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#### LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

December, 2015

#### Dear ACCEPT Community Members:

This past year has been a time of great opportunities, accomplishments, successes, and challenges for the ACCEPT Education Collaborative. I am pleased to report that ACCEPT, working closely with our partners – educators, parents, teachers, and school districts – has moved closer to our shared vision of meeting the educational needs of unique learners.

Students are at the core of everything we do at ACCEPT but our commitment goes well beyond the classroom. It extends to our relationships with families, school districts, and educators. ACCEPT works to help the overall team, including teacher training, transportation, family support, and administrative and school district services.

At ACCEPT we believe all unique learners deserve to receive an education maximizing their personal potential. Utilizing innovative, efficient, and cutting-edge instructional practices, special people come together to do this important work.

This Annual Report offers a review of ACCEPT's accomplishments during the past year. We served more students than we have in more than a decade. In response to the evolving needs of our districts we added special education programs, including two high school programs and one elementary level program. We transported a record number of students to a record number of locations with the largest fleet in Collaborative history. Our outstanding professionals continue to serve students by supporting parents and educators; a growing number of school districts and families benefited from our home-based services and in-school consultation services. Hundreds of educators participated in professional development opportunities. Medicaid reimbursement services continue to collect every possible dollar for the twenty-two municipalities we serve. We made important strides in technology, including a new website and a digital learning plan to guide our training and teaching. The ACCEPT Collaborative Agreement and Host School Agreement were approved. We welcomed a new district, Wellesley, to the Collaborative.

As we look back on our accomplishments of the past year I want all of us to feel justifiably proud. This year marked our fortieth year and serves as a launch pad for future success. I am thankful to those who came before me and pledge to continue ACCEPT's exceptional work as we begin our fifth decade.

Sincerely,

Marcia J. Berkowitz, Ed.M, M.Ed.

**Executive Director** 

#### GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP TEAMS

he ACCEPT Education Collaborative was formed by its member school districts and is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of the Superintendents from 15 member school districts.

Four operating committees: Professional Development, Special Education, Technology and Business Operations meet regularly throughout the year with the Executive Director to make recommendations relative to program development, and service delivery. ACCEPT is organized according to Massachusetts General Law Chapter 40, Section 4e.

#### Board of Directors Member Districts

Mr. James Adams Superintendent, Ashland Public Schools

Mr. Steven Bliss Superintendent, Dover-Sherborn Regional School District

Dr. Stacy Scott Superintendent, Framingham Public Schools Ms. Maureen Sabolinski Superintendent, Franklin Public Schools Dr. Bradford Jackson Superintendent, Holliston Public Schools Dr. Cathy MacLeod Superintendent, Hopkinton Public Schools Dr. Jeffrey Marsden Superintendent, Medfield Public Schools Dr. Judith Evans Superintendent, Medway Public Schools Ms. Nancy Gustafson Superintendent, Millis Public Schools Dr. Peter Sanchioni Superintendent, Natick Public Schools Dr. Daniel Gutekanst Superintendent, Needham Public Schools Mr. Jonathan Evans

Superintendent, South Middlesex Regional Vocational Technical School District

Dr. Anne Wilson Superintendent, Sudbury Public Schools

## **Board of Directors Leadership Team**

Chair of Board of Directors Dr. Judy Evans, Medway

Vice-Chair Dr. Daniel E. Gutekanst, Needham

Finance & Budget Sub Committee Dr. Brad Jackson, Holliston

Ms. Nancy Gustafson, *Millis* Dr. Peter Sanchioni, *Natick* 

Personnel Sub Committee Dr. Daniel Gutekanst, Needham Public Schools

Dr. Stacy Scott, Framingham Public Schools

Board Policies Sub Committee Dr. Judy Evans, Medway Public Schools

Ms. Maureen Sabolinski, Franklin Public Schools

#### **ACCEPT Education Collaborative Senior Leadership Team**

Ms. Marcia Berkowitz, Executive Director

Mr. Paul Tzovolos, Director of Special Education Programs and Services

Ms. Peg Murphy, Transportation Manager

Mr. Shane Marchand, Interim Transportation Manager

#### ADVISORY COMMITTEES

#### **Special Education**

#### ADVISORY BOARD MEMBER / DISTRICT

Ms. Kathryn Silva, Ashland

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Ms. Terry Green, Dover/Sherborn

Ms. Laura Spear, Framingham

Mr. Ildefonso Arellano, Framingham

Ms. Beth Fitzmaurice, Franklin

Ms. Meg Camire, Holliston

Ms. Marijane Hackett, Hopkinton

Mr. Matt LaCava, Medfield

Ms. Kathleen Bernklow, Medway

Ms. Susan Donelan, Millis

Mr. Tim Luff, Natick

Ms. Mary Lammi, Needham

Ms. Terry Green, Sherborn

Mr. Michael Dolan, South Middlesex Regional

Ms. Deborah Dixson, Sudbury

# **Technology**

#### ADVISORY BOARD MEMBER / DISTRICT

Mr. Paul Carpenter, Ashland

Mr. Anthony Ritacco, Dover/Sherborn

Mr. George Carpenter, Framingham

Mr. Tim Rapoza, Franklin

Dr. Sara Ahern, Holliston

Mr. Ashoke Ghosh Hopkinton

Mr. Eoin O'Corcora, Medfield

Mr. Richard Boucher, Medway

Ms. Kay Tessier, Millis

Ms. Grace Magley, Natick

Mr. Dennis Roche, Natick

Ms. Deb Gammerman, Needham

Mr. John Brochu, South Middlesex Regional

Mr. Michael O'Brien, Sudbury

#### **Curriculum Leadership**

#### ADVISORY BOARD MEMBER / DISTRICT

Mr. Richard Lind, Ashland

Dr. Karen LeDuc, Dover/Sherborn

Dr. Grace Wai, Framingham

Ms. Joyce Edwards, Franklin

Dr. Sara Ahern, Holliston

Mr. Robert Belo Hopkinton

Ms. Kim Cave, Medfield

Dr. Judy Evans, Medway

Dr. Armand Pires, Medway

Ms. Joan Lynn, Millis

Dr. Anna Nolin, Natick

Ms. Terry Duggan, Needham

Ms. Shannon Snow, South Middlesex Regional

Ms. Kim Swain, Sudbury

#### **Business**

#### ADVISORY BOARD MEMBER / DISTRICT

Ms. Barbara Durand, Ashland

Ms. Christine Tague, Dover/Sherborn

Dr. Edward Gotgart, Framingham

Ms. Miriam Goodman, Franklin

Mr. Keith Buday, Holliston

Mr. Ralph Dumas, Hopkinton

Mr. Michael LaFrancesca, Medfield

Mr. Donald Aicardi, Medway

Ms. Deb Brown, Millis

Mr. Liam Hurley, Natick

Ms. Anne Gulati, Needham

Ms. Kirsteen Leveillee, South Middlesex Regional

Ms. Mary Will, Sudbury

#### ABOUT ACCEPT EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE

ounded in 1974, ACCEPT has established trusted partnerships to promote excellence and innovation in educational practice. Our mission is to use the collective power of member school districts and community resources to provide a wide range of exceptional programs and services that maximizes the potential of students, their families, educators and communities.

Care and respect for human differences, best practices, continuous improvement, open and honest communication and integrity in decision making are the core values at the foundation of our work. Our goal is to be the provider of first choice for high quality regional programs and services that meet our students' and member districts evolving needs.

A wide range of exceptional programs and services are offered to meet the evolving needs of our members:

#### **Serving Students**

- Special Education Programs
- Extended School Year Services
- Job Coaching
- Vocational and Transition Services
- Related Services
- Assistive Technology
- Virtual High School Global Consortium On-Line Course

#### **Serving Parents**

- Home-Based Services
- Parent Advisory Council

#### **Serving Educators**

- Professional Development
- Consultation and Evaluation Services
- Leadership Induction Program for New Special Education Administrators

#### **Serving School Districts**

- Specialized Transportation Services
- Educational Technology
- Medicaid Reimbursement Services
- Education and Behavioral Consultation
- Education Related Service and Behavioral Assessment Services
- Vocational Assessment Services
- Grant Development and Management
- Professional Development Targeted to District Needs
- Annual Symposiums on Blended Learning
- Special Education Director's Job Alike
- Curriculum Leadership Job Alike
- Business Manager Job Alike
- Technology Director Job Alike
- BCBA Job Alike

academic year the
Collaborative served 142
students in school-based
programs, 64 students
received home-based
services, and we
transported 542 students.
The Academy at Franklin
High School, ACCESS APP
(Medfield High School),
ACES (Pine Hill Elementary
School, Sherborn) were
new programs developed

in response to the evolving

needs of districts.

**During the 2014-2015** 

#### **ACCEPT Guiding Principles**

- Respect for diversity and human differences
- Best practices
- Continuous improvement
- Open and honest communication
- Integrity

# **Special Education Program Highlights**

#### Overview

ACCEPT provides a wide range of special education programs for students from elementary through high school years, up to 22 years of age. ACCEPT's special education teachers and therapists are experienced, well trained and licensed professionals. Over the past years, numerous programs have been developed and implemented, excellent staff hired, and programs have continued to improve. ACCEPT's commitment to provide new, high-quality and cost-effective services resulted in increased usage of our programs. Consistently ACCEPT programs receive positive feedback from parents and districts regarding the quality of the programs. ACCEPT continues to identify needs and build capacity to serve member districts.

#### **Specialized Services**

ACCEPT offers a full range of specialized therapeutic services for uniquely challenged students. Teachers and related service providers work in collaboration to ensure that therapeutic strategies are interwoven into instructional activities and routines throughout the day. Services include speech and language, occupational, physical and vision therapy. Also included are vocational rehabilitation, counseling, nursing services, behavioral consultation and other related services as required for individual students.

Educators and therapists jointly develop goals, curriculum, strategies and interventions. The entire team works to help every student maximize his or her achievement and participation in the school and in the community.

#### Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

ACCEPT provides a hands-on, relevant approach to academic instruction in the areas of English, Language Arts, history, social sciences, math,

science and technology, using

the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks as a guide.

Additionally, social/ emotional, behavioral and communication skill development is an integral component of the curriculum. When appropriate, students are integrated

throughout their day and receive instruction on daily living activities.

Student's at **Special Olympics**  Students benefit from ACCEPT's technology-rich classroom environments. All classrooms have interactive whiteboards, laptop and /or desktop computers for student use, iPads and other assistive technology devices. Individualized Education Programs (IEP), based on assessment information and ongoing quantitative data collection, are developed to maximize student independence and participation within the school and community.

ACCEPT classrooms are highly structured environments with consistent routines. Staff uses 21st century research-based teaching and assistive technologies to maximize student achievement, independence and participation.

A variety of specialized approaches include: positive behavioral interventions and supports, Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), TEACCH, specialized reading programs and language and picture communication systems. Student progress is monitored and shared with families regularly. ACCEPT students participate in MCAS or MCAS Alternate Assessment.

#### **Extended School Year Services**

These programs are designed to prevent substantial regression of skills and provide a bridge between academic years. Structured individual, small group and classroom instruction is provided consistent with the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP).

#### ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROGRAMS

#### **ACCEPT Academy (Therapeutic Program)**

Emotional/Behavioral

Pittaway School, 75 Central Street, Ashland, MA

Grades: K – 5

ACCEPT Academy is a public day school therapeutic program for students unable to make adequate social and emotional progress in traditional classrooms. Students may experience a range of mental health issues, school adjustment difficulties, inappropriate social functioning and/or poor peer relations. Comprehensive clinical services are provided, and teachers use positive behavioral intervention supports to assist students with self-regulation and self-control.

The ultimate goal of the program is to assist students to overcome the issues at hand, practice effective behavioral alternatives and enhance their academic skills, allowing them to be successful when they return to their sending school.

