

2016-2017



# ANNUAL REPORT

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# ANNUAL REPORT

# Message from the Executive Director and Board Chair



## What is the ACCEPT Advantage?

Exceptional services to students and families, educators, and districts with attention to:

- High-quality teaching and learning.
- Responsiveness to evolving needs.
- Outcomes-focused and cost-effective delivery.
- Supporting district capacity and expertise.
- Unlocking student potential and achieving success.



Welcome to ACCEPT and our Annual Report. We are pleased to share these highlights of our activities and accomplishments during the 2016-2017 school year. This was an exciting year with the implementation of our revised Strategic Plan and the opening of our new Center for Learning and Growth. Our Strategic Plan provided a blueprint for sustainable growth in capacity to continue to serve our students, families, and districts without sacrificing quality. The Center for Learning and Growth provided us with a home.

The design, construction, and opening of our Center came at a perfect time for ACCEPT. Classroom space in districts continues to be at a premium, severely limiting the Collaborative's ability to grow and meet the evolving needs of our districts. In addition, our offices and services have been dispersed in a variety of locations, making it difficult to build a unified professional learning community. Moving into our own building, with classrooms, offices, our transportation operations, and professional development spaces, launches a new chapter for ACCEPT.

While our initial focus was on securing space for our students and programs, we quickly learned that our beautiful new Center opened a range of additional opportunities for partnerships. It's been a year of collaboration with funders, our new neighbors, our construction team, local businesses, our artist in residence, and so many friends and family who donated books, beautiful furniture, store fixtures, restaurant equipment, time, and more. The energy of our students, the generosity of so many individuals and corporations who believe in our work and share our vision, and the spirit of our highly qualified teaching staff brings our Center alive.

As we go forward, we are poised for so much more. Our students inspire us every day. Families entrust us to provide the best possible academic, therapeutic, and vocational options. Districts appreciate our flexibility, creative problem solving, and responsiveness. These are the pillars that support the ACCEPT hallmark of strength through collaboration.

We invite you to visit our new Center for Learning and Growth, and join our ongoing quest to evolve, improve, and respond to the needs of the unique learners we serve. We want you, too, to experience the ACCEPT Advantage.

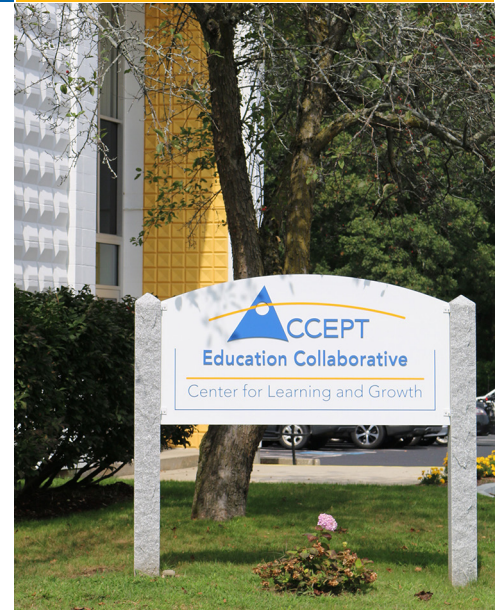
**Daniel E. Gutekanst, Ed.D.**  
Chair, Board of Directors,  
ACCEPT Collaborative  
Superintendent, Needham Public Schools

