrete trials, incidental teaching opportunities, and systematic schedules of reinforcement
- Ample 1:1 instructional time
- Visual supports
- Total communication approach (i.e., verbal language, gesture, sign language, picture symbol communication, Picture Exchange Communication [PECs], AAC devices) as appropriate to individual needs
- Ongoing data collection with regular review for evaluation of student progress and procedural effectiveness
- DIR Floortime, particularly with younger students
- Parent/guardian training and/or consultation
- Sensory programming and/or other occupational therapy techniques
- Speech/language/communication programming
- Social skills training

Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs) work directly with each ASD class. They collaborate with teachers and therapists to identify appropriate goals and programs in areas such as adaptive behavior, communication, socialization, daily living skills, and cognitive/academic development. They directly supervise the ABA Tutors and monitor student progress in the IEP objectives which they address. They develop students' Individualized Behavior Intervention Plans with input from other Team members. They consult with all classroom staff and parents/guardians.

Our Autism Program Specialist also works directly with each ASD class. She provides direct services such as Floortime and social skills groups, along with consultation with staff and parents/guardians. She focuses primarily on students' social-emotional development and supports students' growth in areas such as conflict resolution, perspective-taking, conversing, and dealing with frustration.

The ASD classes are equipped to address a wide range of behaviors, and students will have, as a matter of routine, an individualized Behavior Intervention Plan, to be reviewed and updated annually or as needed. Examples of common behaviors that are addressed include noncompliance, tantrums, stereotypy, bolting, and flopping. Behaviors that compromise staff or student safety, or behaviors that make it difficult or impossible for other students in or near the classroom to learn are beyond the scope of the program. Examples of excluded behaviors include persistent screaming or intense, repeated aggression or self-injurious behavior.

Along with our own ASD classes, member districts may access ABA programming for students within their own district. This "ABA only" service allows for the provision of the direct services of ABA Tutors and the consultation of a BCBA in a student's home school with goals and objectives specified for ABA by the student's Team and IEP.

## **Curriculum**

The curriculum for the ASD classes is determined by the students' IEPs and follows the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks with appropriate modifications and accommodations. Various

assessments appropriate to the ASD population, such as the ABLLS-R and AFLS, are also used to guide target areas for instruction.

In our preschool and elementary programs, monthly themes and special activities throughout the year are reflected in most aspects of the program, including therapies, as appropriate. Targeted areas include teaching of cognitive, academic, communication, motor, social, sensory, adaptive behavior, and self-help skills. Individual and small group opportunities are available. A total communication approach is used to facilitate language development in the context of direct teaching and the natural environment. This includes use of spoken language, vocalization, objects, pictures, sign language, gestures and aided forms of communication. Circle time, art, cooking, singing, symbolic play, snack/lunch, gym and science provide opportunities for application of skills and generalization of concepts.

As students reach our middle school and high school programs, we begin to incorporate functional life skills, health and fitness, leisure, pre-vocational, and vocational skills. The classrooms are furnished with equipment to accommodate daily fitness routines. A small kitchen area accommodates our cooking curriculum. Focus is on independence, self-reliance, responsibility, and social maturity. These skills help to build a foundation leading to high school programming. As the students move to a transition-age program most of their learning of functional academics, life skills and vocational skills will be community-based.

Students go out into the community on a regular basis to apply their social, language, safety, and functional academic skills in natural, real life settings. This includes occasional curriculum-related field trips for all classes. Our upper elementary, middle school, and high school classes go swimming on a regular basis to serve both fitness and sensory needs. Community outings increase in our upper elementary, middle school, and high school classes to include practical activities such as ordering food at restaurants and purchasing groceries for cooking activities.

### **Inclusion Opportunities**

All students are identified with an age-appropriate grade level. They are included in general education classes and activities with their grade level peers, as deemed appropriate by the Team. Students are always supervised and supported by a CASE staff member in any of the inclusionary classes. Preschool students may join a preschool class for activities such as morning circle, choice time, or snack time. At the elementary, middle, and high school levels, inclusion programming most often occurs during “specials” such as art, music, physical education, and library, or in social activities such as lunch and recess. Some students are also included, per their IEPs, for academic classes, such as health, science and/or social studies. Students may participate in their grade level field trips and school assemblies.

In many of the schools, there is an opportunity for reverse mainstreaming. For example, our middle and high school Best Buddy program students from the general education classroom come into our classes to participate in small groups that focus on appropriate peer interactions, social skills, and

communication skills.

## **Home/School Connections**

Home/school communication is an important part of the CASE ASD Program. A daily notebook travels from home to school and school to home, to keep staff and parents/guardians' current regarding students' progress. The notebook is also an important tool to help the adults at home and at school to elicit pragmatic language, "news" from the students. As the student gets older he/she may carry his/her agenda to and from school. Parents/guardians can also determine with the teacher if email is a good option for communication. The ASD program also offers clinic meetings up through grade 8 on a regular basis to provide opportunities for parent/guardian training, sharing of information, and coordination between home and school. Annual IEP review meetings, parent/guardian-teacher conferences, and progress reports complete the range of options for parent/guardian-school communication.

CASE also provides a parent/guardian support group throughout the year. This group is facilitated by our Autism Program Specialist who sets agendas based on parent/guardian interests and needs. At times, speakers will be brought into focus on particular topics.