#### **Tuition**

Member Tuition: \$44,556 Non-Member Tuition: \$53,467 Member Savings: \$8,911

#### **Comparison Tuition Rates**

**Average Private** 

School Tuition: \$72,613

**Average Savings** 

Over Private School: \$28,057

#### Academy ACES (ACCEPT's Classroom for Essential Skills)

• Autism Spectrum and other Neurological Disorders (Moderate to Severe)

Pine Hill Elementary School, 10 Pine Hill Lane, Sherborn, MA 01770

Grades: Primary

ACES is a public day school therapeutic program for students who require intensive teaching supports in order to make effective academic and behavioral progress. Students may experience a range of school adjustment difficulties, inappropriate social functioning, poor academic performance, developmental delays and /or immature peer relations.

Comprehensive academic, behavioral and clinical services are provided throughout the school day. A strong home-school relationship, through ongoing communication and collaboration, is a critical and essential part of the student's success. The ultimate goal of the program is to assist students in becoming engaged learners through the use of innovative and empirically-based instruction, and to overcome behavioral and social challenges by practicing effective behavioral alternatives.

#### **Tuition**

Member Tuition: \$44,556
Non-Member Tuition: \$53,467
Member Savings: \$8,911

#### **Comparison Tuition Rates**

**Average Private** 

School Tuition: \$72,170

**Average Savings** 

Over Private School: \$27,614

## IDEAL (Individually Designed Education to Access Learning)

Global Impairments Medically Involved

Wheelock School, 15 Elm Street, Medfield, MA

**Grades: Primary** 

IDEAL is designed for students with global impairments. The classroom is rich in resources, including an emphasis on assistive technology and augmentative communication devices, symbols, photos, single-switches, switch accessed toys, music and computers. Direct hands-on input is required for all activities, including sensory-motor integration, physical therapy, feeding, language development and other activities of daily living.

A multi-disciplinary team of experienced staff, parents and medical specialists work together to provide comprehensive and coordinated services. A registered nurse is assigned to the program to support the complex medical needs of the students.

#### **Tuition**

Member Tuition: \$56,415 Non-Member Tuition: \$67,698 Member Savings: \$11,283

#### **Comparison Tuition Rates**

**Average Private** 

School Tuition: \$86,470

Average Savings

Over Private School: \$30,055

#### MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAMS

#### **ACCEPT Academy (Therapeutic Program)**

Emotional/Behavioral

Ashland Middle School, 87 West Union Street, Ashland, MA

Grades: 6 - 8

ACCEPT Academy is a substantially separate therapeutic program with opportunities for inclusion in a public middle school. Students may experience a range of mental health issues, school adjustment difficulties, inappropriate social functioning and/or poor peer relations.

A consistent therapeutic milieu and rigorous academics are the cornerstones of the Academy and include: individual and small group instruction, behavior management, attention to organizational strategies, time management and study skills. Clinical services include: counseling, individual crisis intervention, ongoing collaboration with family and community treatment teams and case management.

The ultimate goal of the program is to assist students to overcome the issues at hand, practice positive replacement behavior and enhance their academic skills, allowing them to be successful when they return to their sending school.

#### **Tuition**

Member Tuition: \$44,556 Non-Member Tuition: \$53,467 Member Savings: \$8,911

#### **Comparison Tuition Rates**

**Average Private** 

School Tuition: \$72,170

**Average Savings** 

Over Private School: \$27,614

#### PALS (Programs for Academic and Life Skills)

• Autism Spectrum and other Neurological Disorders (Moderate to Severe) Ashland Middle School, 87 West Union Street, Ashland, MA

Grades: 6 - 8

PALS prepares students for a successful middle school experience by focusing on the individualized student's needs in the areas of functional academics, social skill development, behavioral regulation, adaptive daily living skills and prevocational experiences. Staff work with students, families, schools and community agencies to provide support services that meet the unique needs of students. PALS staff work to strengthen academic, social, language and life skills to promote independence and participation in the community.

As students within the PALS program reach age fourteen, they access the ACCEPT Center for Transition (ACT) on a weekly basis. Students are exposed to a variety of prevocational opportunities related to activities of independent living, work experience, career exploration and job seeking, including resume writing and interview skills. Through simulated work stations and more than 20 community based work sites, students experience the realities of the workplace and develop technical skills and individual qualities that are required to succeed in the world of work.

#### **Tuition**

Member Tuition: \$42,605 Non-Member Tuition: \$51,126 Member Savings: \$8,521

#### **Comparison Tuition Rates**

**Average Private** 

School Tuition: \$92,564

Average Savings

Over Private School: \$48,008

One of my favorite things at ACCEPT is that you can meet new friends.

During the summer program we go on great field trips. This school is so fun!

Student

#### HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAMS

#### **ACCEPT Academy (Therapeutic Program)**

#### Emotional/Behavioral

Franklin High School, 218 Oak Street, Franklin, MA 02038

Grades: 9 – 12

ACCEPT Academy is a substantially separate therapeutic program with opportunities for inclusion in a public high school. Students may experience a range of mental health issues, school adjustment difficulties, inappropriate social functioning and/or poor peer relations.

A consistent therapeutic milieu and rigorous academics are the cornerstones of the Academy. Students engage in a blended learning environment, enrolling in The Virtual High School (VHS) online accredited courses, as well as participating in individual and small group instruction. Attention to organizational strategies, time management and study skills are emphasized. Clinical services include: counseling, individual crisis intervention, ongoing collaboration with family and community treatment teams and case management.

The ultimate goal of the program is to assist students to overcome the issues at hand, practice positive replacement behavior and enhance their academic skills allowing them to be successful when they return to their sending school.

#### **Tuition**

Member Tuition: \$44,556 Non-Member Tuition: \$53,467 Member Savings: \$8,911

#### **Comparison Tuition Rates**

**Average Private** 

School Tuition: \$67,245

Average Savings

Over Private School: \$22,689

#### **ACCESS APP**

Moderate Disabilities

Medfield High School, 88R South Street, Medfield, MA 02052

Grades: 9 - 12

ACCESS APP is a program for students with intellectual impairments and complex language and learning difficulties. A functional academic curriculum, accompanied by vocational experiences, support development of the social, academic and vocational skills students need to transition successfully into the community.

ACCESS APP's overarching goal is for students to achieve independent functioning in the community while developing a foundation of more advanced vocational and social skills.

#### **Tuition**

Member Tuition: \$44,556 Non-Member Tuition: \$53,467 Member Savings: \$8,911

#### **Comparison Tuition Rates**

**Average Private** 

School Tuition: \$92,565

Average Savings

Over Private School: \$48,009

#### PALS (Programs for Academic and Life Skills)

Autism Spectrum and other Neurological Disorders

Holliston High School, 370 Hollis Street, Holliston, MA Medway High School, 88 Summer Street, Medway, MA

Grades: 9 - 12

PALS is designed for high school-aged students with autism, intellectual impairments and /or related disorders. Students have atypical social, cognitive and /or language delays. PALS develops and strengthens academic, social, language, life and prevocational skills and work behaviors to promote independence and participation in the community. Three program levels are available to accommodate the intensity and skill level of the individual.

#### **Tuition**

Member Tuition: \$42,605 Non-Member Tuition: \$51,126 Member Savings: \$8,521

#### **Comparison Tuition Rates**

**Average Private** 

School Tuition: \$92,565

**Average Savings** 

Over Private School: \$49,960

#### HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAMS

#### The CLUB (After School Program)

• Learning Disabilities and Asperger's Syndrome (Mild to Moderate)
Ashland High School, 65 East Union Street, Ashland, MA

Grades: 11 – 12

The CLUB offers a challenging and structured social, academic, career and life skills curriculum for high school students with learning disabilities, ADHD, Asperger's and/or high functioning autism. These students require additional skills to facilitate a successful transition to college or career.

#### **Tuition**

**Member Tuition** 

Per Module: \$650

\$2,500 for full program

Non-Member Tuition: \$780 \$3,000 for full program

Member Savings: \$130

\$500 for full program

# **SOAR (Short-term Option for Assessment and Recommendations)**

Emotional/Behavioral

Assabet Valley Alternative School, 57 Orchard Street, Marlborough, MA Grades: 9 - 12

SOAR is a joint partnership program of ACCEPT and Assabet Valley Collaborative. This is a short-term public day school stabilization and diagnostic assessment program for students who are struggling in their school setting as a result of emotional and/or behavioral difficulties.

The clinical and educational experts at SOAR assist districts to address diagnostic and placement issues for students experiencing difficulties. SOAR staff provide counseling, behavior management, academic support and case management.

#### **Tuition**

**Member Tuition** 

for 45 days: \$12,357 Non-Member Tuition: \$13,702 Member Savings: \$1,345

#### **Comparison Tuition Rates**

**Average Private** 

School Tuition: \$16,811

Average Savings

Over Private School: \$4,454

"I really enjoy my school work. The teachers are great, and I have lots of friends. Every day, I look forward to going to school."

Student









#### TRANSITION PROGRAMS FOR STUDENT 18 - 22

#### C2C (Classroom To Community)

• Autism Spectrum and other Neurological Disorders Ashland High School, 65 East Union Street, Ashland, MA

**Grades: Post High School** 

Students in this program have atypical social, cognitive and/or language delays. C2C provides community, vocational, social and functional life skills activities to enhance students' abilities and facilitate transition to adult life.

#### **Tuition**

Member Tuition: \$42,605 Non-Member Tuition: \$51,125 Member Savings: \$8,521

#### **Comparison Tuition Rates**

**Average Private** 

School Tuition: \$88,281

**Average Savings** 

Over Private School: \$45,676

#### **Passages**

Mild to Moderate Disabilities

Ashland High School, 65 East Union Street, Ashland, MA

**Grades: Post High School** 

Designed for students with varying disabilities, Passages is a comprehensive post-high-school transition program that prepares students to be active members of their communities. Multiple activities reinforcing targeted skills are presented in the classroom, community and workplace. A safe, thoughtfully-planned environment encourages mutual trust and respect and fosters personal growth, responsibility and independence.

The Passages Program has two strands:

#### Passages ECO (Exploring Community Options)

ECO is a multi-year post-high-school transition program for students with a broad range of mild to moderate disabilities. ECO provides the opportunity for individuals to explore a variety of vocational and community opportunities to prepare students for a smooth transition to appropriate next steps.

#### Passages 5 for 5

5 for 5 serves students with Asperger's, nonverbal learning disabilities, ADHD, and other learning disabilities who need an additional year after high school to develop the skills necessary to transition to college or career successfully.

#### **Tuition**

Member Tuition: \$34,177
Non-Member Tuition: \$41,012
Member Savings: \$6,835

#### **Comparison Tuition Rates**

**Average Private** 

School Tuition: \$90,367

Average Savings

Over Private School: \$56,190

#### **ACT (ACCEPT's Center for Transition)**

All Types of Disabilities

Medway Middle School, 45 Holliston Street, Medway, MA 02053

**Grades: Post High School** 

All ACCEPT students age 14 through age 22 attend ACT on a regular basis. Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors provide opportunities for students to explore a variety of educational, vocational and occupational opportunities in a safe and nurturing environment. Students learn a variety of skills related to activities of independent living, work experience, career exploration and job seeking including resume writing and interview skills. Through simulated work stations and more than 20 community based work sites, students experience the realities of the workplace and develop technical skills and individual qualities that are required to succeed in the world of work. ACT services are also available to districts as an adjunct to their programming.

#### **Tuition**

Intake: \$400

Includes review of record and student screening

1-3 students: \$63 per student per day (up to 3 hours per day) 4-6 students: \$45 per student per day (up to 3 hours per day)

## EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR ~ TUITION COMPARISON









Program and Location	Types of Impairment(s)	Member Summer Tuition	Average Private School Tuition	Average Savings Over Private School
ELEMENTARY SCH	0 O L			
IDEAL Wheelock Elementary School, Medfield	Global Impairments Medically Involved	\$5,918	\$6,470	\$552
ACCEPT Academy (Therapeutic Program) Pittaway School, Ashland	Emotional/Behavioral	\$5,918	\$6,470	\$552
MIDDLE SCHOOL				
PALS Program Ashland Middle School	Autism Spectrum and other Neurological Disorders (Moderate to Severe)	\$5,918	\$6,470	\$552
ACCEPT Academy Therapeutic Program Ashland Middle School	Emotional/Behavioral	\$5,918	\$6,470	\$552
HIGH SCHOOL				
PALS Program Ashland High School	Autism Spectrum and other Neurological Disorders (Moderate to Severe)	\$5,918	\$6,470	\$552
ACCESS APP Medfield High School	Moderate Disabilities	\$5,918	\$6,470	\$552
TRANSITION SCH	0 O L			
C2C (Classroom to Community) Ashland High School, Community	Autism Spectrum and other Neurological Disorders (Severe)	\$5,918	\$6,470	\$552
PASSAGES 5 for 5 (5th Year Transition) Ashland High School	Learning Disabilities and Asperger's Syndrome	\$2,959	\$3,237	\$276
PASSAGES ECO Ashland High School	Mild to Moderate	\$2,959	\$3,237	\$276

On average, ACCEPT Extended School Year programs are 8.5% less expensive than similar programs offered by private schools. Full day programs are approximately \$552 less and half-day programs \$276 less. We are proud to be able to accommodate district requests for summer-only placements.

