

# CAPS Collaborative

## Director's Report

September 2016

**Summer Programs:** We offered a great summer program three days a week for six weeks. This year we serviced 103 students. The overall number was a big increase to that which we budgeted. We were able to introduce a number of our new staff to our programs during the summer. This was a wonderful way for the staff and the students to transition together. Summer is very busy time for everyone here at CAPS and we used the time to plan for the upcoming year, get classrooms up and ready and clean every nook in the building. I would like to acknowledge the administrative team, teachers, support staff, and Brian, our lone maintenance person, for all their hard work this summer getting our buildings and classrooms set up and ready.

**School Year 2017:** The Opening Day All staff meeting was held on August 25<sup>th</sup>. We had to find a new location this year due to the closing of the Wachusett Village Inn. We moved down Route 2 a little and held the meeting at the Great Wolf Lodge. The location worked well and many of the staff enjoyed seeing the water park for the first time. The meeting was a great opportunity for me to rally the staff around our focus of Team Work and remind everyone about our mission and values. We started a tradition of recognizing staff at key anniversary dates for employment. We gave out certificates as well as flowers and specialty gifts for staff who have worked at CAPS for 15, 20, 25, and 30 plus years. Our longest employed employee was recognized for 32 years of dedicated service in our programs. I also took advantage of having all the staff together at one time to stress a few areas of concern. The most pressing being attendance and how shocked I was regarding attendance trends I saw from my review of last year's data. The information tied in nicely with my focus on how it takes every single person employed at CAPS to do the difficult work we do every day. I left the staff with some challenges to focus on during the upcoming year and we all set goals to help guide our work for the 2017 school year.

**Student Enrollment:** As we start the 2017 school year our enrollment has increased significantly. When I came on board here a little over a year ago we started the 2016 school year with 101 students in all of our programs. This year I am happy to report that we currently have 122 students. New referrals come into the office daily. The growth in programs has been spread out to all of our programs. At the end of last year, the Board okayed moving forward to expand our middle school programming with a new teacher. That has been done and the room is already full. Our early childhood Kelly Day program has also seen an increase. We would like to expand that program but are having a difficult time finding a teacher with the correct certification to help with our expansion. Increased student population as well

as increased staffing have led the admin team to have some good conversations around planned, growth and capacity. We are talking frequently about making sure that our growth does not outgrow our ability to ensure quality programs.

**Staffing:** As the 2016 school year ended and we transition into 2017 CAPS has seen a number of staff changes. Between retirements, staff leaving after maternity leaves, and staff finding new positions and other opportunities CAPS saw 10 people resign. We have worked all summer to find replacements and have also had to bring in a couple new positions to meet the student needs with our increased student numbers. We started the school year with thirteen new staff and we are very happy to bring these qualified educators into our CAPS family.

**Staff handbook:** Working with staff and then a Board Sub-committee we have made significant progress with suggested edits for our employee handbook. We are working right now to get an edited draft prepared to bring forward to the Board for discussion and ultimate approval. Included in this discussion will be information on employee benefits and retiree benefits and the long term impact on our organization. Several possible options have been discussed at the sub-committee level and we look forward to a board discussion and vote in the near future.

**Moving Forward:** As I begin my second year here at CAPS, in my position as Executive Director, I am excited about where we are going as an organization and how best to carefully manage the growth we are experiencing. I look forward to working with my staff and you as a Board to make good decisions for our organization, making CAPS programs be the programs of choice in North Central Massachusetts.

Respectfully Submitted

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Executive Director  
CAPS Collaborative