**Marcia Berkowitz, Ed.M, M.Ed.**  
Executive Director,  
ACCEPT Collaborative

# ABOUT ACCEPT EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE

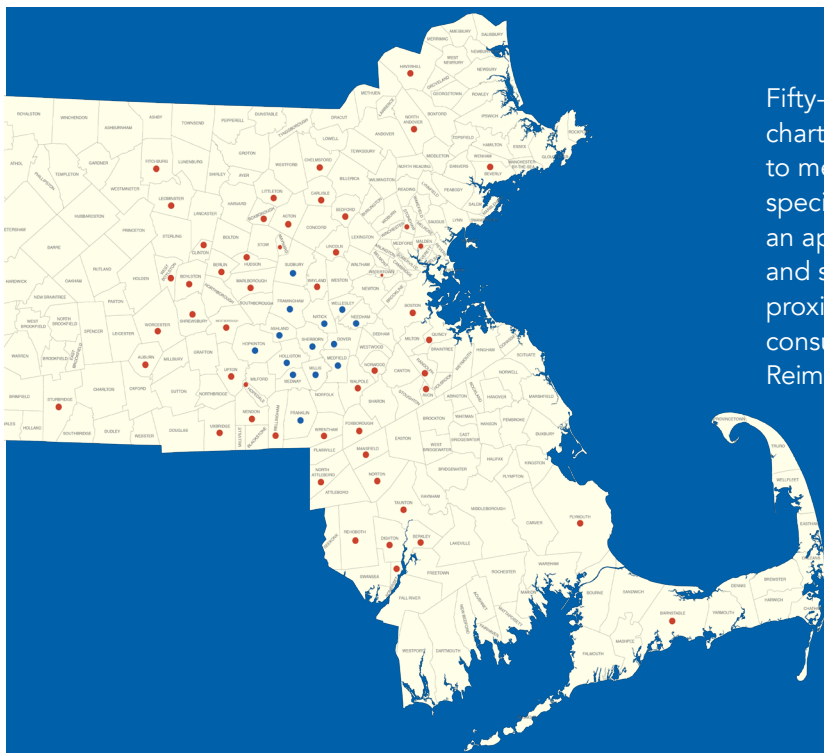
# ANNUAL REPORT

Since 1974, ACCEPT has provided excellence and innovation in educational practice for school districts in Metrowest Boston. ACCEPT, a non-profit, is governed by the Superintendents of the sixteen member school districts and an appointed representative of the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education. ACCEPT is a multi-service, entrepreneurial public school partner.



## A VALUE ADDED PARTNER FOR SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Fiscal challenges and budget shortfalls are perennial challenges for school districts in Massachusetts. With annual costs rising faster than revenues, districts continue to value opportunities to stretch dollars, better meet the needs of their special education populations, and take advantage of new technologies, proven education practices, and cost-savings opportunities. This allows districts to be laser-focused on maximizing their investments in student learning and growth. Flexible and adaptable, ACCEPT quickly responds to the individual needs of member districts with new programs and services. ACCEPT is supported primarily by fee-for-service activities, with an annual operating budget of over \$14 million.



Fifty-eight non-member districts, regional schools, charter schools, and parochial schools, in addition to member districts, utilize ACCEPT's programs, specialized expertise, and services. Most are within an approximately 20-mile radius of Natick. Programs and services that are less dependent on geographic proximity (e.g., professional development, school consultation, Virtual High School (VHS) and Medicaid Reimbursement) draw districts from a larger radius.

- Member district
- Sample of Non-member districts that utilize ACCEPT programs and services

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## What are Collaboratives?

Massachusetts collaboratives are educational services agencies that bring school districts together to form partnerships that create regional educational resources. Collaboratives benefit districts, students, families, educators, and taxpayers by maximizing efficiency through shared costs and expertise; play a leadership role in developing a broad range of innovative programming to meet emerging needs; provide training; enable the sharing of exemplary educational practices; and serve and educate directly many of our most vulnerable students across the Commonwealth. The 1974 Massachusetts enabling legislation originally addressed demands for special education services. Since then, the 28 educational collaboratives statewide have grown to encompass a range of educational services and programs.

*(Massachusetts Organization of Educational Collaboratives, 2016).*



# GOVERNANCE



The ACCEPT Education Collaborative was formed by its member school districts and is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of the Superintendents from 16 member school districts. Four operating committees, Special Education, Curriculum, Technology, and Business Operations, meet regularly throughout the year with the Executive Director to make recommendations relative to program development and service delivery (see page 30). ACCEPT is organized according to Massachusetts General Law Chapter 40, Section 4e.