## **Extended School Year**

A five-week summer option is available for students whose IEPs call for an extended year program. The CASE Extended School Year Program, which is held at the air-conditioned Russell Street Elementary School in Littleton, addresses the students' IEP goals and benchmarks over the summer in much the same manner as the regular school year program. Inclusionary programming is not available during the summer session.

For some students, extended school year services beyond the five-week summer school program are necessary. "Intercession" services are provided for students for whom the break in services between the school year and summer program would result in substantial regression of skills. The need for Intercession is determined by the student's Team, and Intercession services are provided by ABA Tutors, under the supervision of the BCBAs.

## **Staffing and Services**

- DESE Certified Special Education Teachers, trained and experienced in ABA, and/or other best practice strategies and methodologies for working with students on the Autism spectrum (or students functioning in a manner similar to those on the spectrum)
- Board Certified Behavior Analysts
- Autism Program Specialist
- ABA Tutors
- Speech and Language Therapists
- Occupational Therapists

- Physical Therapists
- Adjustment Counselors/Social Workers
- Teaching Assistants
- CETT (Assistive Technology Team)
- Others as required by students' IEPs (such as Teacher of the Visually Impaired, Nurse, Teacher of the Deaf, Orientation and Mobility Services)

## **Referrals**

Placement in all CASE programs follows consensus by the sending school district, parent, and CASE staff. Current, signed IEP and placement pages are required for enrollment in all CASE classes. Referrals to a CASE program are initiated by the school district. Parents/guardians may obtain additional information about this or other CASE classes by contacting the special education office in their school district. District personnel may obtain additional information, including a referral form, by contacting the CASE Office as noted below.

For PK-8:

Sandra Daigneault

Program Administrator

978-318-1536

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For High School:

Deanne Cefalo

Program Administrator

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# **Program Description: Social-Emotional Program K – 8**

## **Population Served**

The CASE Collaborative Social-Emotional Program serves students with average or above average intellectual abilities who experience social, emotional, and/or behavioral difficulties, and have been unable to make adequate academic and social/emotional progress in the general education setting.

Students served in the CASE Social-Emotional Program may have one or more of the following characteristics:

- Poor impulse control
- Difficulty remaining on-task
- Difficulty with transitions
- Low tolerance for frustration
- Difficulty managing conflict
- Underdeveloped social skills
- Emotional and behavioral self-regulation difficulties
- Difficulty following the agenda of others
- Inflexible behavior
- Oppositional behavior
- Poor relationships with peers and/or adults
- Difficulty dealing with stress and/or anxiety
- Difficulty modulating moods

## **Program Description**

Students from kindergarten through eighth grade are enrolled in self-contained classes which are housed in member school districts. The CASE Social-Emotional Program includes an early elementary, an upper elementary class, and a middle school class.

The CASE Social-Emotional Program offers highly structured therapeutic classes that are academically challenging while also remaining supportive and sensitive to the individual needs of each student.



There are four primary components of the classrooms in the CASE Social-Emotional Program:

1. Each class has a challenging curriculum which mirrors the academic expectations of the host school and is aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, ensuring students access to the general education curriculum.
2. Each class is based on the therapeutic milieu model which emphasizes support, structure, and consistent expectations for all students throughout the school day. Each interaction students have is an opportunity for them to learn and build new skills.
3. CASE classes foster a sense of community and belonging in which students feel respected, cared for, and valued as people and capable learners.
4. Behavior management is based on classroom values of safety, respect, and responsibility. Students are supported by the individualized use of various behavior interventions, which all emphasize skill-building and increasing self-control and self-management.

The staff utilizes a team model in providing therapeutic intervention services to students. The team includes the counselor, teachers, administrator, parents/guardians, other school personnel, and professionals from collateral agencies who may be working with a student and his/her family. Consistent communication among all team members enables students to receive the most comprehensive and individualized educational services needed to address their needs.

The counselor and teacher use a variety of strategies to cultivate a class culture that fosters a sense of safety, respect and appreciation of others. In addition, each student is provided individual therapy sessions and weekly group counseling with the program counselor.

Parents/guardians are asked to sign a release of information allowing the counselor to be in contact with the student's outside providers (e.g., therapist, psychiatrist, social worker, etc.). It is important that program staff and outside providers work collaboratively to offer the most comprehensive and unified treatment opportunities.

A comprehensive behavior management system is provided for students for whom structure and external limits are important elements in helping them manage and contain their behavior. A daily point system, individual and group behavioral contracts, positive reinforcement, and other forms of behavioral management strategies may be utilized to assist students with self-regulation and self-control issues.

An important goal for every student is to gain an increasing awareness of his or her strengths and challenges. The educational climate within each classroom is designed to promote learning by:

1. Creating a comfortable, non-threatening, caring environment for learning;
2. Engaging students personally through the use of journals, discussion, sharing, reflection; and
3. Helping students recognize and use adaptive coping and problem-solving strategies.

## **Curriculum**

The curriculum for the class is determined by students' IEPs and is designed to mirror the general education curriculum and academic expectations, as well as to meet the guidelines of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Highly specialized instruction is provided to students individually and in small groups. Instructional methodology, strategies and accommodations are designed to preserve the integrity of the curriculum while meeting students' individual learning needs. Students participate in mandated standardized testing, i.e., MCAS, with appropriate accommodations as specified in their IEPs.