#### **Home-based Services**

Home-based services are designed to teach parents and caregivers the skills necessary to maximize social, behavioral, and educational functioning of their children at home and in the community. Strategies to manage challenging situations that may arise

are provided to parents and caregivers. A variety of assessments are used to

determine the individualized objectives for each family.

Services are individually tailored to address each student's needs. The training provided is aimed at ensuring generalization and maintenance of skills the students learn during home sessions. Students become more independent as they improve their real life skills. The programming is based largely on the paradigm of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), a set of principles used to increase or decrease socially significant behaviors and specific skills.

Programming objectives are observable, measurable and data-driven. Parents are active partners and a vital support in helping their child reach his or her potential.

#### Home-based Assessment

Comprehensive assessments, based on objective information, aid in determining the appropriateness, duration and intensity of services. A student's skill set, preferences, developmental level and age are considered when creating individualized goals.

## **Home-based Objectives**

#### Language/Communication

Language and communication skills are essential for a student's development and independence. Often a lack of communication skills influences behavior and an individual's ability to access his or her surroundings effectively. Skills addressed include:

- Sign language
- Picture Exchange Communication System
- Use of augmentative and alternative communication devices
- Receptive communication
- Verbal behavior
- Discrete Trial Teaching
- Incidental Teaching

#### **Behavior Management**

Behavior management systems in home programming are based on an individual student's behavior. These students often exhibit behaviors which significantly impact their ability to access typical routines and events in the home and community. Systems to address behaviors include:

- Token economies
- Reinforcement
- Behavior reduction procedures
- Teaching appropriate replacement behaviors
- Teaching self-monitoring procedures
- TEACCH for visual supports

#### **Adaptive Daily Living**

Adaptive daily living skills are used for the performance of daily activities required for personal and social sufficiency. Skills include:

- Grooming (e.g. hygiene routines)
- Toilet training
- Gross motor
- Fine motor
- Sensory needs
- General self-help skills (e.g. house keeping)

#### Play and Leisure

Functional play and leisure skills are necessary at all ages in order to decrease the frequency of self-stimulatory behavior and increase opportunities for appropriate interactions with same-age peers. Play and leisure skills include:

- Independent play
- Structured play schedules
- Game play
- Turn taking
- Socio-dramatic play

#### **Social Skills**

Social skills evolve and grow as an individual ages; they are necessary for effective communication. Instruction includes:

- Community outings
- Structured play dates
- Video modeling
- Social thinking curricula
- Executive functioning strategies
- Social stories
- Pragmatic language

#### **Highly Qualified and Experienced Professionals**

Home-based staff include highly qualified and experienced supervisors and therapists. Supervisors hold a master's degree and are licensed as Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBA). They provide supervision and parent consultation, create home programs and implement staff training. Many teach in graduate programs and facilitate workshops.

Therapists providing direct services hold a minimum of a bachelor's degree. Each therapist undergoes training in Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) and many have additional certifications, such as crisis intervention, CPR and first aid.

Home-based staff participate in ongoing professional development activities in which current and best practices are discussed to help them stay abreast of the most up-to-date interventions.

#### **Cost Comparison**

Given the variety of services provided and the differing skill levels of the providers, direct cost comparisons for home-based services are difficult. However, a survey of private providers in the area shows the rate for regular, ongoing BCBA consultation and parent training ranges between \$100 and \$200 per hour; ACCEPT's rate for these services is \$87 per hour for member districts; a savings of 15% to 56%. Some area agencies charge \$250 per hour for a functional behavioral assessment (FBA) compared to ACCEPT member district rate of \$87 per hour. A typical FBA requires twelve to fourteen hours so the savings can be as much as \$2,300.

## **Consultation and Evaluation Services**

ACCEPT offers a variety of educational and behavioral consultation services to help schools build their capacity to serve students with disabilities.

Consultants are available to assess student needs,

evaluate school programs, and provide ongoing support to educators.

#### **School Consultation**

Highly qualified and experienced staff are available to work with schools on a short- or long-term basis.

Consultation may include

strategies to promote generalization

of skills, classroom accommodations, assessment methods, integrating specialized curricula and development of behavioral supports. The individual needs of students and their classrooms determine the focus of these services.

#### **Evaluation Services**

Comprehensive educational and behavioral evaluation services are provided by ACCEPT's multi-disciplinary team of experts, including certified school psychologists, behavior analysts, speech-language pathologists, vocational-rehabilitation

counselors and special education teachers. A wide range of evaluations are offered, including:

- District Program Evaluations (e.g. autism; transition)
- Functional Behavior Assessments (FBA)
- Transition and Vocational Assessments
- Psychological Assessments
- Speech / Language Assessments
- Social Skills Assessments
- Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy Assessments

Consultation and evaluation services continue to expand to meet the growing needs of member and non-member districts. Our consultation staff offered services in behavioral/educational consultation. vocational consultation, curriculum consultation, instructional technology consultation, and related services consultation (PT, OT, SLP) as well as a variety of studentspecific and program-wide evaluations. Over the past two years, ACCEPT consultants have conducted over 60 Transition and Vocational Evaluations, 22 Functional Behavior Assessments, 13 Comparative Psychological Assessments, and 6 District Program Evaluations. In terms of cost effectiveness to member districts. ACCEPT's consultation and evaluation services rates are 25-30% lower than the rates of comparable private agencies and our rates for non-member districts are ten to fifteen percent lower than these private agencies.

## **Specialized Transportation Services**



ACCEPT Education Collaborative has provided specialized transportation services for our member school districts for almost 40 years. Each school day, we deliver

safe and reliable transportation services for over 542 students at a significant discount to for-profit specialized transportation providers. We conducted a survey of 6 for-profit transportation providers in the Metrowest area including companies such as JCS, YCN and Kiessling and found the average daily cost for a vehicle was \$223 per day. Rates varied depending on the duration on the trip from \$190 to \$275 per day. ACCEPT average daily van rate for fiscal year 2016 is \$190, \$33 or 15% below the for-profit average. This savings to school districts is significant. Using the current fleet of 146 vans necessary to accommodate ridership of 520 students, ACCEPT is saving school districts approximately \$867,000 over the school year.

## **Professional Development**

belief that what matters most is student achievement and excellence in teaching. ACCEPT's high quality professional development courses and workshops are designed to meet the instructional, management, and leadership challenges that educators face daily. These programs target struggling learners, narrow the achievement gap, and improve outcomes for all students. ACCEPT offered 31 workshops for 1,094 educators throughout the school year. It is clear that ACCEPT professional development offerings represent value. Numerous educators participate in multiple courses and workshops, and return year after year. From a pricing perspective, ACCEPT professional development programs are at or below the cost of offerings in the area. In some areas the savings are substantial. A review of offerings from Research for Better Teaching, Teachers 21, and the Reading Institute shows a range of \$195 to \$300 per day for a workshop. The average per day cost for an ACCEPT workshop is approximately \$175.

ACCEPT's programs for educators are grounded in the

# **Educational Technology Services**

Providing an educational environment that supports all learners at high-levels remains central to the Collaborative's mission. It prepares students to be contributing global citizens. Our critical areas of focus remain:

- Leadership and vision for 21st century teaching and learning
- A high performing technology infrastructure that connects students to the learning community from home and high school, and provides the necessary technology tools and resources to support their learning.
- Targeted professional development to continuously improve student achievement and integrate 21st century skills into their core curriculum.
- Curriculum, assessment and instruction that integrates 21st century student outcomes using data driven decision making in support of continuous student improvement.

The Technology Advisory Committee is comprised of Technology Directors and Coordinators who work collaboratively throughout the school year to support each other as 21st century educational leaders. The focus of our work in this area is to help develop new technology policies and to find new tools and products that help improve teaching and learning. ACCEPT provided 666 middle and high school students with innovative on-line courses through the ACCEPT/The Virtual High School Consortium. As part of the Consortium, teaching membership districts saved an average of \$235 per VHS seat. The cost savings to member districts provides an average savings of 45% when compared with the cost of a seat with the new TECCA Connections Academy Commonwealth Virtual School. ACCEPT member districts will continue to enjoy the benefits of the cooperative purchasing of anti-virus software on the current contract through the end of June 2017.

#### **Medicaid Reimbursement Services**

In 1994, ACCEPT Education Collaborative established a Municipal Medicaid Reimbursement Program for member and non-member districts to recoup money spent on school-based health and related medical services. Over the past twenty-one years this program has returned over \$49 million to participating cities and towns.

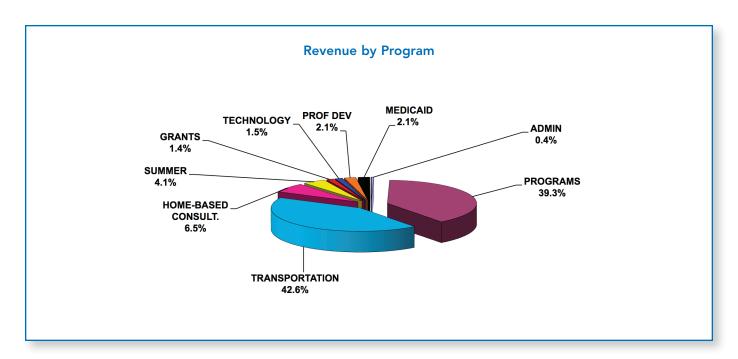
Participating school districts for 2014-2015 included Ashland, Auburn, Bedford, Carlisle, Concord, Concord-Carlisle Regional, Dudley-Charlton, Foxborough, Franklin, Framingham, Holliston, Hopkinton, Lincoln-Sudbury Regional, Littleton, Medfield, Millis, Medway, Natick, Northern Berkshire Regional (McCann Technical School), South Middlesex Regional (Keefe Technical School), Sudbury, and Walpole. During FY2015, these districts received a total of \$4,062,792 in Direct Service and Administrative Activity Claiming Reimbursements, compared to \$1,842,490 in FY2014 (significant under-reimbursements for Direct Service Claiming in 2014 were adjusted in 2015).