### Board of Directors

Daniel Gutekanst, Chair  
Anne Wilson, Vice-Chair  
James Adams  
William McAlduff

Robert Tremblay  
Edward Gotgart

Maureen Sabolinski  
Bradford Jackson  
Cathy MacLeod  
Jeffrey Marsden  
Armand Pires  
Nancy Gustafson  
Peter Sanchioni  
Jonathan Evans

David Lussier

### Member Districts

Superintendent, Needham Public Schools  
Superintendent, Sudbury Public Schools  
Superintendent, Ashland Public Schools  
Interim Superintendent, Dover-Sherborn Regional School District  
Superintendent, Framingham Public Schools  
Interim Superintendent, Framingham Public Schools  
Superintendent, Franklin Public Schools  
Superintendent, Holliston Public Schools  
Superintendent, Hopkinton Public Schools  
Superintendent, Medfield Public Schools  
Superintendent, Medway Public Schools  
Superintendent, Millis Public Schools  
Superintendent, Natick Public Schools  
Superintendent, South Middlesex Regional Vocational Technical School District  
Superintendent, Wellesley Public Schools

# HIGHLIGHTS & NEW OR CHANGED 2016 – 2017

# ANNUAL REPORT

## PROGRAMMING FOR STUDENTS

Overall the number of students enrolled in ACCEPT school-year school-based programs increased by almost 10%.

ACCEPT shifted to a co-teaching model utilizing a special educator and behavior specialist (BCBA) in the Academy and ACES programs (K-6). The full-time approach strengthens the learning for students as behavioral strategies and proactive measures are fully embedded and practiced throughout the school day.

The IDEAL and ACES programs moved from Medway Middle School to Burke-Memorial School in Medway. We are grateful to our districts for welcoming ACCEPT classrooms at their school sites.

Academy (Inclusion) for grades K-5 opened at the Burke-Memorial School in Medway. The Academy is a substantially separate therapeutic program with opportunities for inclusion in a public elementary school. Students may experience a range of mental health issues, school adjustment difficulties, inappropriate social functioning and/or poor peer relations.

## MAINTAINING HIGH VALUE FOR DISTRICTS

ACCEPT tuitions, home-based fees, and consultation/evaluation fees were not increased for the 2016-17 school year. Private school tuitions went up an average of 6.3% compared to ACCEPT's increase of 0%, further widening the cost savings over private programs.

