



**Mission:** *To work in partnership with districts to provide programs and services of the highest quality and to improve results for students.*

## Executive Director’s Report: September 2014

This Executive Director’s Report is intended to serve two major purposes: First, it is intended to inform Board Members of major developments since the last Board meeting. Second, it is intended to stimulate discussion of significant issues at the Board of Directors meeting on September 10, 2014.

### Review of Accomplishments: Summer 2014

**Status of Programs and Services: June 30 – September 6.** As of June 30, enrollment in CAPS programs was 98. Enrollment in specific CAPS programs from April 2014 to September 2014 is shown in the table below. As always, the Extended School Year (ESY) enrollment fluctuated, but averaged 78 students. In other words, over 75 percent of the students attending CAPS programs during the school year participated in ESY programs. The increased percentage reflects both the changing nature of our student population as well as the quality of our ESY programs.

<b>CAPS Enrollment by Program: April 2014 to September 2014</b>					
<b>Program</b>	<b>April</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>June</b>	<b>September</b>	
Jr/Sr High	16	15	16	17	
Gateway	19	19	19	13	
Odyssey	4	4	4	2	
Kelly Day Pre	8	8	8	11	
Kelly Day Elem	8	8	8	7	
Kelly Day High School	5	5	5	6	
Jr. Senators	8	8	8	9	
Sr. Senators	8	8	9	9	
Horizons	8	7	7	6	
Deaf pre	7	7	7	7	
DHHP Middle	0	0	0	3	
LINK	7	7	7	2	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>92</b>	

***Progress toward meeting goals for 2013-2014.*** Major goals for 2013-2014 school year were (1) Move programs and central office from School Street; (2) Replace coordinators for alternative education and satellite programs; and (3) Enhance professional development opportunities for CAPS staff. The first goal was accomplished by moving the central office (shared space with FLLAC) as well as the Gateway and Jr./Sr. high programs to the Sonoma Square complex in Westminster. The second goal was accomplished through the hiring of Mr. Kyle Harrington to replace Ms. Kathy Figueira as Program Coordinator for the Gateway and Jr./Sr. High programs. As 2013-14 Board members know, Ms. Sheri D'Annolfo was hired as Satellite Program Coordinator on February 1, 2014 replacing Ms. Barbara White. Ms. D'Annolfo is Coordinator for Kelly Day, Senators, and Horizons programs. In addition, she has assumed responsibility for supervision of the DHHP Preschool as well as the new DHHP Middle School program in Winchendon. Regarding Goal #3, we have expanded professional development opportunities for all staff, but this remains a goal for the 2014-15 school year.

Other changes/accomplishments are addressed in separate sections below:

**Sonoma Square:** The lease for the Sonoma Square property was signed on July 3, 2014. The landlord had made substantial renovations to the property in anticipation of the signing of the lease. More work has been done since the lease was signed, and only a few facility issues remain. Both July and August were devoted to addressing wiring issues, establishing the new phone system, and securing internet access. The central offices for CAPS and FLLAC were moved to Sonoma Square in mid-August, and the Gateway and Jr./Sr. High programs were moved on August 15 and 16.

Board members need to be aware that Justin Nussey took the initiative and took the majority of responsibility for ensuring that systems (e.g., internet access, phone systems, etc.) were in place for both programs and central office functions. Establishing these systems required considerable work (including work on weekends), and the move to Sonoma Square would not have been possible without Justin's hard work.

**Board Visits to Programs:** Board members are encouraged to visit our programs. Changes include (1) expansion of Hubbardston Center programs; (2) establishing a middle school program for deaf/hard of hearing students; and (3) Gateway and Jr./Sr. High moving to Sonoma Square.

**Preliminary Financials for FY15:** A spreadsheet with a three-year profit/loss statement will be provided as a handout at the September Board meeting. The statement provides the actuals for FY 13 and FY 14 and a projection for FY 15.

**Update on Audit FY 14:** As Board members know, McCarthy, Hargrave, & Co. were hired as the auditors for FY 14. Preliminary financials have been sent to the auditors, and field work has been planned for later in September. On a related issue, Mr. Murray Cox has been hired as the CAPS Treasurer following the resignation of Mr. Joseph Piniarski. Mr. Cox has taken a proactive role as Treasurer and has been actively involved in reviewing financial documents and has met with the Warrant Subcommittee to discuss account payable and payroll procedures.

