



**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: June 2015

This Executive Director’s Report is divided in to two sections: (1) *Status of CAPS Programs and Services*, and (2) *Report on Standing Agenda Items*.

### 1. Status of CAPS Programs and Services

**Referrals/Enrollment.** CAPS has received forty-seven (47) regular referrals since the beginning of September. Seven of these referrals have been since the April 8 Board meeting. Enrollment in specific CAPS programs from March 2015 to June 2015 is shown in the table below. As is evident from the table, CAPS has had a healthy growth in enrollment over the last quarter of the year, and enrollment currently stands at 107 students. In brief, over the past year, CAPS programs have become more stable and are growing rapidly.

<b>CAPS Enrollment by Program: March to June 2015</b>					
<b>Program</b>	<b>March</b>	<b>April</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>June</b>	
Jr/Sr High	21	22	16	16	
Gateway	16	17	18	18	
Odyssey	4	4	10	12	
Kelly Day Pre	2	2	3	3	
Kelly Day K-2	8	8	8	8	
Kelly Day Elem	7	7	7	8	
Kelly Day Middle	6	6	6	6	
Jr. Senators	8	8	8	7	
Sr. Senators	9	9	9	9	
Horizons	6	6	6	5	
Deaf pre	10	10	10	9	
DHHP Mid	2	2	2	4	
LINK	2	2	2	2	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>107</b>	

**CAPS News.** A growing trend in business is to evaluate organizations by using a “triple bottom line” criteria or according to how the organization is performing relative to “people, places, and profit.” This concept provides a framework for assessing CAPS progress over the 2014-2015 school year. A brief summary is provided below.

*People.* Over the course of the school year, CAPS has had to make several personnel changes in order to ensure appropriate services to students and to meet the growing number of students in several programs. We are fortunate to now have two competent, committed program coordinators for our alternative education and satellite programs as well as our physical-occupational therapy services. . We have also hired some of the “best and the brightest” for new positions, and they are team players who fit into existing service-delivery models.

The recent Coordinated Program Review (CPR) has created new challenges. Collaboratives now have to conform to age span regulations for public schools, and this requires the development of new programs. CAPS will have to increase the number of satellite program classrooms from seven to eleven. We are currently in the process of hiring teachers for these new classrooms. As mentioned above, we are looking for team players and are currently negotiating with three recent graduates from master’s degree programs who will fit into our collaborative approach to instructional services.

**I want to thank the Board of Directors for helping CAPS to become more responsive and supportive of its employees, as well as supporting CAPS in its efforts to hire the most qualified, motivated, and dedicated.**

*Place.* The move to Sonoma Square has enhanced CAPS professional brand and led to opportunities for CAPS, FLLAC, and the region’s districts to expand their professional development offerings. Central MA Collaboratives, DSAC, NAWWG, area curriculum coordinators have all used the CAPS/FLLAC Professional Development Center. Office space for CAPS employees has been enhanced and the joint office space has provided more collaboration for CAPS and FLLAC. The Sonoma Square classroom space has allowed CAPS to establish a small computer center and therefore provide more opportunities for online learning. The move to Sonoma Square has greatly enhanced CAPS capability. A new initiative involves establishing a recycling program for the programs and offices at Sonoma Square. Justin Nussey, our Finance Manager, has developed an action plan for involving students and staff in a recycling plan as well as increasing awareness of sustainability issues.

Nevertheless, the facility has not been without challenges. Classroom space has had to be modified to meet the needs of our students. Fortunately, the landlords have been both responsive in constructing new spaces for classrooms and offices. Issues involving air quality have arisen, and in my last Director’s report, I indicated that CAPS had hired a firm, **Cardno, ATC**, to conduct mold tests. The tests indicated mold had been present in some locations, but that the current levels were within an acceptable range. The landlords will be removing the materials that had mold present. In other Director’s reports, I have indicated that the increase in enrollment has led to a search for additional space for alternative education students, and this is currently the most pressing facility need. We are investigating potential classroom space in Fitchburg,

Winchendon, and Gardner. We are optimistic about finding space in these districts, and we have had successful partnerships with all three districts.