## By the Numbers Students Served

117 students educated in school-based programs

64 students/families received home-based services

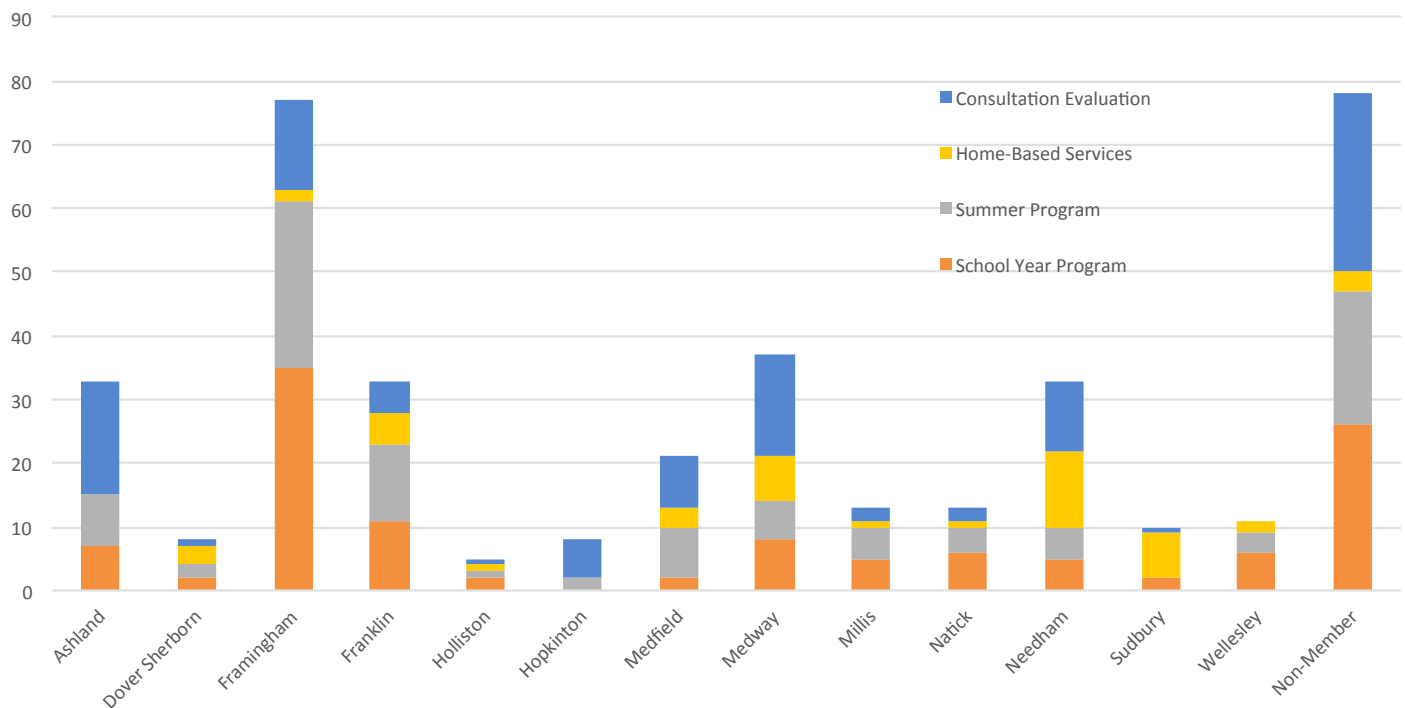
560 students transported

605 students enrolled in ACCEPT/Virtual High School (VHS) partnership

“The staff is exceptional.”

- ACCEPT Parent

Number of Students Served by Program and by District - FY17





Thanks to the many businesses and community partners that contributed to the planning, construction, furnishing, and purchasing of curriculum enhancements for the new Center for Learning and Growth.

- 2 Million and Change Foundation
- AMR
- Bauer Associates Inc.
- Bell Traffic Signal Maintenance
- Bob's Discount Furniture
- Book Donors
- Community Action Partnership
- Creative Pavilion
- Scott Dunlop, Ai3
- Fidelity
- Franklin Public Schools
- Amy Furman (artist)
- Holmes Realty
- R.P. Masiello
- Wendy Masiello
- Medfield Public Schools
- Middlesex Bank
- MutualOne Foundation
- MathWorks
- Natick Public Schools
- Greg O'Connor
- OwnerIQ
- Penguin Books
- Jessica Perry
- Roche Bros.
- Staples
- Staples Foundation
- The Sudbury Foundation
- Wellesley Public Schools

## COMMUNICATING AND BRANDING THE ACCEPT ADVANTAGE

ACCEPT focused on branding and on communicating our successes and offerings, in line with our strategic plan. The Collaborative was selected to participate in the Community Action Partners (CAP), a volunteer organization for Harvard Business School and Harvard Kennedy School alumni helping Boston-area nonprofits.

The CAP consulting team worked with ACCEPT constituents all school year to define the ACCEPT Advantage as well as marketing, branding, and communications needs and opportunities. The CAP team's work led to a Sudbury Foundation Capacity Building Grant to strengthen awareness of the ACCEPT brand, expand reach and awareness of ACCEPT's services, and create internal communications capacity.

## BUILDING AND OPENING THE NEW ACCEPT CENTER FOR LEARNING AND GROWTH

Recognizing that classroom space was limiting our ability to respond to the needs of students in our member districts, ACCEPT entered a long-term lease for dedicated space at 4 Tech Circle in Natick. At our soft opening in June 2017, we unveiled the 36,000 square foot ACCEPT headquarters. All non-inclusion and transition programs, our offices, our transportation hub, and professional development spaces have been consolidated into the new Center. Students who will benefit from inclusion opportunities continue to attend ACCEPT programs in member district schools.

## NEW PARTNERSHIPS

With our strategic plan in hand, as well as new opportunities resulting from our new physical space, ACCEPT significantly expanded our partnerships with community organizations, businesses, and donors.



# PARTNERSHIPS FOR LEARNING

# ANNUAL REPORT

## CENTER FOR LEARNING & GROWTH

Our staff dreamed big and by pooling the resources of our many community partners and volunteers we were able to add the big and small enhancements that provide opportunities for authentic hands-on learning to make our curriculum come alive.