## **Inclusion Opportunities**

While the model of each class is that of a self-contained structure, inclusion in general education classes is possible and encouraged. Some students require the structure and therapeutic support of the CASE classroom for the entire school day, while other students participate in one or more general education classes, as determined by their individual needs and abilities. They are included in general education classes and activities with their grade level peers, as deemed appropriate by the Team. Students are always supervised and supported by a CASE staff member in any of the inclusionary classes.

The goal for all students in the CASE Social-Emotional Program is to develop the necessary academic and social skills to enable them to be included in general education classes. Each student in a CASE Social-Emotional class is assigned by grade to a general education class(es) or team in the school. Opportunities exist for students to be included in academic and non-academic classes and activities, including extracurricular activities, as deemed appropriate by the student's special education Team. CASE Social-Emotional Program staff/administrator and host school staff/administrator work together to address issues that may preclude a student from participating in any school-wide event or activity.

Close monitoring of student progress, as well as consistent communication between CASE Social-Emotional Program staff and host school staff occurs to ensure the success of the students' inclusion experiences.

## **Home/School Connections**

Regular communication among the teacher, the counselor, and parents/guardians regarding student progress is critical to student success. Parents/guardians and staff establish a communication system that meets their individual needs.

Parent/ guardian and counselor meetings are available for parents/guardians seeking additional support during periods of increased stress or crisis. Parents/guardians may also meet with the teacher and counselor on a regular basis to address their needs in supporting the growth and

progress of their student. When appropriate, the counselor may assist parents/guardians in obtaining outside services (e.g., counseling).

In the event that a student needs crisis intervention services beyond the scope of what can be provided in a school setting (e.g., psychiatric hospitalization, Department of Students and Family Services, Department of Mental Health Services), CASE Social-Emotional Program staff assists parents/guardians in accessing these services.

Program staff recognizes the valuable resource parents/guardians can be for other parents/guardians. The counselor will facilitate opportunities to bring parents/guardians together to capitalize on this resource, allowing parents/guardians to support and guide one another.

### **Extended School Year**

A five-week summer option is available for students in kindergarten through grade six whose IEPs call for an extended year program. The CASE Extended School Year Program, which is held at the air-conditioned Russell Street Elementary School in Littleton, addresses the students' IEP goals and benchmarks over the summer in much the same manner as the regular school year program.

A six-week summer option is available to students in grades six through eight whose IEPs call for an extended year program. The CASE-Camp Triumph Program, which is held at the air- conditioned John Glenn Middle School in Bedford allows students to access all components of Camp Triumph, a specialized summer day program for students with social/emotional/behavioral challenges. Additionally, students receive small group tutoring in English language arts and/or mathematics to prevent regression of academic skills in these areas.

Inclusionary programming is not available during the summer session.

### **Staffing and Services**

- DESE Certified Special Education Teachers
- School Adjustment Counselors/Social Workers
- Speech and Language Therapists
- Occupational Therapists
- Physical Therapists
- Reading Specialists
- Teaching Assistants
- CETT (Assistive Technology Team)
- Others as required by students' IEPs (e.g., Nurse, BCBA consultation, Teacher of the Deaf consultation)

### **Referrals**

Placement in all CASE programs follows consensus by the sending school district, parent/guardian, and CASE staff. Current, signed IEP and placement pages are required for enrollment in all CASE classes. Referrals to a CASE program are initiated by the school district. Parents/ guardians may obtain additional information about this or other CASE classes by contacting the special education office in their school district. District personnel may obtain additional information, including a referral form, by contacting the CASE Office as noted below.

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Program Administrator

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# Program Description: Colebrook High School

## Population Served

Colebrook High School (CHS), a CASE Collaborative program, serves adolescents with average or above average intellectual abilities who experience social, emotional, and/or behavioral difficulties, and have been unable to make adequate academic and social/emotional progress in the general education setting. Students served in the CASE Colebrook Program may have one or more of the following characteristics:

- Respond well to praise and are motivated to do well in school
- Respond well to structure and a predictable environment
- Are capable of forming appropriate relationships with peers and adults
- Need accommodations to access the general education curriculum
- Demonstrate empathy and are accepting of others
- Are self-reflective
- Struggle with peer and adult relationships
- Have maladaptive coping mechanisms for anxiety, frustration, or stressors
- Struggle with mood regulation
- Have low self-esteem
- Have difficulty self-advocating
- Have difficulty reading social cues
- Have sensory integration deficits
- Have executive functioning difficulties
- Avoid activities that cause anxiety
- Have difficulty taking responsibility for their actions
- Exhibit poor impulse control
- Have low frustration tolerance
- Have difficulty navigating transitions
- Demonstrate rigidity/lack of flexibility
- Exhibit oppositional behavior
- Exhibit poor decision-making skills

Students must demonstrate a level of self-control that ensures they will not endanger themselves or others. The facility, the program design, and the staffing are not adequate to manage a student who

is in need of physical restraint. Maintaining an environment in which students feel safe is an important aspect of the program. If a student needs adults to impose physical constraints to provide that safety, s/he is in need of a more restrictive setting.

## **Program Description**

Colebrook High School is located in the Acton/Boxborough Public Schools complex in the Administration Building. CHS is a fully approved MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Department (DESE) public day school program.

The Colebrook High School program serves adolescents who have experienced difficulties and/or failures in general education settings. The intent of the program is to serve as a catalyst in breaking a negative cycle for these students. It also functions as a stepping-stone for students returning to school from a hospitalization or residential placement, before their return to their district high schools or other post-graduate educational program.