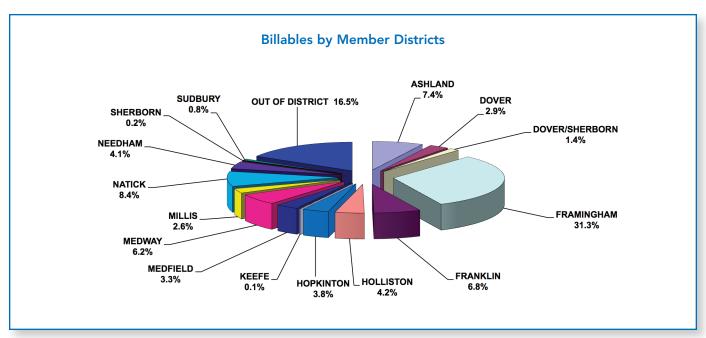
		FY2	0 1	4		F Y 2	0 1 5	5
District * AAC Only	C	Pirect Service aiming (DSC) Pimbursement	A	Administrative ctivity Claiming (AAC) eimbursement	(	Direct Service Claiming (DSC) Leimbursement	Ac	dministrative tivity Claiming (AAC) eimbursement
Ashland	\$	26,183.25	\$	34,051.09	\$	62,172.93	\$	43,881.00
Auburn*	\$	-	\$	57,156.57	\$	_	\$	47,056.93
Bedford	\$	19,008.36	\$	24,274.78	\$	47,135.77	\$	30,311.01
Carlisle*	\$	-	\$	6,919.90	\$	-	\$	6,662.22
Concord*	\$	-	\$	34,768.94	\$	-	\$	28,305.64
Concord-Carlisle Regional*	\$	-	\$	20,316.41	\$	-	\$	20,531.09
Dudley-Charlton	\$	7,136.68	\$	81,598.88	\$	112,747.39	\$	54,046.50
Foxborough	\$	6,584.70	\$	15,395.17	\$	74,221.47	\$	33,363.63
Framingham	\$	205,106.57	\$	310,594.68	\$	1,404,765.71	\$	342,228.56
Franklin	\$	95,488.37	\$	54,762.55	\$	207,511.57	\$	89,789.55
Holliston	\$	2,495.07	\$	46,667.36	\$	112,333.31	\$	48,466.81
Hopkinton	\$	4,158.49	\$	9,791.13	\$	53,206.04	\$	22,219.55
Lincoln/Sudbury Regional*	\$	-	\$	44,691.01	\$	_	\$	42,601.53
Littleton	\$	11,298.70	\$	40,242.67	\$	50,256.56	\$	25,231.29
Medfield	\$	10,264.29	\$	21,761.64	\$	46,674.77	\$	25,881.96
Medway	\$	7,440.44	\$	17,320.61	\$	71,739.86	\$	26,620.53
Millis	\$	17,235.57	\$	23,873.85	\$	39,858.32	\$	25,613.24
Natick	\$	99,083.72	\$	77,477.19	\$	305,040.97	\$	92,528.99
Northern Berkshire Regional (McCann Technical)	\$	-	\$	9,823.65	\$	-	\$	9,895.94
South Middlesex Regional (Keefe Technical)	\$	17,122.01	\$	19,185.57	\$	35,821.90	\$	15,992.09
Sudbury*	\$	-	\$	24,258.48	\$	-	\$	15,704.08
Walpole	\$	231,624.99	\$	67,327.28	\$	308,016.54	\$	84,355.50
Total	\$	790,231.21	\$	1,052,259.41	\$	2,931,503.11	\$	1,131,287.64

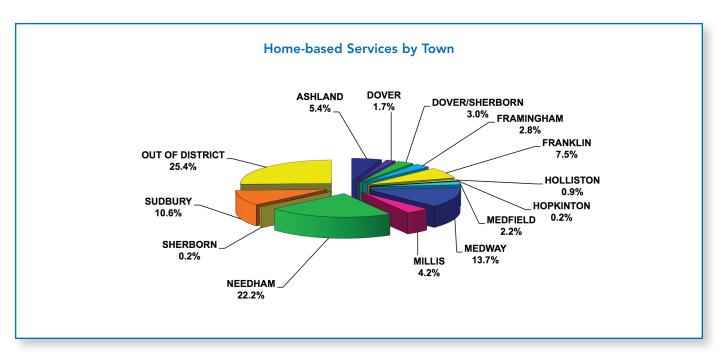
ACCEPT works effectively with school districts to claim every possible dollar, maintain confidentiality, and keep the necessary records required by districts, towns, and the Medicaid Division of Medical Assistance.

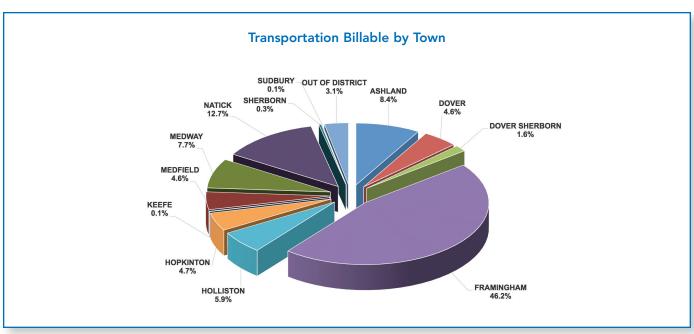
#### THE ACCEPT COMMUNITY AT A GLANCE

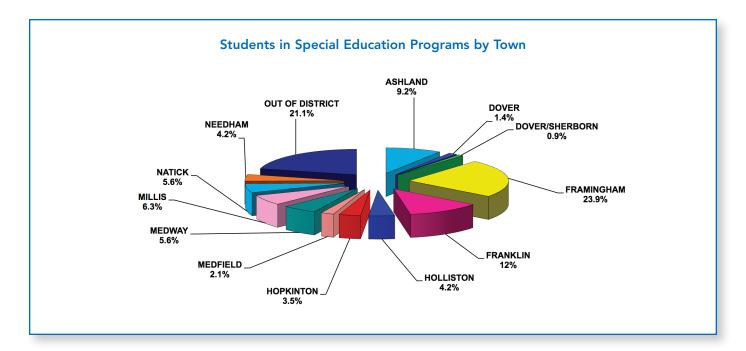
As an extension of member districts, ACCEPT embraces its responsibility to function in a fiscally responsible manner. Keen and routine oversight is necessary to ensure that changes in expense are balanced by proportional changes in revenue. Conservative fiscal planning and effective program management are ACCEPT cornerstones and have resulted in a positive financial outcome over each of the past several fiscal years.

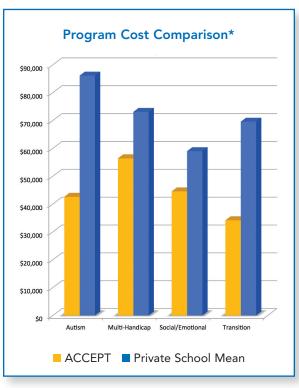


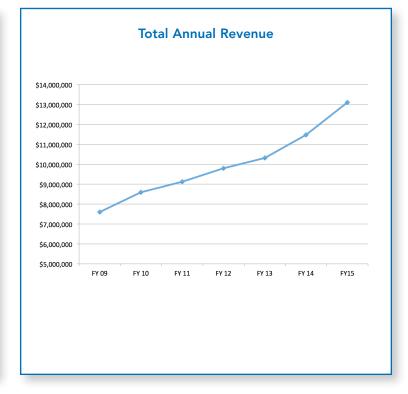












 $<sup>^{\</sup>star}$  Data for private schools obtained from MA Operational Services Division



# FY 15 AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

## **ACCEPT EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE**

**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS** 

FOR THE YEARS ENDED JUNE 30, 2015 AND 2014

(WITH INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT THEREON)

# ACCEPT EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS JUNE 30, 2015

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The following discussion and analysis of the ACCEPT Education Collaborative's (ACCEPT, the Collaborative) financial performance provides an overall review of ACCEPT'S financial activities for the current fiscal year, with comparative information for the prior year. The intent of this discussion and analysis is to examine ACCEPT's financial performance during FY2015. Readers are encouraged to review the independent auditors' report for a more detailed review of ACCEPT'S financial performance.

#### ABOUT ACCEPT EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE

**Mission**: To use the collective power of member school districts and community resources to provide a wide range of exceptional programs and services that maximize the potential of students, their families, educators and communities.

ACCEPT's goal is to be the provider of first choice for high quality regional programs and services that meet our students' and member districts evolving needs.

#### **Guiding Principles:**

- Respect for diversity and human differences
- Best teaching practices
- Continuous improvement
- Open and honest communication
- Integrity

ACCEPT, founded in 1974 and headquartered in Natick, Massachusetts, is a regional public non-profit educational organization serving 15 local school districts in the MetroWest area. ACCEPT has established trusted partnerships with member districts by providing a wide range of high quality and cost-effective, evolving programs and services for students, parents, educators, and school districts. Current programs and services include: Special Education Programs, Specialized Transportation Services, Home-based Services, Consultation Services, Medicaid Reimbursement Services, Educational Technology Services, and Professional Development.

ACCEPT is organized according to Massachusetts General Law Chapter 40, Section 4e. It has 501(c)(3) status for tax purposes under federal regulations for non-profit organizations. ACCEPT is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of the Superintendents from its member school districts: Ashland, Dover, Dover/Sherborn Regional, Framingham, Franklin, Holliston, Hopkinton, Medfield, Medway, Millis, Natick, Needham, Sherborn, South Middlesex Regional Technical Vocational High School, and Sudbury Public Schools. Four operating committees/job-alike groups,

Special Education, Technology, Curriculum, and Business Operations, provide input into the development and implementation of ACCEPT's programs.

A key differentiator between Massachusetts educational collaboratives and their member districts is the manner in which budgets are developed and funding is available. Under Massachusetts law, school committees must adopt an annual budget, funded by local tax assessments. Once adopted, the district must operate within the constraints of the budget; extraordinary circumstances resulting in the need for additional funding require further approval.

ACCEPT's budget is approved by the Board of Directors and is based on projected revenues and expenses. Tuitions, fees, and other assessments must be established recognizing revenues and expenses will vary throughout the year as the number of students enrolled and services purchased changes. Keen and routine oversight is necessary to ensure that changes in expense are balanced by proportional changes in revenue. Conservative fiscal planning and effective program management are ACCEPT cornerstones and have resulted in a positive financial outcome over each of the past several fiscal years.

#### **OVERVIEW OF FINANCIAL REPORTS**

During FY2015, ACCEPT fully implemented GASB Statement No. 34 which requires both government wide and fund financial statements. In addition, the Collaborative adopted GASB Statement No. 68 which requires extensive pension disclosures.

This overview is intended to serve as an introduction to the Collaborative's financial reports, which consist of a series of financial statements and other information as follows:

**Management's Discussion and Analysis** introduces the basic financial statements and provides an analytical overview of the Collaborative's financial activities.

**Government-wide financial statements** consist of the Statement of Net Position and the Statement of Activities. These provide both short-term and long-term information about the Collaborative's overall financial status.

**Fund basis financial statements** focus on individual parts of the Collaborative, reporting the Collaborative's operations in more detail than the government-wide statements. The *governmental funds statements* tell how basic services were financed in the short-term as well as what remains for future spending.

**Notes to the financial statements** explain some of the information in the statements and provide more detailed data.

**Supplementary information** includes both additional financial information which provides more detail support of the basic financial statements and information required by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

#### **Government-Wide Financial Statements**

The government-wide financial statements are designed to provide readers with a broad overview of the Collaborative finances, in a manner similar to a private sector business.

The **Statement of Net Position** presents information on all of the Collaborative's assets and liabilities with the difference between the two reported as *net position*. It is one way of measuring the Collaborative's financial health or position.

The **Statement of Activities** presents information showing how the Collaborative's net position changed during the most recent fiscal year. All of the current year's revenues and expenses are accounted for in the *Statement of Activities* regardless of when cash is received or paid.

Over time, increases or decreases in net position may serve as a useful indicator of whether the financial position of the Collaborative is improving or deteriorating.

#### **Fund Financial Statements**

A fund is a grouping of related accounts or a single account that is used to maintain control over resources that have been segregated for specific activities or objectives. Fund accounting is used to ensure and demonstrate compliance with finance-related legal requirements. All of the funds are governmental funds.

#### Governmental Funds

Governmental funds are used to account for essentially the same functions reported as governmental activities in the government-wide financial statements. However, unlike the governmental-wide financial statements, governmental fund financial statements focus on near-term inflows of spendable resources, as well as on balances of spendable resources available at the end of the fiscal year. Such information may be useful in evaluating a government's near-term financing requirements.

Because the focus of governmental funds is narrower than that of the government-wide financial statements, it is useful to compare the information presented for governmental activities in the government-wide financial statements. By doing so, readers may better understand the long-term impact of the government's near-term financing decisions. Both the governmental fund balance sheet and the governmental fund statement of revenues, expenditures, and changes in fund balance provide a reconciliation to facilitate this comparison between governmental funds and governmental activities.

#### **GOVERNMENT-WIDE FINANCIAL ANALYSIS**

The following *Statement of Net Position* is for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2015 with comparative information from fiscal year 2014.