### SCHOOL LIBRARY AND MURAL PROJECT

We wanted our students to make their mark on the physical space as well. With the help of Lori Bowness, our art teacher, and artist Stephanie Boyd Berks, student drawings were compiled to create a fabulous mural that greets visitors in the new William T. Hurley Library. The Library was named in honor of Bill, our Business Manager, to recognize his tireless efforts in helping to make the creation of our new fantastic facility a reality.

Our beautiful library space was completed with the donations of flexible tulip tables from MathWorks, and lots of age-appropriate, high-quality books from member school districts, individuals, parents, and staff.

### PLAYGROUND SURFACE AND BIG BLUE BLOCKS

Thanks to MutualOne Foundation the Center has a universally accessible outdoor play area with a colorful blue poured rubber surface that is soft on falls and easy on chairs with wheels. MathWorks funded the purchase of durable foam Big Blue Blocks, an innovative set of giant geometric blocks that inspire fun, imagination, and safe physical play. They create an indoor or outdoor play laboratory for STEM concepts such as geometry, and also a place to practice social/emotional skills such as collaboration, negotiation, and communication.

### WALK AND DON'T WALK – PEDESTRIAN TRAVEL

Crossing the street is an important skill in becoming an independent traveler whether walking to the bus stop, to the store for groceries, or a few blocks to a job or school. Thanks to the generosity of Bell Traffic Signal Maintenance, the opportunity to practice with a real crossing signal is part of our Transition Center. Bell donated the crossing light, and our new neighbor, John Glenn of Bauer Associates, walked it down the street to his shop and re-programmed it for our purposes.

### APARTMENT LIFE

Thanks to many donors, including Bob's Discount Furniture, our new Center includes a model apartment that allows our transition age (18-22 year old) students the opportunity to learn targeted independent living skills in a safe, thoughtfully-planned learning environment. The fully functioning one-bedroom apartment with kitchen, dinette and living area, as well as washer/dryer across the hall provides a realistic space for students to develop the skills necessary to live as independently as possible once they are no longer eligible for the supports offered by public schools.



“ACCEPT is all (about) the wonderful kind and caring people who make things easy and fun.”

- ACCEPT Student



## ACCEPT

“Wow, it looks like a store, it smells like a store, it IS a store!”

- ACCEPT Student



“My favorite thing about ACCEPT is the opportunities that are available for all of our students, of all ages!!”

- ACCEPT Staff Member

## UNLOCKING POTENTIAL · ACHIEVING SUCCESS

### TRANSITIONING TO THE WORLD OF WORK

Many of our students aged 18-22 are preparing for the world of work. Hearing of our interest in creating a mock retail environment at our new Center sparked the imagination of our Staples partners. Staples volunteers supplied and installed an entire mock store, complete with shelving, labels, copy center, posters, cash register, shopping carts, and more.



View the video produced by our Staples partners on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wl5PjLeBjqw>

Next door to Staples is a mock Roche Bros. with shelves and refrigerator case. The store serves multiple purposes – from refrigerated fruit/vegetable storage for our ACCEPTional cafe vocational training program, to a mock shopping experience for our life skills students, to vocational training in a retail environment.



# STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK



## OUR MISSION

To use the collective power of member school districts to provide programs and services that maximize the potential of students, their families, educators, and communities.

- We anticipate and respond to evolving educational needs with innovative, forward-thinking, high-quality, best-in-class programs and services.
- We complement and extend in-district options by leveraging our expertise, utilizing economies of scale, and building strength through collaboration.

## STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK AND STRATEGIC MINDSET

ACCEPT's strategic planning work goes deeper than a set of initiatives for growth. ACCEPT has adopted a strategic mindset – one that guides staff in working smart and is adaptive to the changing needs of students and their families. Our strategic framework graphic illustrates how the puzzle pieces that include elements of the mission and guiding principles fit together and wrap around the central focus on learning for all students (see back cover). Being strategic, aligned, and coherent is everyone's business.