## **Academics**

Challenging academics are the top program priority. A core belief is that, as a school, the primary way to positively impact a student's self-esteem is through the experience of academic success. Appropriate accommodations and specialized instruction are utilized to address disabilities, learning styles, and emotional issues that may interfere with student learning.

Students receive individualized academic instruction and support. Class sizes range between 5- 12 students. Each student is also assigned an Academic Advisor.

## **Academic Regroup**

Some Colebrook students experience executive functioning difficulties. This may impact their planning, organization, attention, and transitions. Without appropriate support and structure, students may experience stress and anxiety as they attempt to compensate for these difficulties. Some students present as confused and anxious between classes as they transition and prepare for upcoming classes. Academic Regroup is a structured and supportive initiative with the goal of increasing student independence.

Every two academic periods all students gather in the community room with a staff facilitator. The staff person checks in with students to determine what materials they need for the next two periods. The intent of such intervention is to help students ritualize and internalize school preparation skills.

Following Academic Regroup, should a student arrive to class unprepared in any way, s/he will receive an Academic Regroup In-house Disciplinary Period. These students are then released 5- 10 minutes before the end of the period to check in with the teacher about what was missed, get

homework, and, if needed, to schedule a meeting with a teacher during a directed study period to make up any work missed.

### **Therapeutic Milieu with Student and Family Therapeutic Services**

A therapeutic milieu is a structured group setting in which the existence of the group is a key force in the outcome of student progress. Using the combined elements of positive peer pressure, trust, safety and repetition, the therapeutic milieu provides an idealized setting for group members to work through emotional and relational issues.

The milieu evolves from the implementation and infusion of all program components within the context of a set of collectively adopted school-based values. Colebrook staff offers immediate feedback and provides necessary interventions in the milieu. Students also receive 1:1 therapy, a variety of therapy groups, and parent support services, including family therapy.

### **Community Building**

It is important for students to feel a sense of community and school spirit at Colebrook, while remaining connected to the home school community. Students are encouraged and empowered to take the responsibility to create the type of school they desire based on commonly accepted school-based values.

### **School Performance and Self-Regulation Systems**

The Level System provides a self-monitoring system for students to track their own progress across academic and social/emotional/behavioral domains, leading to success. The Level System also provides for students who may be functioning at varying school performance levels, recognizing and rewarding those functioning at a high level and providing additional supports for those who may be struggling.

These program components provide the operating structures within the therapeutic context of a "Relationship Model of Intervention". The goal is to use the staff-student relationship to guide students through an exploration of their attitudes, values and behaviors, and to encourage and reinforce developmentally appropriate academic, emotional and social growth. Through this process students are consistently recognized and supported for their positive choices and progress, while they also are held accountable for their behaviors by taking responsibility.

Students are given opportunities to take on a leadership roles. The culture at Colebrook is one in which students can become role models for each other. Students need to feel safe and comfortable to explore and develop their strengths and skills, re-channeling them in more productive, constructive and self-affirming ways.

Students gain peer status by working within the program systems, their progress being recognized

through weekly awards, increased privileges and responsibilities, participation in work-study opportunities, and inclusion in the general education program and/or activities.

## **Curriculum**

Colebrook High School provides a rigorous academic program that is aligned with MA Curriculum Frameworks and the Common Core Standards, intensive therapeutic support and intervention and comprehensive transition services. Academic credits earned are directly transferred to a sending district transcript. Students receive diplomas from their sending districts.

## **Inclusion Opportunities**

While most Colebrook students initially attend all academic classes at Colebrook, there are opportunities to participate in inclusion classes and other school experiences at Acton/Boxborough Regional High School (ABRHS), as appropriate. Students involved in these inclusion opportunities must comply with ABRHS and Colebrook attendance and other expectations.

## **Home/School Connections**

There is immeasurable value of working as a team with families. It is understood that many families may experience considerable stress and isolation. Thus, Colebrook staff is committed to finding opportunities to support parents and encourage them to be active participants in the school community. Parent support services, including family therapy, are part of the Colebrook Program.

## **45-Day Interim Alternative Education Setting**

The Colebrook High School Assessment and Intervention Program is an interim alternative educational setting that students attend daily for up to 45 school days. The program provides students with a structured, safe, and therapeutic school environment, while allowing a team of educators and clinicians to work with students, their parents, and their school districts to determine their educational needs.

Students are referred by their school district and we ask that the district provide a set of diagnostic questions. The questions help define specific goal(s) during the interim period, as well as to identify the appropriate assessments to be administered. Students are infused into Colebrook classes, as it is important to assess daily classroom functioning and to determine learning needs. 1:1 tutoring may also be provided if necessary. Students are also infused into the Colebrook therapeutic milieu, during non-academic periods in order to provide a baseline social context in which to assess students social functioning.

Each student and family is assigned a caseworker who provides 1:1 therapy, conducts clinical and social assessments, and meets with parents during the course of the assessment period. Students also participate in group therapy and wellness classes.



Assessment services include a psycho-social report, an academic report, which includes a summary of academic functioning and a listing of completed assignments from each course teacher. Specific recommendations are based upon classroom and clinical observations, clinical interviews, interviews with family and other service providers, a review of all relevant records, and results from identified formal assessments. The recommendations clarify for students, parents and districts the current academic and social/emotional needs to guide them in determining an appropriate school placement.