**I would like to thank the Board of Directors for their support in leasing the Sonoma Square facility and for their guidance and assistance in finding appropriate and supportive public school environments for our students.**

*Profit.* CAPS has continued to make progress toward keeping a reserve to cover three months of expenses in spite of several challenges. (The three-year P/L included with this report indicates a profit of approximately \$350,000). One of the challenges this year has been to conserve funds while meeting CAPS needs for facilities and personnel. Also, CAPS has faced a changing market as students referred to CAPS having increasingly complex needs at the same time as districts are seeking to retain more and more students in their district's programs. With the support of the Finance Subcommittee and the Treasurer, CAPS has made considerable progress this year in collecting receivables, tracking revenue and expenses, and forecasting end-of-year profit/loss. CAPS has also been fortunate to have a Treasurer and audit firm that have provided responsible fiscal oversight as well as provided expert consultation. We have signed contracts for both the Treasurer and the auditing firm. The actuarial study recommended by the auditors is underway.

**I would like to take this opportunity to thank both the Finance Subcommittee as well as the full Board of Directors for their guidance, assistance, and support in keeping CAPS a fiscally stable entity.**

### **Status of Board Appointments for 2015-2016**

As the Board knows, letters have been sent to member school committee chairs requesting appointment of a representative to the CAPS Board. We are still seeking minutes from school committee meetings confirming appointments, but the Board constituency is set with the exception of Winchendon forthcoming, and I will keep Board members informed as more information becomes available.

### **Thank You to Board Members**

On behalf of CAPS staff and administration, I would like express our appreciation for the contribution of Ms. Stephanie Conrod, Ms. Deb Koziol, and Mr. Mike Niles for their service on the Board of Directors and their many contributions to CAPS. In addition, it would be difficult to overstate our appreciation of Dr. Ralph Hicks, our Board Chair for the past three years. Dr. Hicks has guided us through our transitional years that included changes in board constituency, in expectations from DESE, in shifting demands for accountability and higher performance standards, and in major moves such as the one from School Street to Sonoma Square. He probably is not aware of it, but staff have consistently expressed their appreciation (and relief) that Dr. Hicks was at the helm. We cannot thank him enough and offer enough well-wishes as he undergoes his own transition. Thank you and best wishes, Dr. Hicks.

Another thank you to all of you staying on the Board and to new member Dr. Steve Hemman. I will miss you, but I know that CAPS will be in good hands with new Director, Ms. Cindy Landanno, and all of you. Thank you for all you have done and for being such good stewards of an important organization.

## **2. Report on Standing Agenda Items**

### **MOEC/Collaborative Developments (Central MA meets on 5/19)**

The Central MA Collaboratives met on May 19 will be held at Assabet Valley Collaborative. Cindy Landanno and I attended along with Cathy Cummins (Assabet Valley), Mike Palladino (Southern Worcester County), Mary Baker (Central MA), and Richard Murphy. Steve Theall (Executive Director for MOEC) also attended. The discussion focused on the possibility of combining efforts to focus on providing professional development and enhancing regional services on secondary transition.

### **DESE Developments/Meeting DESE Timelines**

The interviews and observations of CAPS classrooms took place on May 11 through May 14. An exit interview on May 14 was held with the two DESE representatives, our three program coordinators and myself. While it was clear that we will have to address several areas of compliance, the DESE representatives were very complimentary regarding the quality of CAPS classrooms and services. They were effusive in their praise of CAPS staff.

On another topic, DESE has initiated new procedures for Board member training and Collaborative record-keeping. More guidance from DESE on these procedures is forthcoming, and we will keep Board members informed of the changes.

### **New Hires/Staff Changes**

The only new hire is Mr. Robert Johnson as a paraprofessional for the alternative programs. Mr. Johnson will replace two staff who are retiring and provide additional support in behavior management. He has a bachelor's degree in communications from Worcester State University and a master's degree in physical education from Plymouth State University. Copies of Mr. Johnson's resume will be brought to the June 10 Board meeting.

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