ASSETS		2015		2014		INCREASE (DECREASE)
CURRENT ASSETS	_	2013	•	2014	_	(DLORLAGE)
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$	3,029,844	\$	2,315,513	\$	714,331
Accounts Receivable, Net		1,933,731		1,752,713	·	181,018
Prepaid Expenses		11,894		108,691		(96,797)
Security Deposits		11,639		11,639		-
Total Current Assets	_	4,987,108		4,188,556	_	798,552
CAPITAL ASSETS	_		•		_	
Furniture and Equipment		113,758		113,758		-
Vehicles		3,002,819		2,416,540		586,279
Less: Accumulated Depreciation		(1,917,282)		(1,313,543)		(603,739)
Net Capital Assets		1,199,295		1,216,755		(17,460)
Total Assets	_	6,186,403		5,405,311	_	781,092
LIABILITIES AND NET POSITION						
CURRENT LIABILITIES						
Accounts Payable		196,312		303,341		(107,029)
Accrued Payroll and Fringe Benefits		476,268		401,324		74,944
Current Portion of Notes Payable		419,736		394,462		25,274
Amounts Due Members		475,000		160,000		315,000
Deferred Revenue		207,867		124,918		82,949
Total Current Liabilities		1,775,183	,	1,384,045	_	391,138
NONCURRENT LIABILITIES						
Accrued OPEB Expense		648,663		499,146		149,517
Long Term Portion of Notes Payable		155,449		315,442		(159,993)
Total Noncurrent Liabilities		804,112		814,588		(10,476)
Total Liabilities		2,579,295		2,198,633	_	380,662
NET POSITION						
Invested in Capital Assets, Net of Related Debt		624,110		506,851		117,259
Unrestricted		2,966,154		2,685,291		280,863
Restricted		16,844		14,536		2,308
Total Net Position	_	3,607,108	•	3,206,678	_	400,430
Total Liabilities and Net Position	\$	6,186,403	\$	5,405,311		781,092

The assets of the Collaborative exceeded its liabilities at June 30, 2015 by \$3,607,108 (net position).

The Collaborative's net position increased by \$400,430 (12.5%) during the year. This increase was the result of an increase in program revenue in excess of increased expenses.

The Collaborative's total assets increased in 2015 versus 2014 by \$781,092 (14.5%). This was caused primarily by the increases in cash and accounts receivable. During

FY15, ACCEPT acquired new vehicles for student transportation. This increase of \$586,279 is offset by depreciation expense of \$603,739. Loan commitments for the vehicles are described in the footnotes to the financial statements.

Total liabilities increased primarily due to the increase in the accrued OPEB expense and increase in the amounts due members.

As indicated in the following summarized comparative *Statement of Activities*, net position increased by \$400,430 during the current fiscal year. Revenues increased from the prior year due to an increase in student enrollments. Expenses increased due to increased costs of providing services.

	FY2015	FY2014	% Change
Student Services Revenue	\$ 13,100,465	\$ 11,263,673	_
Governmental Revenues (In-Kind)	391,226	-	
Grant Income	181,687	205,326	
Other Income	9,654	5,196	
Total Revenue	13,683,032	11,474,195	19%
Student Services Expense	11,899,527	10,615,137	
Governmental Expenses (In-Kind)	391,226	-	
Grant Expenses	181,569	205,326	
Administrative Expenses	206,541	86,212	
Depreciation Expense	603,739	486,665	
Total Expenses	13,282,602	11,393,340	17%
Change in Net Position	\$ 400,430	\$ 80,855	

#### **GENERAL FUND BUDGETARY HIGHLIGHTS**

The budget for fiscal year 2015 was based on the assumption that enrollments would increase and the related costs of service provision would increase, i.e. pay rate and fringe benefit increases and the cost of transportation services. Actual results were more favorable than the budget due to:

- Increased enrollment beyond expectations and new program locations
- Increase in transportation service revenue
- Increase in costs for program and transportation services

#### REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

This financial report is designed to provide users with a general overview of the Collaborative's purpose and financial position. Questions about the report or requests for additional information may be directed to the Executive Director, ACCEPT Education Collaborative, 220 N. Main Street, Natick MA 01760.

By: Marcia J. Berkowitz, Ed.M., M.Ed.

Marcia J. Berkowitz, Ed.M, M.Ed. Executive Director ACCEPT Education Collaborative

# Bruce D. Norling, CPA, P.C.

#### **INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT**

To the Board of Directors ACCEPT Education Collaborative Natick, Massachusetts

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of the governmental activities, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of ACCEPT Education Collaborative (the Collaborative) as of and for the year ended June 30, 2015, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise the Collaborative's basic financial statements as listed in the table of contents.

#### Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

#### **Auditor's Responsibility**

Our responsibility is to express opinions on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinions.

#### Opinions

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the respective financial position of the governmental activities, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of the Collaborative as of June 30, 2015, and the respective changes in financial position and, where applicable, cash flows thereof for the years then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally

accepted in the United States of America.

#### Other Matters

## Required Supplementary Information

Accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America require that the management's discussion and analysis; schedule of revenues. expenditures and changes in fund balances - budget and actual - general fund; retiree health plan funding progress; schedule of the collaborative's proportionate share of the net pension liability; and schedule of pension contributions on pages 1 through 6 and pages 29 through 32 be presented to supplement the basic financial statements. Such information, although not a part of the basic financial statements, is required by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board, who considers it to be an essential part of financial reporting for placing the basic financial statements in an appropriate operational, economic, or historical context. We have applied certain limited procedures to the required supplementary information in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America, which consisted of inquiries of management about the methods of preparing the information and comparing the information for consistency with management's responses to our inquiries, the basic financial statements, and other knowledge we obtained during our audit of the basic financial statements. We do not express an opinion or provide any assurance on the information because the limited procedures do not provide us with sufficient evidence to express an opinion or provide any assurance.

#### Other Information

Our audit was conducted for the purpose of forming opinions on the financial statements that collectively comprise the Collaborative's basic financial statements. The supplementary Information Required by MGL Chapter 40 Section 4E on page 33 is presented for purposes of additional analysis and is not a required part of the financial statements. This supplementary information has not been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the basic financial statements and, accordingly, we do not express an opinion or provide any assurance on it.

#### Other Reporting Required by Government Auditing Standards

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we have also issued our report dated December 16, 2015, on our consideration of the Collaborative's internal control over financial reporting and on our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts and grant agreements, and other matters. The purpose of that report is to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on internal control over financial reporting or on compliance. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering the Collaborative's internal control over financial reporting and compliance.

Bruce D. Norling, CPA, P.C.

December 16, 2015

## ACCEPT EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE STATEMENT OF NET POSITION JUNE 30, 2015

ASSETS		Governmental Activities
CURRENT ASSETS Cash and Cash Equivalents Accounts Receivable, Net Prepaid Expenses Security Deposits	\$	3,029,844 1,933,731 11,894 11,639
Total Current Assets		4,987,108
CAPITAL ASSETS Furniture and Equipment Vehicles Less: Accumulated Depreciation Net Capital Assets Total Assets		113,758 3,002,819 (1,917,282) 1,199,295 6,186,403
LIABILITIES		<u> </u>
CURRENT LIABILITIES Accounts Payable Accrued Payroll and Fringe Benefits Current Portion of Notes Payable Amounts Due Members Deferred Revenue		196,312 476,268 419,736 475,000 207,867
Total Current Liabilities		1,775,183
NONCURRENT LIABILITIES Accrued OPEB Expense Long Term Portion of Notes Payable		648,663 155,449
Total Noncurrent Liabilities		804,112
Total Liabilities		2,579,295
NET POSITION Invested in Capital Assets, Net of Related Debt Unrestricted Restricted Total Net Position	\$	624,110 2,966,154 16,844 3,607,108
	•	

# ACCEPT EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2015

		Program	Revenue	
	Expenses	Charges for Services	Operating Grants and Contributions	Net (Expense) Revenue and Changes in Net Position
FUNCTIONS / PROGRAMS				
Governmental Activities				(
Administration	206,541	<b>-</b>	-	(206,541)
Regular, Therapy, and Other Programs - School Year	4,510,693	5,223,843	-	713,150
Summer Programs	357,761	551,385	-	193,624
Home-based Services and Consultation	802,730	866,779	-	64,049
Transportation	6,160,202	5,664,641	-	(495,561)
Professional Development Programs	282,227	280,246	-	(1,981)
Medicaid Reimbursement Services	132,476	279,721	=	147,245
Technology Initiative	168,401	-	181,800	13,399
Grant Expenses	181,569	-	181,687	118
Gifts and Other	5,002	-	7,310	2,308
Reserve for Members	475,000	-	-	(475,000)
Total Governmental Activities	13,282,602	12,866,615	370,797	(45,190)
General revenues:				
Membership dues				52,050
Governmental Revenues (In-Kind)				391,226
Investment earnings			_	2,344
Total general revenues			_	445,620
CHANGE IN NET POSITION				400,430
NET POSITION, Beginning of Year			_	3,206,678
NET POSITION, End of Year			_	3,607,108

# ACCEPT EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE BALANCE SHEET GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS JUNE 30, 2015

	_	General Fund	G	Nonmajor Sovernmental Funds		Total Governmental Funds
ASSETS	φ	2 020 044	φ		<b>ው</b>	2 020 044
Cash and Cash Equivalents Accounts Receivable, Net	\$	3,029,844 1,933,731	\$	-	\$	3,029,844 1,933,731
Prepaid Expenses		11,894		-		11,894
Security Deposits	-	11,639		-		11,639
Total Assets	:	4,987,108	:			4,987,108
LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCES						
LIABILITIES						
Accounts Payable	\$	196,312	\$	-	\$	196,312
Accrued Payroll and Fringe Benefits  Amounts Due Members		476,268 475,000		-		476,268 475,000
Deferred Revenue	-	207,867				207,867
Total Liabilities	-	1,355,447		-		1,355,447
FUND BALANCES						
Nonspendable		-		-		40.044
Restricted Committed		16,844 -		-		16,844
Assigned		-		_		-
Unassigned	-	3,614,817		-		3,614,817
Total Fund Balances	-	3,631,661				3,631,661
Total Liabilities and Fund Balances	\$	4,987,108	\$		\$	4,987,108

# ACCEPT EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE RECONCILIATION OF THE GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS BALANCE SHEET TO THE STATEMENT OF NET POSITION JUNE 30, 2015

Total fund balance, governmental funds

\$ 3,631,661

Amounts reported for governmental activities in Statement of Net Position are different because:

Capital assets, net of accumulated depreciation, used in governmental activities are not current financial resources and, therefore, are not reported in this fund financial statement, but are reported in the governmental activities of the Statement of Net Position.

1,199,295

Certain liabilities are not due and payable in the current period and are not included in the fund financial statement, but are included in the governmental activities of the Statement of Net Position.