### **Extended School Year**

A five-week summer option is available for Colebrook students whose IEPs call for an extended year program. Inclusionary programming is not available during the summer

### **Staffing and Services**

- Program Administrator
- Social Studies Teacher
- Science Teacher
- English Teacher
- Mathematics Teacher
- Teaching Assistant(s)
- 3 School Adjustment Counselors/Social Workers
- Transition Specialist and Teacher for Extended Opportunities
- Clinical Psychologist (Consultant)
- Resource Officer (In partnership with Action/Boxborough Schools)

### **Referrals**

Placement in all CASE programs follows consensus by the sending school district, parent/guardian, and CASE staff. New, signed IEP and placement pages are required for enrollment in all CASE classes. Referrals to a CASE program are initiated by the school district. Parents/guardians may obtain additional information about this, or other CASE classes by contacting the special education office in their school district. District personnel may obtain additional information, including a referral form, by contacting the Colebrook Office as noted below.

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Colebrook Program Administrator  
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# **Service to Communities: The CASE CETT Team Consultation, Education and Training for Technology**

## **Mission**

The Mission of the CASE CETT Team is to support the use of Assistive Technology for students from the CASE Collaborative communities. The CETT Team strives to provide guidance, support and consultation to educational teams in the selection and use of appropriate assistive technology that will help students access the curriculum and/or meet individual educational goals.

## **Consultations**

The team provides assistive technology consultations to CASE classrooms and member districts for individual students. A few of the many areas that the CETT Team's consultations focus on are alternative-augmentative communication (AAC), reading, written expression, and physical access to curriculum. Consultations often include observations, meeting with the special education Team to discuss possible assistive technology interventions, training when necessary, field testing with a student and a written report summarizing recommendations.

## **CASE Classroom Consultations**

The CETT Team provides assistive technology services to all CASE classrooms. The CETT Team assists special educators and therapists in the selection of, and training for, various assistive technology equipment, and acts as a resource for sharing tools and tips. This support is individualized, based on the needs of each classroom. Examples have included: developing switch accessible digital books for preschoolers; staff training on Kurzweil 3000, Classroom Suite and Word Prediction software; Talking Word Processors and Dragon Naturally Speaking; and working with staff to create video modeling projects for use in the classroom. Assistance may take place in a single brainstorming session or ongoing monthly meetings to discuss assistive technology solutions. The CASE CETT Team is available to all CASE classrooms.

## **AAC Consultations**

The CETT Team provides consultations to special educators and therapists to help determine the most appropriate alternative-augmentative communication (AAC) system for students. CETT loans low- and high-tech devices, from single message switches to dynamic display devices. Support with AAC devices is provided through assistance with renting devices for trial periods, assessment of

device effectiveness, programming, training on programming and use, and helping families obtain private funding for the purchase of devices.

### **Lending Library**

The CETT Team has an assortment of both low- and high-tech Assistive Technology tools in their lending library. The library has a range of software and hardware, including AAC devices that are available on a short-term loan basis. The purpose of this lending library is to provide educators and students with the opportunity to try these products prior to purchasing them. The CETT Team is continuously reviewing new equipment on the market and making purchases, as appropriate, to ensure that current assistive technology tools are available for loan.

### **Assistive Technology Training**

The CASE CETT Team provides workshops for staff and parents of students in CASE Collaborative classrooms who are interested in learning more about Assistive Technology. Staff workshops are scheduled yearly through the CASE Professional Development office and are open to educators in CASE community member districts. Examples of recent workshops include "iPad Apps for Special Education", "Selecting the Right App for Your Child", "Intro to Video Modeling", and "Boardmaker and Beyond".

### **CASE CETT Team Professional Development**

Members of the CASE CETT Team pursue continuing professional study in the area of assistive technology by attending national conferences, including Closing The Gap and Assistive Technology Industry Association. In addition, they participate in list serves such as QIAT (Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology), and blogs, such as SpeechTechie.com.

### **Contact Information**

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Russell Street School

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## **Service to Member Districts: Transportation**

CASE Transportation transports students who reside in CASE Transportation districts to and from public or private special education programs. Transportation assessments are based upon transporting a student to and/or from school on a set schedule. The transportation administrator makes every effort to contain costs while providing safe transportation for students in CASE districts.

The transportation office consolidates runs within the constraints of a student's IEP. District requests impacting efficiency include factors such as: the need for wheelchair/lift vans; requirements for time in transport lower than required by regulation; additional wait time on pick up or drop off; multiple pick-up and drop off schedules to the same location; monitors, service animals, and/or medical support accompanying the student; and requests for additional vans to separate students.

CASE transportation works closely with districts and student placements to define and implement positive behavioral supports for students in an effort to meet student needs and provide the efficiency of consolidated routes. The transportation administrator works with district liaisons to remind them of the additional costs to the district associated with unique student schedules. In many cases this is unavoidable as a necessary component of the student's IEP; however, at times, adjustments are considered and implemented.

## Cost Effectiveness: Programs

During 2013-2014, CASE Collaborative restructured its budget methodology and fee structure to arrive at tiered tuition costs for its various program strands. This has resulted in rates that are truer to the actual cost of operating individual classrooms, rather than an averaged rate for all programs. CASE provides service levels comparable to those of the private programs listed, while offering the added benefit of providing those services in a less restrictive, more inclusive environment.

