



Director's Report

December 14, 2016

Program Highlights:

Gateway Programs recently held a thanksgiving feast in celebration of the local Police and Fire personnel. The Thanksgiving style meal was served in the PD Center and most if not all of the Westminster Police and Fire personnel attended, sharing a special meal with our students. Several students spoke and thanked the police and fire staff for all of their hard work and their dedication to our programs. I can't express enough how grateful we are for all that the fire and police do for us here in Westminster. We are truly blessed to have such a wonderful working relationship. In addition, the Attorney General's Office presented information to our Gateway High School students last month. The presentation was a big success and our students were very polite and receptive to the information offered on how to avoid bullying and cyber bullying. Our School Resource Officer set up this presentation and is planning a second program for our middle school students.

Satellite classrooms

Each of our satellite programs is also blessed to be a part of the schools that host our classrooms. We are always included in building activities and our classrooms have become a clear part of the school culture. We are invited to special events, are part of special programs and are involved in numerous inclusion activities. The opportunity for time working with age appropriate peers is a unique quality to the success of our programs.

Program Referrals

CAPS continues to receive a steady flow of program referrals. Referrals are reflective of all programs and the number of referrals to all of our programs continue to increase. Each week we are approached for potential placements in many of our classroom. The program administration and staff review each referral in a timely manner being careful to determine if our program is the right choice for these students. We work hard to accommodate our member districts needs and also try to support other nearby districts needs as well. As our population continues to grow we are in deep discussion on how to grow our programs successfully, making sure we continue to provide the quality expected of CAPS programs and ensuring we have program capacity to best meet individual student's needs.



Preliminary Budget Work:

As we approach the budget season I have been meeting with program administrators to discuss program projection for FY18 and possible need for program expansion. In addition, we have reviewed several classrooms that are not as productive and are exploring the possibility of phasing those programs out. Considerations will be given to the impact on students, districts and transition plans will be created if the needs arise. Working with the Finance Sub-committee FY 18 budget impacts will be discussed and a balanced budget, that supports our program needs, will be presented to the whole Board in several months.

Benefit Changes:

As discussed and voted on at our last Board meeting we have done away with the employee health care retirement benefit and will be introducing a new 403(b) matched plan for all employees. In addition, each year in February we have open enrollment for our benefit package. Pete Stephens our Board Chair has made the suggestion that we hold an all staff information session in February to explain the new benefit to all employees as well as update employees on any benefit changes. The challenge of meeting with all CAPS staff is very difficult based on our programs being in many different locations, each with a different calendar of school days. Our plan is to dismiss all of our programs for a half day in early February and hold an all staff meeting that afternoon, guaranteeing that all staff hear this important information.

Professional Development:

CAPS staff recently provided a professional development training for Fitchburg, on their last professional development day. Mental Health First Aid was presented in the CAPS PD Center, to an audience of Fitchburg Public Schools adjustment counselors, as well as guidance counselors. The training was well received and CAPS staff should be recognized for their hard work preparing for this training and their professional presentation. CAPS has the capacity to provide a variety of trainings for districts such as Mental Health First Aid, IEP Writing Bootcamp, training for related service staff and a variety of other topics. If your district is interested in discussing possible trainings provided by CAPS, please let me know.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cindy Landanno
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CAPS Collaborative