Notes Payable (575,185) Accrued OPEB Expense (648,663)

# ACCEPT EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENDITURES AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS

#### FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2015

REVENUES	General Fund	Nonmajor Governmental Funds	Total Governmental Funds
Administration - Membership and Other Fees	\$ 52,050		52,050
Tuition and Therapy	4.700.000		4 700 000
Regular Programs Tuition - School Year	4,799,693		4,799,693
Speech Therapy Tuition - Collaborative Students	50,715		50,715
Occupational Therapy Tuition - Collaborative Students			45,659
Physical Therapy Tuition - Collaborative Students	29,490		29,490
Other Therapy Tuition - Collaborative Students	298,286		298,286
Subtotal, Tuition and Therapy	5,223,843		5,223,843
Summer Programs Tuition	551,385		551,385
Home-based Services and Consultation	866,779		866,779
Transportation	5,664,641		5,664,641
Professional Development Programs	280,246		280,246
Medicaid Reimbursement Services	279,721		279,721
Technology Initiative	181,800		181,800
Grant Revenues	181,687		181,687
Governmental Revenues (In-Kind)	391,226		391,226
Gifts and Other	7,310		7,310
Investment Income	2,344		2,344
Total Revenues	13,683,032		13,683,032
Total Revenues	13,003,032		13,063,032
EXPENDITURES			
Administration	206,541		206,541
Regular, Therapy, and Other Programs - School Year	4,361,176		4,361,176
Summer Programs	357,761		357,761
Home-based Services and Consultation	802,730		802,730
Transportation	6,277,461		6,277,461
Professional Development Programs	282,227		282,227
Medicaid Reimbursement Services	132,476		132,476
Technology Initiative	168,401		168,401
Grant Expenses	181,569		181,569
Gifts and Other	5,002		5,002
Reserve for Members (Due to Members)	475,000	-	475,000
Total Expenditures	13,250,344		13,250,344
Evenes of Beveryes over Evenesdiffines	400.000		422.000
Excess of Revenues over Expenditures OTHER FINANCING SOURCES (USES)	432,688	-	432,688
Transfers (out)	_	_	_
Transfers (out)			
Net Change in Fund Balances	432,688	-	432,688
FUND BALANCE, Beginning of Year - cumulative effect			
of a change in accounting principle - full implementation of			
GASB 34	3,198,973		3,198,973
FUND BALANCE, End of Year	\$ 3,631,661		3,631,661

# ACCEPT EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE RECONCILIATION OF THE STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENDITURES AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES OF GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS TO THE STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2015

Net change in fund balances - total governmental funds:	\$ 432,688
Amounts reported for Governmental Activities in Statement of Activities are different because:	
Governmental funds report outlays for capital assets as expenditures because such outlays use current financial resources. In contract, the Statement of Activities reports only a portion of the outlay as expenses. The outlay is allocated over the assets' estimated useful lives as depreciation expense for the period.	
This is the amount by which capital outlays (\$586,279) were exceeded by depreciation (\$603,739) in the current period.	(17,460)
Governmental funds report debt service payments as expenditures because such outlays use current financial resources. In contrast, the Statement of Activities reports only the current year interest accrued on the debt as expense.	
This is the amount of debt principal payments in the current period.	134,719
Governmental funds do not present revenues that are not available to pay current obligations. In contrast, such revenues are reported in the Statement of Activities when earned.	-
Some expenses reported in the Statement of Activities do not require the use of current financial resources and these are not reported as expenditures in governmental funds:	
OPEB liability not reflected on Governmental funds	 (149,517)
Change in net position of governmental activities	\$ 400,430

#### 1. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

#### FINANCIAL REPORTING ENTITY

Founded in 1974 to promote excellence and innovation in educational practice for school districts in MetroWest, the ACCEPT Education Collaborative (the Collaborative, ACCEPT) is an unincorporated multi-purpose school collaborative formed under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. ACCEPT's mission is to use the collective power of member school districts and community resources to provide a wide range of exceptional programs and services that maximize the potential of students, their families, educators and communities. ACCEPT's main source of revenue is derived from fee for services for special education programs, transportation services, home-based services, behavioral and educational consultation, professional development, educational technology services and Medicaid reimbursement claiming services.

As required by accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAP) and in accordance with the Governmental Accounting Standards Board, the accompanying financial statements present the Collaborative and its component units. Component units are included in the reporting entity if their operational and financial relationships with the Collaborative are significant. Pursuant to these criteria, the Collaborative did not identify any component units requiring inclusion in the accompanying financial statements.

ACCEPT has fully implemented GASB Statement No. 34, Basic Financial Statements – and Management's Discussion and Analysis – for State and Local Governments as required by Massachusetts law regarding Collaboratives. This statement requires both government wide and fund financial statements. Previously, the Collaborative presented only enterprise fund financial statements. There was no change in the beginning net position on the government-wide financial statements. The opening balance in the governmental fund balance as a result of the cumulative effect of this change in accounting principle was \$3,198,973 as reported on the statement of revenues, expenditures and changes in fund balances.

The Collaborative has adopted GASB Statement No. 62, Codification of Accounting and Financial Reporting Guidance Contained in Pre-November 30, 1989 FASB and AICPA Pronouncements, which establishes guidance for applying standards established in Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) statements and interpretations to the preparation of financial statements for proprietary fund activities. In accordance with GASB Statement No. 62, the Collaborative complies with and observes all FASB statements and interpretations that were issued on or before November 30, 1989, unless they conflict with GASB pronouncements.

Adoption of New Accounting Pronouncements: In June, 2012, the GASB issued GASB Statement No. 68, Accounting and Financial Reporting for Pensions – An Amendment of GASB Statement No. 27. This Statement establishes standards for measuring and

recognizing liabilities, deferred outflows of resources, and deferred inflows of resources, and expense/expenditures related to pensions. For defined benefit pensions, this Statement identifies the methods and assumptions that should be used to project benefit payments, discount projected benefit payments to their actuarial present value, and attribute that present value to periods of employee service. Note disclosure and required supplementary information requirements for pensions also are addressed.

#### **BASIS OF PRESENTATION**

The financial statements of the Collaborative have been prepared in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles. The Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) is the accepted standard setting body for establishing governmental accounting and financial reporting principles. The Collaborative's basic financial statements include both government-wide and fund financial statements.

The government-wide financial statements report information on all activities of the Collaborative on a full accrual, economic resource basis, which recognizes all long-term assets and receivables as well as long-term obligations. The Collaborative's net position is reported in three parts: net investment in capital assets, restricted, and unrestricted. Net position is reported as restricted when amounts are not available for appropriation or are legally restricted by outside parties for a specific future use. The Collaborative first utilizes restricted resources to finance qualifying activities.

Fund financial statements present governmental funds on a measurement basis focusing on sources, uses and balance of current financial resources on the modified accrual basis of accounting. Under the modified accrual basis of accounting, revenues are recognized when susceptible to accrual (i.e. measurable and available). Measurable means the amount of the transaction can be determined and available means collectible within the current period or soon enough thereafter to pay liabilities of the current period. The general fund is the Collaborative's primary operating fund. It accounts for all financial resources of the Collaborative. Fund balances within the general fund are classified using a hierarchy based primarily on the extent to which a government is bound to honor constraints on the specific purposes for which amounts in those funds can be spent. All of ACCEPT's funds are governmental funds.

Following are the governmental fund classifications available to the Collaborative:

Non-spendable – includes amounts that cannot be spent because they are not in spendable form or legally or contractually required to be maintained intact.

Restricted – amounts subject to constraints that are externally imposed by creditors, grantors, contributors, or laws or regulations of other governments; or due to constitutional provisions or enabling legislation.

Committed – amounts that can only be used for specific purposes pursuant to constraints imposed by formal action of the government's highest level of decision-making authority.

Assigned – amounts that are intended to be used for specific purposes but are not considered restricted or committed.

*Unassigned* – is the residual classification for the general fund. It represents amounts that have not been assigned to other funds and that have not been restricted, committed, or assigned to specific purposes within the general fund.

#### REVENUE RECOGNITION

Revenues are recognized at the time services are provided. Tuition and program fees billed for the next school year are recorded as a deferred liability at June 30 and recognized as revenue in the next fiscal year.

#### **ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE**

Accounts receivables are stated at the amount management expects to collect from outstanding balances. Management provides for probable uncollectible amounts through a provision for bad debt expense and an adjustment to a valuation allowance based on its assessment of the current status of individual accounts. Overdue accounts receivable are not assessed a finance charge.

#### **CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS**

The Collaborative considers all highly liquid investments purchased with a maturity of three months or less to be cash equivalents.

#### **CAPITAL ASSETS**

Purchases of capital assets over \$2,500 (with an estimated useful life in excess of one year) are capitalized at cost. A full year of depreciation is taken on vehicles in the year of purchase. Depreciation is computed using the straight-line method over the estimated useful life of the asset.

#### **USE OF ESTIMATES**

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect certain reported amounts and disclosures. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

#### 2. CLASSROOM SPACE

The Collaborative receives the use of classroom space from certain members for which either payments are made or credits are allowed the members against billings for services provided to students from their communities. The total value of \$162,940 in 2015 for the use of such space has been reflected in program expenses in the accompanying financial statements.

#### 3. MEMBERSHIP ASSESSMENTS

Under the terms of their agreement, a portion of the administrative costs of the Collaborative shall be made available by assessing the member towns at a rate to be

determined annually by the Collaborative Board. The assessment to each member was \$4,000 in 2015. Non-member towns pay higher tuition.

#### 4. CAPITAL ASSETS AND DEPRECIATION

The capital asset activity in the statement of net position for the year ended June 30, 2015 is as follows:

Capital Assets	6/30/14	<b>Additions</b>	6/30/15
Furniture & Equipment	\$ 113,758	-	113,758
Vehicles	2,416,540	586,279	3,002,819
Total Cost	2,530,298	586,279	3,116,577
Accumulated			_
Depreciation	1,313,543	603,739	1,917,282
Net Capital Assets	\$ 1,216,755	(17,460)	1,199,295

Depreciation expense was \$603,739 in 2015. These amounts were allocated to transportation expense on the statement of activities

#### 5. TRANSPORTATION FEES AND CHARGES

The Collaborative provides transportation for member district students who attend schools outside their local community. The costs for transportation are billed to the towns whose students are receiving the services.

#### 6. PENSION PLANS

The Collaborative sponsors two retirement plans for its employees.

#### Massachusetts State Employees' Retirement System

**Plan Description and Provisions** - Non-teacher personnel participate in the Massachusetts State Employees' Retirement System (MSERS), a cost sharing multiple-employer defined benefit plan established under the Massachusetts Contributory Retirement Law. Benefit provisions and contribution requirements are established by state law. MSERS provides retirement benefits up to a maximum of 80% of a member's highest three-year average annual compensation. Benefit payments are based upon member's age, length of creditable service, level of compensation, and group classification.

Members of the system become fully vested after 10 years of creditable service. A retirement allowance may be received upon reaching age 65 or upon attaining twenty years of service. The Plan also provides for early retirement at age 55 if the participant (1) has a record of 10 years creditable service, (2) was on the Collaborative payroll after January 1, 1978, (3) voluntarily left Collaborative employment on or after that date, and (4) left accumulated annuity deductions in the Fund. The MSERS issues a publicly available financial report in accordance with guidelines established by the Commonwealth's Public Employee Retirement Administration Commission.

#### **Contributions**

Hire Date

Plan members are required to contribute to the MSERS at rates ranging from 5% to 11% of their annual covered compensation, on a pre-tax basis. The Collaborative is required to contribute at an actuarially determined rate that is apportioned among employees based on active current payroll. The contribution requirements of plan members are established and may be amended by the MSERS Board of Trustees. The Collaborative's current contribution rate is 5.6%.

Prior to 1975	THIC Date	70 of Compensation
1984 to 6/30/1996	Prior to 1975	5% of regular compensation
e i	1975 – 1983	7% of regular compensation
7/1/1996 to present 9% of regular compensation	1984 to 6/30/1996	8% of regular compensation
	7/1/1996 to present	9% of regular compensation

% of Compensation

1979 to present ...... An additional 2% of regular compensation in excess of \$30,000

#### **Annual Pension Cost**

The Collaborative's required and actual contributions to MSERS were \$100,778. Pension expense to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for the Collaborative amounted to \$179,338. Therefore, \$78,560 is reflected as revenues and corresponding expenditures in the Collaborative's financial statements for the portion of the Commonwealth's pension expense not required to be paid by the Collaborative. Collaboratives contribute amounts equal to the normal cost of employees' benefits at a rate established by the Public Employees' Retirement Administration Commission (PERAC), currently 5.6% of covered payroll. Legally, the Collaboratives are only responsible for contributing the annual normal cost of their employees' benefits (i.e., the present value of the benefits earned by those employees in any given year) and are not legally responsible for the past service cost attributable to those employees or previously retired employees of the Collaboratives. The Commonwealth as a nonemployer is legally responsible for the entire past service cost related to the Collaboratives.

#### Massachusetts Teachers' Retirement System

#### Plan Description and Provisions

Teachers and certain administrative personnel participate in the Massachusetts Teachers' Retirement System (MTRS), a cost-sharing multi-employer defined benefit plan administered by the Massachusetts Teachers' Retirement Board. Benefit provisions and contribution requirements are established by state law. Eligibility requirements for participation are as follows:

 The employees must be employed on at least a half-time basis in a contracted professional position within the public school system located in Massachusetts.

• The employee must be certified by the Massachusetts Department of Education for a position which requires certification.