### ***Developmental Disabilities***

#### **Alternative to McCarthy-Towne P (DD)**

"Equalized" average total tuition (non-CASE programs)-205 days	\$96,415.09
CASE Collaborative	\$76,790.00

*Comparable programs include: Community Therapeutic; Cotting; Perkins Multi-Impaired*

#### **Alternative to McCarthy-Towne UE (DD)**

"Equalized" average total tuition (non-CASE programs)-205 days	\$77,420.05
CASE Collaborative	\$76,790.00

*Comparable programs include: Cardinal Cushing; Cotting; Protestant Guild*

#### **Alternative to Carlisle (LLD/DD)**

"Equalized" average total tuition (non-CASE programs)-205 days	\$72,585.63
CASE Collaborative	\$76,790.00

*Comparable programs include: Little People's School; Community Therapeutic; Cotting; Milestones*

#### **Alternative to Fowler I (DD)**

"Equalized" average total tuition (non-CASE programs)-205 days	\$85,276.44
CASE Collaborative	\$76,790.00

*Comparable programs include: Cardinal Cushing; Cotting; Perkins Multi-Impaired; Protestant Guild*

#### **Alternative to Fowler Moderate 1 & 2 (DD)**

"Equalized" average total tuition (non-CASE programs)-205 days	\$73,282.81
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CASE Collaborative \$76,790.00

*Comparable programs include: Clearway; McLean Hospital; Milestones; Willow Hill*

## **Cost Effectiveness: Developmental Disabilities - Intensive**

### **Alternative to Bedford PS (DD-INT)**

"Equalized" average total tuition (non-CASE programs)-205 days \$104,476.59  
CASE Collaborative \$88,767.00

*Comparable programs include: BC Campus; Crotched Mountain (NH); Franciscan's; Perkins Multi-Impaired; Perkins Severely Impaired; Professional Center*

### **Alternative to Davis (DD-INT)**

"Equalized" average total tuition (non-CASE programs)-205 days \$104,476.59  
CASE Collaborative \$88,767.00

*Comparable programs include: BC Campus; Crotched Mountain (NH); Franciscan's; Perkins Multi-Impaired; Perkins Severely Impaired; Professional Center*

### **Alternative to Lincoln (DD-INT)**

"Equalized" average total tuition (non-CASE programs)-205 days \$104,476.59  
CASE Collaborative \$88,767.00

*Comparable programs include: BC Campus; Crotched Mountain (NH); Franciscan's; Perkins Multi-Impaired; Perkins Severely Impaired; Professional Center*

## **Cost Effectiveness: Developmental Preschool**

### **Alternative to Bedford PS (SC/DD/ASD)**

"Equalized" average total tuition (non-CASE programs)-205 days \$94,304.67  
CASE Collaborative \$84,339.00

*Comparable programs include: Crossroads; May Inst. (Randolph); May Inst. (Woburn); Melmark; Nashoba Learning Group; NECC, intensive; Sterling Nursery School*

## **Cost Effectiveness: Autism Spectrum Disorders**

### **Alternative to Hildreth (ASD/SC)**

"Equalized" average total tuition (non-CASE programs)-205 days	\$89,649.99
CASE Collaborative	\$84,339.00

*Comparable programs include: Boston Higashi; Crossroads; League; May Inst. (Randolph); Melmark; Nashoba Learning Group; NECC, intensive; Protestant Guild*

### **Alternative to Russell Street (ASD)**

"Equalized" average total tuition (non-CASE programs)-205 days	\$89,649.99
CASE Collaborative	\$84,339.00

*Comparable programs include: Boston Higashi; Crossroads; League; May Inst. (Randolph); Melmark; Nashoba Learning Group; NECC, intensive; Protestant Guild*

### **Alternative to Littleton MS (ASD)**

"Equalized" average total tuition (non-CASE programs)-205 days	\$90,634.58
CASE Collaborative	\$84,339.00

*Comparable programs include: Crossroads; League; May Inst. (Randolph); McLean Hosp.; Melmark; Milestones; Nashoba Learning Group; NECC, intensive; NECC, day*

## **Cost Effectiveness: Alternative Program K - 8**

### **Alternative to Blanchard Early Elementary (SE)**

"Equalized" average total tuition (non-CASE programs)-205 days	\$81,506.94
CASE Collaborative	\$63,317.00

*Comparable programs include: Community Therapeutic; Dearborn; Italian Home; Judge Baker Childrens Ctr, Manville; McLean Hospital; Walker*

### **Alternative to Blanchard Upper Elementary (SE)**

"Equalized" average total tuition (non-CASE programs)-205 days	\$81,506.94
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CASE Collaborative \$63,317.00

*Comparable programs include: Community Therapeutic; Dearborn; Italian Home; Judge Baker Childrens Ctr, Manville; McLean Hospital; Walker*

**Alternative to Sanborn Middle School (SE)**

"Equalized" average total tuition (non-CASE programs) - 209 days \$79,005.15

CASE Collaborative \$63,317.00

*Comparable programs include: McLean Hosp., Arlington; Bay Cove; Community Therapeutic; Dearborn; Italian Home; Judge Baker, Manville; NE Academy; McLean Hospital*