## **Major Goals for SY14-15:**

***Professional Development/Learning Skills.*** As mentioned above, professional development for staff remains a goal for 2014-2015. The changing nature of the population of CAPS students requires more training in behavior management, dealing with students with more complex medical needs, and enhancing assessments of student progress. In the area of administration, professional development is needed in meeting DESE requirements in staff evaluations, RETELL, DDMs, and other initiatives. Training on enhancing the efficiency of internal operations is also needed.

***Sustainability of Programs/Staff Morale.*** As is obvious from this report, CAPS staff has experienced dramatic changes over the last year. In fact, CAPS is a vastly different organization than it was five years ago. The rapid nature of change has resulted in a great deal of uncertainty and anxiety for CAPS staff. A goal for this year is to strengthen programs through enhancing program sustainability and improving staff morale. This issue was raised by the Policy Subcommittee two years ago and remains a major concern. In addition, Satellite Program Coordinator, Sheri D'Annolfo, has been working on staff morale issues and building highly-productive staff teams since she was hired. She is also working to establish a CAPS-wide wellness program.

***Bussing.*** The Board had requested that CAPS examine the feasibility of expanding transportation services to member districts. CAPS decided to generate a report that examined the cost/benefit to CAPS member district as an approach to addressing and discussing this issue. Mr. John Mara (Odyssey teacher and Special Projects at CAPS) developed such a report based on an analysis of transportation services to Ashburnham/Westminster Regional School District. The report is included as a handout for the September 10 Board meeting. The report is intended to stimulate discussion of whether expanding CAPS transportation services should be a goal for 2014-15.

**MOEC/Collaborative Developments:** On September 4, CAPS and FLLAC hosted a Central MA Collaboratives meeting at Sonoma Square. Steve Theall, MOEC Director, and all five Collaborative Directors attended. Issues discussed included Student Information Systems, DDMs, recent Assabet Valley Workshops of Teacher Evaluation, enrollment fluctuations, and difficulties in collecting payments from districts. Job-Alike meetings were also discussed, and it was decided that Mr. Peter Gagnon (former Program Coordinator of CAPS alternative programs) take the lead in arranging meetings of Central MA Collaborative alternative education program coordinators. Establishing a regional alternative education conference would be a long-range goal for the group.

**DESE Developments/Meeting DESE Timelines:** CAPS Agreement was approved by Commissioner Chester on August 5, 2014. Each Board member will receive a copy at the September 10 Board meeting. On September 2, Suzanne Shaw of DESE reported that the CAPS Coordinated Program Review would take place in May 2015. Subsequently, she sent documents related to the review and asked to meet with the CAPS Executive Director in February 2015.

## **Information on Board Voting Items:**

***Fund Raising/Donations.*** As CAPS Board members know, we have received generous donations in the memory of Mr. Pete DeCarolis. Consistent with the donor's wishes, the donations are placed in a fund for the purchase of specialized equipment for our students with medically fragile conditions. Since the June Board meeting, we have received \$900 in donations to this fund bringing the total to \$2,100. Thank you letters have been sent to all the families.

***Community Innovations Grant.*** A request has been made for CAPS to be the fiscal agent for a Community Innovations Grant. These grants are intended to assist school districts and municipalities to increase efficiency by combining efforts. A description of the grants and two examples are included in Board handouts.

***New Hires/Non-renewals.*** At the time of this report, the following staff changes have occurred since the June Board meeting.

***Non-renewals:*** Judith Lang-Chiarella (Jr./Sr. High Teacher); Sheri Paul (LPN); Assistant Teachers: Nancy Bissonnette, Ann Stephenson, Debbie Pickett, Tammy Nail, Julie Smith, and Sue Harty.

***Resignations:*** Cheryl Varieur (COTA); Donna Heglin (PTA); Theresa Taylor (BCBA); Melissa Bolduc (LPN).

***Retirements:*** Mary Foley (Odyssey Teacher); Kathy Grimes (ASL Interpreter).

***New Hires:*** John Mara (Odyssey Teacher); Cynthia Brown (BCBA); Mindy Jones Imperio (Long-Term Substitute Teacher – Kelly Day High School; Tori Bourgeois (LPN).  
Assistant Teachers: Dan Kazmarczyk, Sabrina Streeter, Brandy Lefsyk, Jennifer Degnan, , Kelly Mancill, Jessica Nagle, and Sheena Palmi.

***Note.*** Melanie Glynn (COTA) accepted a position with CAPS in July, and she resigned in August. At the time of this report, the COTA position had not been filled.

Board members are encouraged to get in touch with the Executive Director if they have any questions or concerns regarding this report.