MTRS is part of the Commonwealth's reporting entity and does not issue a stand-alone audited financial report. Additional information can be obtained on the state website.

#### **Contributions**

Participation in the plan requires that members contribute a fixed percentage of their compensation each pay period depending upon the date of employment. Employee contributions vest immediately. After 10 years of service, employee benefits become fully vested. After 20 years, or upon having attained the age of 55 with at least 10 years of service, employees are eligible to receive benefits under the plan. Benefits are based on the average of the three highest-salaried years of the employee service and are determined in a manner similar to the provisions of MSERS.

Hire Date Prior to 1975	<ul> <li>% of Compensation</li> <li>5% of regular compensation</li> <li>7% of regular compensation</li> <li>8% of regular compensation</li> <li>9% of regular compensation</li> <li>11% of regular compensation (for teachers hired after 7/1/01 and those accepting provisions of Chapter 114 of the Acts of 2000)</li> </ul>
1979 to present	An additional 2% of regular compensation in excess of \$30,000

The Collaborative has no obligation to contribute to the MTRS. All pension benefits and expenses paid by the Teachers' Retirement Board to employees of the Collaborative are funded by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Pension expense to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for the Collaborative was \$312,666 for fiscal 2015, and this amount is reflected as in-kind governmental revenues and corresponding expenditures in the Collaborative's financial statements.

#### **Pension Liabilities and Pension Expense**

The Collaborative is considered to be a special funding situation as defined by GASB Statement No. 68, *Accounting and Financial Reporting for Pensions* and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is a nonemployer contributing entity for MTRS and MSERS. Therefore, the Collaborative is required to disclose, but not record, the portion of the nonemployer contributing entities' share of the collective net pension liability that is associated with the employer.

The Collaborative's proportionate share of the net pension liability was \$4,500,421 for MTRS and \$2,521,960 for MSERS. For both MSERS and MTRS, the net pension liability was measured as of June 30, 2014 and the total pension liability used to calculate the net pension liabilities were determined by actuarial valuations as January

1, 2014 rolled forward to June 30, 2014. The Collaborative's proportion of the net pension liability was based on a projection of the Collaborative's long-term share of contributions to the pension plan relative to the projected contributions of all participating school districts and the State, actuarially determined. At January 1, 2014, the Collaborative's proportion was 0.034% for MSERS and 0.0283% for MTRS. As a special funding situation, the Collaborative must recognize its portion of the collective pension expense as both a revenue and pension expense. As indicated above, for the year ended June 30, 2015, the Collaborative recognized pension expense and revenue of \$78,560 (MSERS) and \$312,666 (MTRS).

**Actuarial assumptions** - The total pension liability in the January 1, 2014 actuarial valuations for MSERS and MTRS were determined using the following actuarial assumptions, applied to all periods included in the measurement:

- 1.(a) 8.0% investment rate of return, (b) 3.5% interest rate credited to the annuity savings fund and (c) 3.0% cost of living increase per year.
- 2. Salary increases are based on analyses of past experience but range from 3.5% to 9.0% (MSERS) and 4.0% to 7.5% (MTRS) depending on group and length of service.
- 3. Mortality rates were as follows:
  - Pre-retirement reflects RP-2000 Employees table projected 20 years (MSERS) and 22 years (MTRS) with Scale AA (gender distinct)
  - Post-retirement reflects Healthy Annuitant table projected 15 years (MSERS) and 17 years (MTRS) with Scale AA (gender distinct)
  - Disability the mortality rate is assumed to be in accordance with the RP-2000 Table projected 15 years (MSERS) and 17 years (MTRS) with Scale AA (gender distinct) set forward 3 years for males.

Investment assets of MSERS and MTRS are with the Pension Reserves Investment Trust (PRIT) Fund. The long-term expected rate of return on pension plan investments was determined using a building-block method in which best-estimate ranges of expected future rates of return are developed for each major asset class. These ranges are combined to produce the long-term expected rate of return by weighting the expected future rates of return by the target asset allocation percentage. Best estimates of geometric rates of return for each major asset class included in the PRIT Fund's target asset allocation as of June 30, 2014 are summarized in the following table:

		Long-Term Expected
Asset Class	<b>Target Allocation</b>	Real Rate of Return
Global Equity	43%	7.2%
Core Fixed Income	13	2.5
Hedge Funds	10	5.5
Private Equity	10	8.8
Real Estate	10	6.3
Value Added Fixed Income	10	6.3
Timber/Natural Resources	_4	5.0
Total	<u>100%</u>	

**Discount rate** - The discount rate used to measure the total pension liability was 8%. The projection of cash flows used to determine the discount rate assumed that plan member contributions will be made at the current contribution rates and the Commonwealth's contributions will be made at rates equal to the difference between actuarially determined contribution rates and the member rates. Based on those assumptions, the net position was projected to be available to make all projected future benefit payments of current plan members. Therefore, the long-term expected rate of return on pension plan investments was applied to all periods of projected benefit payments to determine the total pension liability.

**Sensitivity of the Collaborative's proportionate share of the net pension liability to changes in the discount rate**. The following presents the Collaborative's proportionate share of the net pension liability calculated using the discount rate of 8 percent, as well as what the Collaborative's proportionate share of the net pension liability would be if it were calculated using a discount rate that is 1-percentage point lower (7 percent) or 1-percentage point higher (9 percent) than the current rate:

Collaborative's proportionate share of the net pension liability	1% Decrease (7%)	Discount Rate (8%)	1% Increase (9%)
MTRS	\$5,732,261	\$4,500,421	\$3,454,022
MSERS	\$3,651,083	\$2,521,960	\$1,552,763

**Pension plan fiduciary net position** - The Plan Fiduciary Net Position as a percentage of the Total Pension Liability is 61.64% for MTRS and 76.32% for MSERS.

#### 7. POST EMPLOYMENT HEALTHCARE BENEFITS

In addition to providing pension benefits, ACCEPT funds 50% of health insurance coverage for retired employees. In the past, ACCEPT had been meeting its obligations on a "pay as you go" basis. Effective July 1, 2009, the Collaborative adopted GASB 45, Accounting and Financial Reporting by Employers for Post Employment Benefits Other Than Pensions. This statement establishes accounting and financial reporting requirements for employers to measure and report the cost and liabilities associated with other (than pension) post employment benefits (or OPEB). It imposes similar accounting rules for health care benefits as those now in place for pension benefits. The Collaborative applied GASB No. 45 on a prospective basis.

Plan Description - The Collaborative administers a single-employer defined benefit healthcare plan. The Accept Education Collaborative Postretirement Medical Plan ("the Plan") provides medical insurance benefits to eligible retirees. The Collaborative contributes 50% of the cost of current-year premiums for eligible retired plan members.

As of June 30, 2015, eleven retirees meet eligibility requirements. The Plan does not issue a publicly available financial report.

Funding policy – The contribution requirement of the plan members and the Collaborative are established and may be amended by the Collaborative's Advisory Board. The annual required contribution was based on projected pay-as-you-go financing requirements. For fiscal year 2015, ACCEPT contributed \$15,541 to the Plan. The Collaborative has accrued an amount sufficient to meet the outstanding OPEB obligation. Cash, included in the financial statements, was set aside in a separate bank account to fund this obligation, but the legal restrictions on this account have not been put in place to classify the obligation as "funded". Eligible retirees contribute 50% of premium costs.

Annual OPEB Cost and Net OPEB Obligation – The Collaborative's annual OPEB cost (expense) is calculated based on the annual required contribution (ARC) of the employer, an amount actuarially determined in accordance with the parameters of GASB Statement 45. The ARC represents a level of funding that, if paid on an ongoing basis, is projected to cover normal cost each year and amortize any unfunded actuarial liabilities (or funding excess) over a period of thirty years. Calculations were based on single employee benefits. The following table shows the components of the Collaborative's annual OPEB cost for the fiscal years 2015 and 2014, the amount actually contributed to the plan, and changes in the Collaborative's net OPEB obligation based on the actuarial valuation as of July 1, 2014:

A I	FY2015	FY2014
Annual required contribution (ARC)	\$ 190,792	\$ 156,200
Interest on net OPEB obligation	29,907	22,774
Adjustment to ARC	(55,641)	(40,819)
Annual OPEB cost (expense)	165,058	138,155
Contributions made	(15,541)	(17,317)
Increase in net OPEB obligation	149,517	120,838
Net OPEB obligation – beginning of year	499,146	378,308
Net OPEB obligation – end of year	\$ 648,663	\$ 499,146

The Collaborative's annual OPEB cost, the percentage of annual OPEB cost contributed to the plan, and the net OPEB Obligation were as follows:

	Annual	Percentage Annual Annual OPEB OPEB Cost Cost Contributed				
June 30, 2015	165,058	9%	Obligation 648,663			
June 30, 2014	138,155	13%	499,146			
June 30, 2014	155,543	15%	378,308			

Funded Status and Funding Progress – The Funded Status of the plan as of June 30, 2015 was as follows:

Actuarial accrued liability (AAL) \$ 648,663

Actuarial value of plan assets -

Unfunded actuarial accrued liability (UAAL) \$ 1,392,831

Funded ratio (actuarial value of plan assets/AAL) 0%

The projection of future benefit payments for an ongoing plan involves estimates of the value of reported amounts and assumptions about the probability of occurrence of events far into the future. Examples include assumptions about future employment, mortality, and the healthcare cost trend. Amounts determined regarding the funded status of the plan and the annual required contributions of the employer are subject to continual revision as actual results are compared with past expectations and new estimates are made about the future. The schedule of funding progress, presented as required supplementary information following the notes to the financial statements, presents multiyear trend information about whether the actuarial value of plan assets is increasing or decreasing over time relative to the actuarial accrued liabilities for benefits.

Actuarial Methods and Assumptions - Projections of benefits for financial reporting purposes are based on the substantive plan (the plan as understood by the employer and the plan members) and include the types of benefits provided at the time of each valuation, the historical pattern of sharing of benefit costs, and the plan members to that point. The actuarial methods and assumptions used include techniques that are designed to reduce the effects of short-term volatility in actuarial accrued liabilities and the actuarial value of assets, consistent with the long-term perspective of the calculations.

In the July 1, 2014 actuarial valuation, a method assuming "frozen entry age with allocation based on service" was used. The actuarial assumptions included a 6% discount rate and an annual health care cost trend rate of 4.00% for fiscal 2016, reduced by .75% per year to an ultimate rate of 2.5%. The UAAL is being amortized in level dollar amounts over thirty years starting in 2010. The remaining amortization period at June 30, 2015 was twenty-four years. The Collaborative has recorded a liability of \$648,663, which covers the actuarial accrued liability (AAL), which is based on coverage for family and single retirees.

#### 8. ACCRUED VACATIONS

The employees of the Collaborative are entitled to paid vacation time depending on length of service and other factors. The accrued liability for vacations was approximately \$20,315 at June 30, 2015 and is reflected in Accrued Payroll and Fringe Benefits in the

accompanying financial statements. Employees are required to use their vacation time by August 31 following the fiscal year end, or they lose any balance.

#### 9. AMOUNTS DUE MEMBERS

Due to regulations, there is a limit on the amount of surplus Collaboratives are allowed to retain. The Collaborative has calculated an amount due to members of \$475,000 as of June 30, 2015. Members can elect to either receive the funds in cash or apply the amount as a credit against future billings.

#### 10. GROUP HEALTH INSURANCE PLAN

As allowed by state laws, the Collaborative is a member of West Suburban Health Group. This health group provides a form of reinsurance and affords its members protection against substantial health premium increases based on an adverse claim history. If a large premium increase would occur, the cost would be spread among all members. During fiscal year 2015, the employer portion of the Collaborative's premiums totaled \$331,708. No contingent liabilities exist due to the Collaborative's membership in the West Suburban Health Group.

