

CAPS Collaborative

Director's Report

December 9, 2015

Program Approvals: This fall CAPS was required to submit to DESE our Annual Program Approval for our Gateway Programs. Gateway is considered a separate day program by DESE definition and must meet all the requirements of approval for this status. Our report was compiled in the early fall and submitted to meet the DESE deadline. I am pleased to inform the Board that our Program Approval was accepted by DESE and the Gateway Programs are viewed as being in total compliance.

Age Span Waivers: As required by DESE regulation any program with an age span of more than 48 months between the youngest and oldest student needs to apply for an age span waiver. The required documentation is quite cumbersome and all information was submitted to DESE in early October. We have received notification that our age span request have been approved for the four programs in question. The need for waivers is a challenge for programming such as ours with students who stay with us until age 22 and students often grouped by developmental level as opposed to chronological age. The DESE has made it clear that they are not expecting the same requests in future years. We will need to review our programs and student placement to work around this issue in the future.

Playground: Our students have been enjoying our new playground and give it great reviews. We were able to coordinate the installation of the playground and fencing and have come in right on budget for the whole project. I would complement the landlords for their flexibility and understanding of our need for a playground to support our programming. In addition, I would like to recognize Justin Nussey for all his efforts to get quotes, find the best pricing and coordinating the different companies involved making for a smooth installation at the best price. At a recent intake tour for a student the family was overheard saying how nice it was that we had a fancy playground for the students to use. The program staff are appreciative of the Boards support with funding for the playground project and we feel that the investment adds to the quality of the programs we are able to offer our students and sending districts.

New Classroom: As mentioned and approved at our last Board meeting due to an identified need from our sending districts we have recently started a new classroom for students elementary age, who present with both an intellectual disability as well as a social emotional disability. We are able to find a teacher with a unique background to lead this classroom and have two students in the class already. From my experiences I feel this is population that districts will need to have serviced and I would assume that the enrollment in the classroom will continue to increase. We will be conducting a marketing phase to get the information out to our member districts and beyond.

Student enrollment: Enrollment continues to show an increased trend. We have had consistent referrals to each of our programs. The program coordinators are working very hard to move referrals along at a quick turnaround. Districts seem positive about our process and timeline. I will be putting together some marketing materials for distribution to districts highlighting our programs and especially our new classroom.

Coordinated Program Review: Our first round of documentation will be submitted to DESE for our first progress report connected to the CPR. Most areas involved focus on doing a better job of documenting what we already do. Several policies will need to be submitted as well as licensure for staff. Overall we are in good shape for being in full compliance by the end of the school year.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Landanno
Executive Director
CAPS Collaborative