**Cost Effectiveness:  
Colebrook High School**

**Alternative to Colebrook (SE)**

"Equalized" average total tuition (non-CASE programs) - 195 days \$68,705.22

CASE Collaborative \$63,317.00

*Comparable programs include: McLean Hosp., Arlington; McLean Hosp.; Milestones; Walker, Beacon High; James Farr Acad.; NE Academy; JRI, Victor School*

**Cost Effectiveness: Transportation**

CASE Transportation currently provides services to all of CASE's member communities. In addition to its commitment to providing safe, efficient and courteous transportation for children with disabilities who reside in CASE districts, CASE Transportation maximizes efficiency and minimizes cost to participating towns by networking students across communities and stacking routes to enhance vehicle capacity. One of the largest cost drivers for special education transportation is the specialized nature of the service: a district may be sending only one or two students to a particular school or program, resulting in a fee which reflects the entire cost of the vehicle and labor used to transport the child. CASE Transportation cuts cost to its districts by combining students from various communities on single vehicles, which are then used to bring students to multiple destinations.

In the graphs on page 42, a sampling of student data representing one hundred and five\* vehicles used on outbound trips to transport five hundred and twenty two\* students to school is used to demonstrate the efficiency of the collaborative approach.

\* Not all students are transported both to and from school; vehicle assignments may differ on inbound



and outbound trips.

## CASE Collaborative - Program Enrollment (SY2016 - 17)

*Percentage of CASE students representing member towns and non-member towns*

SCHOOL DISTRICTS	ENROLLMENTS Start of year 2016/2017	ADDS	DELETES	ENROLLMENTS AS OF 6/30/17	%
Acton/Boxborough	20	+3	-7	+16	12.4%
Bedford	5		-1	+4	3.1%
Carlisle	1			+1	0.8%
Concord	18		-2	+16	12.4%
Concord/Carlisle	4			+4	3.1%
Harvard	7	+1	-3	+5	3.9%
Lincoln & Lincoln/Hanscom	11	+6	-2	+15	11.6%
Lincoln/Sudbury	6	+1		+7	5.4%
Littleton	7	+4	-1	+10	7.8%
Maynard	2	+1		+3	2.3%
Sudbury	3	+2	-1	+4	3.1%
<b>MEMBER TOWNS</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>+18</b>	<b>-17</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>65.9%</b>
<b>NON-MEMBER TOWNS</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>+6</b>	<b>-11</b>	<b>+44</b>	<b>34.1%</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>+24</b>	<b>-28</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

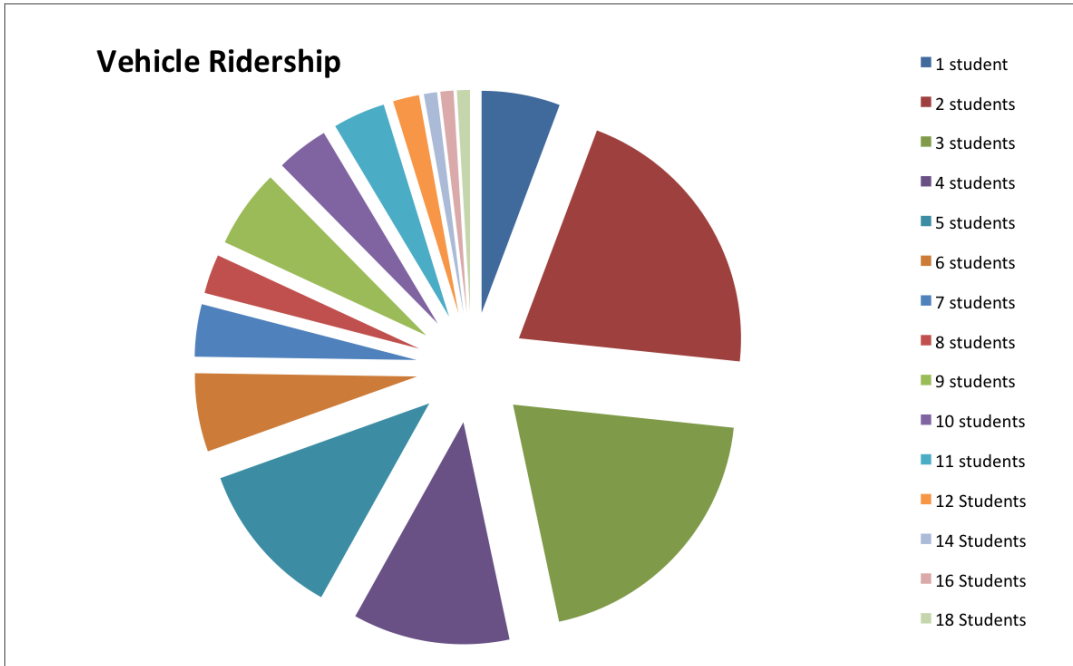
*Grade level representation of students SY2016-17*

LEVELS	A/B	BED	CAR	CON	C/C	HAR	LIN L/H	L/S	LITT	MAY	SUD	OTHER	TOTALS
PRE-SCHOOL	1			1			5				1	4	12
ELEMENTARY		1		5		1	2		2	1	1	3	16
ELEMENTARY-Middle	7	1	1	4			4	1				10	28
MIDDLE	1			6		1	4	2	1	1	1	11	28
HIGH	7	2			4	3		4	7	1	1	16	45
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>129</b>