#### 11. RESTRICTED FUNDS

Following is a summary of restricted net assets at June 30, 2015:

\$ 2,895
2,605
1,814
3,474
6,056
\$ <u>16,844</u>

#### 12. OPERATING LEASES

The Collaborative rents office space located in Natick, Massachusetts and has operating leases through June and August 2017. Rent expense for this facility was \$89,276 for fiscal year 2015. Minimum future rental payments under these operating leases are as follows:

Year	Amount
FY2016	89,961
FY2017	92,017
FY2018	11,994
Total	\$ 193,972

#### 13. CONCENTRATION OF CREDIT RISK

The Collaborative maintains its operating bank accounts at two banks. Generally, these deposits may be redeemed upon demand. Accounts at the institution are insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) up to \$250,000. These balances fluctuate greatly during the year and can exceed this limit. The amount in excess of the FDIC limit totaled \$2,502,821 as of June 30, 2015. In addition, the Collaborative has an arrangement with Bank of America to guarantee the balances in excess of the FDIC limit in exchange for a lower rate of return on the cash balances.

#### 14. LOAN COMMITMENTS

The Collaborative has three 36 month loans, the proceeds from which were used to purchase vehicles for client transportation. The loans are secured by the vehicles. In addition, the Collaborative has a 30 month loan for GPS equipment. These loans are recorded in the government-wide statement of net position.

Bank Name	Bank of America	Bank of America	Bank of America	Bank of West
Date of Loan	8/6/2012	8/13/2013	8/15/2014	11/8/2013
Loan Amount	\$254,304	\$760,374	\$359,340	\$86,674
Interest Rate	3.04%	2.90%	2.91%	7.00%
Monthly Payment	\$7,381	\$22,070	\$10,459	\$3,158

Future principle payments by fiscal year are as follows:

	Bank of America	Bank of America	Bank of America	Bank of West	TOTAL
2016	7,002	260,084	119,095	33,555	419,736
2017	-	22,014	123,005	-	145,019
2018	-	-	10,431	-	10,431
TOTAL	\$ 7,002	282,098	252,531	33,555	\$ 575,186

#### 15. SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

The Collaborative did not have any recognized or non-recognized subsequent events after June 30, 2015, the date of the statement of net position. Subsequent events have been evaluated through December 16, 2015, the date the financial statements were available to be issued.

### Bruce D. Norling, CPA, P.C.

# INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROL OVER FINANCIAL REPORTING AND ON COMPLIANCE AND OTHER MATTERS BASED ON AN AUDIT OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS PERFORMED IN ACCORDANCE WITH GOVERNMENT AUDITING STANDARDS

To the Board of Directors
ACCEPT Education Collaborative
Natick, Massachusetts

We have audited, in accordance with the auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, the financial statements of the governmental activities, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of ACCEPT Education Collaborative, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise the Collaborative's basic financial statements and have issued our report thereon dated December 16, 2015.

#### Internal Control Over Financial Reporting

In planning and performing our audit of the financial statements, we considered the Collaborative's internal control over financial reporting (internal control) to determine the audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances for the purpose of expressing our opinion on the financial statements, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Collaborative's internal control. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of the Collaborative's internal control.

A deficiency in internal control exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct, misstatements on a timely basis. A material weakness is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control, such that there is a reasonable possibility that a material misstatement of the entity's financial statements will not be prevented, or detected and corrected on a timely basis. A significant deficiency is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control that is less severe than a material weakness, yet important enough to merit attention by those charged with governance.

Our consideration of internal control was for the limited purpose described in the first paragraph of this section and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control that might be material weaknesses or significant deficiencies. Given these limitations, during our audit we did not identify any deficiencies in internal control that we consider to be material weaknesses. However, material weaknesses may exist that have not been identified.

#### **Compliance and Other Matters**

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether the Collaborative's financial statements are free of material misstatement, we performed tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements, noncompliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the determination of financial statement amounts. However, providing an opinion on compliance with those provisions was not an objective of our audit, and accordingly, we do not express such an opinion. The results of our tests disclosed no instances of noncompliance or other matters that are required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards*.

#### **Purpose of this Report**

The purpose of this report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of the organization's internal control or on compliance. This report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering the organization's internal control and compliance. Accordingly, this communication is not suitable for any other purpose.

Bruce D. Norling, CPA, P.C

December 16, 2015

## ACCEPT EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE SCHEDULE OF REVENUES, EXPENDITURES AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES – BUDGET AND ACTUAL – GENERAL FUND FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2015

Variance with

	Budgeted Amounts Original Final			Actual Amounts, Budgetary Basis			Final Budget Variance Favorable (Unfavorable)	
REVENUES								
Administration	\$	52,000	\$	52,000	\$	52,050	\$	50
Regular, Therapy, and Other Programs		3,708,125		3,708,125		5,223,843		1,515,718
Transportation		5,041,448		5,041,448		5,664,641		623,193
Home-based Services and Consultation		715,000		715,000		866,779		151,779
Summer Programs		395,000		395,000		551,385		156,385
Technology Initiative		-		=		181,800		181,800
Professional Development Programs		253,000		253,000		280,246		27,246
Medicaid Reimbursement Services		195,000		195,000		279,721		84,721
Grant Revenues		97,628		97,628		181,687		84,059
Gifts and Other		-		-	_	7,310	_	7,310
Total Operating Revenues		10,457,201		10,457,201		13,289,462		2,832,261
Investment Income Total Revenues		10,457,201	_	10,457,201	_	2,344 13,291,806	-	2,344 2,834,605
Total Nevertues		10,437,201		10,407,201		10,231,000		2,004,000
EXPENSES								
Administration		48,219		48,219		198,740		(150,521)
Regular, Therapy, and Other Programs		3,847,908		3,847,908		4,192,969		(345,061)
Transportation		5,041,331		5,041,331		6,062,243		(1,020,912)
Home-based Services and Consultation		707,156		707,156		802,730		(95,574)
Summer Programs		366,595		366,595		357,761		8,834
Technology Initiative		-		-		168,401		(168,401)
Professional Development Programs		345,339		345,339		282,227		63,112
Medicaid Reimbursement Services		152,902		152,902		132,476		20,426
Grant Expenses		97,628		97,628		181,569		(83,941)
Gifts and Other		-		-		5,002		(5,002)
Reserve for Members (Due to Members) Total Expenses	_	10,607,078	_	10,607,078	_	475,000 12,859,118	_	(475,000) (2,252,040)
Excess (Deficit) of Revenues Over Expenses	\$	(149,877)	\$	(149,877)	\$_	432,688	\$	582,565

#### Notes to schedule:

The Board of Directors annually determines the amount to be raised to maintain and operate the Collaborative during the next fiscal year and then, based upon enrollment data, assesses the member and non-member districts in accordance with the terms of the agreement. An annual budget is adopted for the general fund in conformity with the guidelines described above. The above schedule presents a comparison of budgetary data to actual results. The General Fund utilizes the same basis of accounting for both budgetary purposes and The Collaborative prepares its annual budget on a basis (budget basis), which differs from generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP basis). The budget and all transactions are presented in accordance with the Collaborative's method (budget basis) in the above schedule to provide meaningful comparison of actual results with budget.

Reconciliation of the budget basis (Governmental) to the Government-Wide basis is provided below:

_		Revenue	Expenditures	Ex	cess (Deficit)
Budget basis	\$	13,291,806	\$ 12,859,118	\$	432,688
Depreciation		-	603,739		
Recognized on-behalf pension payments	3	391,226	391,226		
Increase in OPEB liability		-	149,517		
Capital Outlays			(586,279)		
Principal Payments on Loans			(134,719)		
Government-Wide Basis	\$_	13,683,032	\$ 13,282,602	\$	400,430

### ACCEPT EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE RETIREE HEALTH PLAN FUNDING PROGRESS JUNE 30, 2015

		Actuarial		
	Actuarial	Accrued	Unfunded	
Valuation	Value of	Liability	AAL	Funded
<u>Date</u>	<u>Assets</u>	(AAL)	(UAAL)	<u>Ratio</u>
6/30/2011	\$0	\$84,188	\$84,188	0%
6/30/2012	\$0	\$245,751	\$245,751	0%
6/30/2013	\$0	\$378,308	\$378,308	0%
6/30/2014	\$0	\$499,146	\$499,146	0%
6/30/2015	\$0	\$648,663	\$648,663	0%

# ACCEPT EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE SCHEDULE OF THE COLLABORATIVE'S PROPORTIONATE SHARE OF THE NET PENSION LIABILITY JUNE 30, 2015

	MTRS	MSERS
Collaborative's proportion of the net pension liability	0.0283%	0.0340%
Collaborative's proportionate share of the net pension liability	\$ 4,500,421	\$2,521,960
Collaborative's covered-employee payroll	\$ 2,467,032	\$1,799,607
Collaborative's proportionate share of the net pension liability as a percentage of its covered-employee payroll	182.42%	140.14%
Plan fiduciary net position as a percentage of the total pension liability	61.64%	76.32%

#### Notes to Required Supplementary Information

MTRS is the Massachusetts Teachers' Retirement System MSERS is the Massachusetts State Employees' Retirement System

#### Measurement Date

The amounts presented in this schedule were determined as of June 30, 2014.

#### Schedule Presentation

This schedule is intended to present information for 10 years. Until a 10-year trend is compiled, information is presented for those years for which information is available.

#### ACCEPT EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE SCHEDULE OF PENSION CONTRIBUTIONS JUNE 30, 2015

		MTRS	ľ	MSERS
Contractually required contribution	\$	-	\$	100,778
Contributions in relation to the contractually required contribution	_\$	-	\$	100,778
Contribution deficiency (excess)	\$	-	\$	
Collaborative's covered-employee payroll	\$	2,467,032	\$1	,799,607
Contributions as a percentage of covered-employee payroll		0%		5.6%

#### Notes to Required Supplementary Information

MTRS is the Massachusetts Teachers' Retirement System MSERS is the Massachusetts State Employees' Retirement System

#### Measurement Date

The amounts presented in this schedule were determined as of June 30, 2014.

#### Schedule Presentation

This schedule is intended to present information for 10 years. Until a 10-year trend is compiled, information is presented for those years for which information is available.

#### **Contributions**

The Collaborative is required to pay an annual appropriation as established by the Public Employees' Retirement Administration Commission (PERAC) for MSERS. No contribution is required for MTRS. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts as a nonemployer is legally responsible for the entire past service cost related to the collaborative and therefore has a 100% special funding situtation.

## ACCEPT Education Collaborative Supplemental Schedule - Information Required by MGL Chapter 40 Section 4E June 30, 2015

The following information is provided to conform to Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 40, Section 4E which establishes the requirements for the formation and administration of Educational Collaboratives in Massachusetts.

- 1) Transactions between the education collaborative and any related for-profit or non-profit organization: None.
- 2) Transactions or contracts related to the purchase, sale, rental or lease of real property: The Collaborative rents office space as described in Footnote #12.
- **3)** The names, duties and total compensation of the 5 most highly compensated employees:

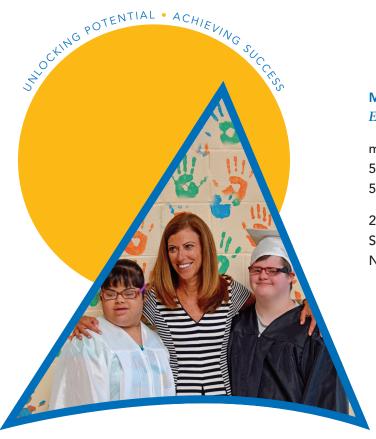
Name	Position	Salary	Benefits	Total Salary & Benefits	
Marcia Berkowitz	Executive Director	\$145,000	12,130	\$157,130	
Jescah Apamo-Gannon	Program Director	137,146	9,941	\$147,087	
Paul Tzovolos	SPED Director	110,000	3,960	113,960	
Ann D'Agostino	Teacher	108,447	20	108,467	
Wendy Danforth	Teacher	102,256	10,678	112,934	
	Total	\$602,849	36,729	\$639,578	

**4)** The amounts expended on administration and overhead:

The total amount expended on administration and overhead for fiscal year 2015 was \$740,885. Of this amount, \$206,541 is reported as administration expense on the Statement of Activities, and \$534,344 is allocated to program and transportation expenses.

- 5) Any accounts held by the collaborative that may be spent at the discretion of another person or entity: None.
- **6)** The amounts expended on services for individuals age 22 and older: None.





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