## CASE Collaborative - Transportation Enrollment (SY2016-17)

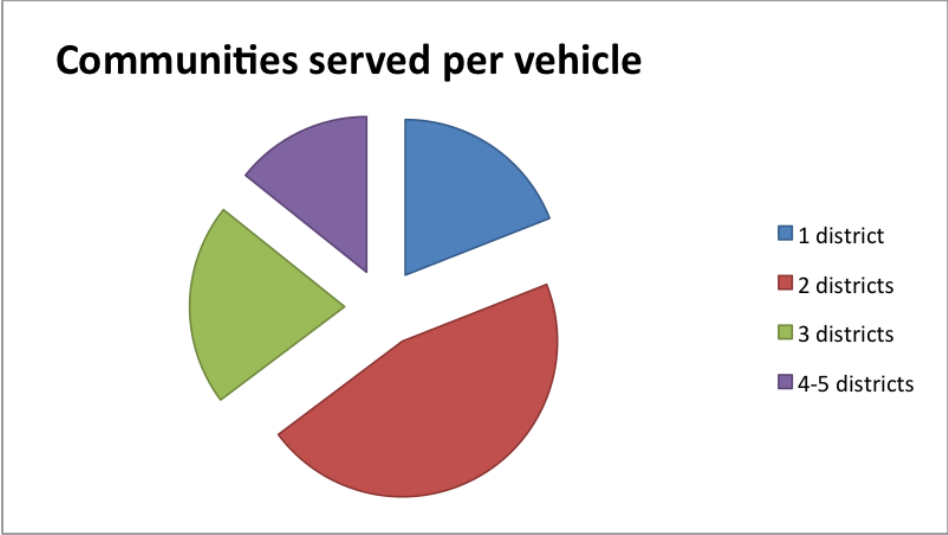
**Graph 1**

Of the 105 vehicles in the data sample, 99 (94%) vehicles transport two or more students to school.



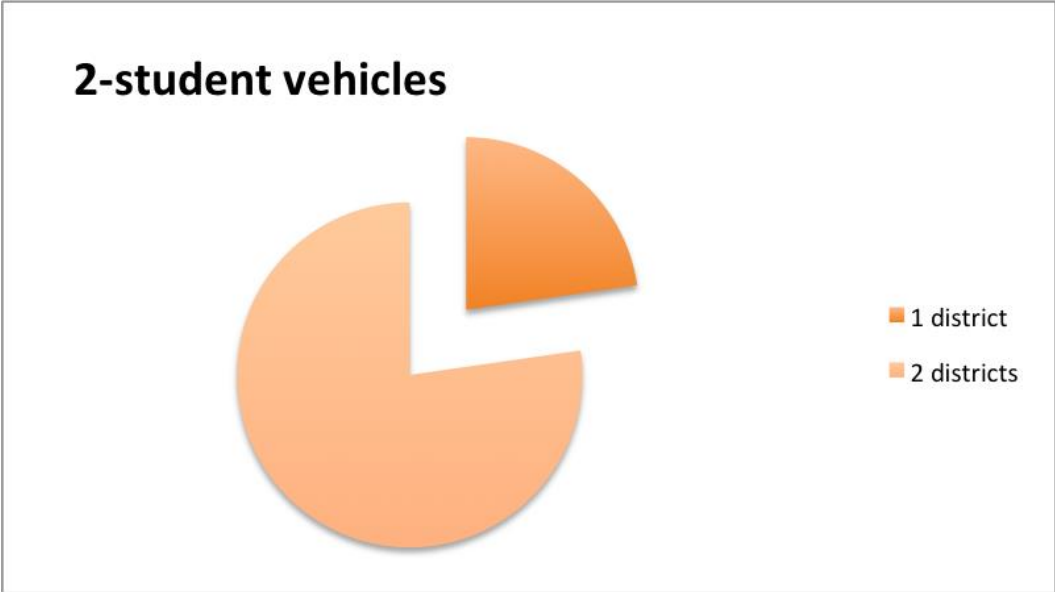
**Graph 2**

Of 105 vehicles used, 85 (80%) vehicles transport students from two or more CASE communities.



**Graph 3**

Of the 22 vehicles which transport two students to school, 17 (77%) vehicles, carry students from two districts. It is reasonable to imagine that if these students were not networked through CASE Transportation, each of the two districts might be paying to transport those students singly to their destinations.



# CASE Collaborative - CETT Consults (SY2016 - 17)

CASE Collaborative = 10 Consults

Member Towns = 24 Consults

Non Member Towns = 8 Consults

**Total = 42 Consults**

2016-17	Assistive Technology Consults	AAC Consults
Case Collaborative	2	8
Member Towns	16	8
Non-Member Towns	4	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>20</b>

## **CASE Collaborative - CETT Consults (SY2017 - Present)**

CASE Collaborative = 15 Consults

Member Towns = 17 Consults

Non Member Towns = 7 Consults

**Total in 2017 = 39 Consults**

<b>2017-18</b>	<b>Assistive Technology Consults</b>	<b>AAC Consults</b>
<b>Case Collaborative</b>	1	14
<b>Member Towns</b>	11	6
<b>Non-Member Towns</b>	1	6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>26</b>

# **Fiscal Year 2017 Audit Report**

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The CASE Board of Directors commissioned an independent auditors' report for the year ending June 30, 2017 from Melanson Heath Accountants & Auditors. The findings were presented to and accepted by the Board of Directors at their December 8, 2017 Meeting.