## THREE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Our strategic planning process in 2015-2016 identified three key anchors to guide smart growth and improvement over the next three to four years:

- Building Infrastructure to Support Growth by removing the factors that are limiting growth
- Communicating the ACCEPT Advantage and promoting a narrative that provides clarity and understanding of all that ACCEPT has to offer
- Expanding Programs, Specialized Expertise, and Services adding value to districts without straining ACCEPT's overall ability to perform

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## ACCEPT Guiding Principles

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



“ I am grateful to be part of ACCEPT. We had the very best team meeting that we have ever had (in our district) and I attribute much of that to the consultation and evaluation team from ACCEPT. ”

- Member District Special Education Director

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# PROGRESS IN ACHIEVING PURPOSE

Since its formation in 1974, ACCEPT Education Collaborative has established trusted partnerships with districts to achieve its objectives and purposes set forth in its Collaborative Agreement. The following table highlights progress in 2016-2017.

Objectives outlined in collaborative agreement	Progress towards those objectives in 2016-17
<b>ELEVATE STUDENT OUTCOMES</b> Deliver efficient, cost-effective, and high quality programs and services that minimize the impact of student disabilities and maximize student outcomes including achievement, independence, and participation in the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adoption of co-teaching model utilizing a special educator and behavior specialist (BCBA). This strengthens the learning for students.</li> <li>• High value and high student outcomes is at the heart of the ACCEPT model.</li> <li>• All students earned passing scores on their MCAS-Alt portfolios.</li> <li>• The end of each year is celebrated by a moving-up and award ceremony.</li> </ul>
<b>RESPOND TO DISTRICT NEEDS WHERE COLLABORATION IS A SENSIBLE APPROACH</b> Develop and implement programs and an array of services that increase educational opportunities for students, families, educators, and districts when it is determined that such programs and services can most effectively, efficiently, and economically be provided on a collaborative basis and complement, strengthen, and meet the evolving needs of member districts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2016-17 ACCEPT entered a long-term build/lease for the new Center for Learning and Growth expanding capacity for districts.</li> <li>• ACCEPT worked with Community Action Partners (CAP) to define the ACCEPT Advantage (see page 7).</li> <li>• Enhanced relationships with district and business community partners allowed us to obtain resources to bolster state of the art programming (see pages 8-9).</li> </ul>
<b>EXPAND PROGRAMS TO MEET NEW NEEDS</b> Expand program options in alignment with the mission and purpose of the Collaborative to help districts maximize cost-efficiency and program effectiveness through a collaborative effort.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ACCEPT added an Academy (Inclusion) program for grades K-5. The Academy is a substantially separate therapeutic program with opportunities for inclusion in a public elementary school.</li> <li>• New ACCEPT leadership models and meeting structures have streamlined administrative functions and promoted collaboration and efficiencies that support program expansion to meet district needs.</li> </ul>
<b>TRANSPORT STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES</b> Provide safe, reliable, and efficient transportation services for students with disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 560 students transported to 92 locations.</li> <li>• New routing and dispatching software explored and selected.</li> <li>• A fleet of 150 vans means that drivers can be dispatched and routed for flexibility, efficiency, and safety.</li> </ul>
<b>OFFER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR CONTENT, SKILLS, AND SHARING OF PRACTICE</b> Offer quality professional development opportunities to general and special education teachers, administrators, and related service providers, focused on closing achievement gaps, preventing unnecessary referrals to special education and personalizing learning for students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional development has been a growth area for ACCEPT in recent years.</li> <li>• ACCEPT hosted job-alike groups for Special Education Directors, Business Managers, Curriculum Directors, Technology Directors, pre-school coordinators, BCBAs, high school special education coordinators.</li> <li>• The 14th Annual Institute for new Special Education directors received excellent reviews again in Summer 2016 (see page 24).</li> </ul>

Executive  
Director

**Marcia  
Berkowitz**

## Special Education Programs

### **Elementary Level**

Academy  
Academy ACES  
IDEAL

### **Middle Level**

Academy  
PALS  
STAR

### **High School Level**

Academy  
ACCESS APP  
PALS  
SOAR

### **Ages 18-22**

#### **Transition Programs**

C2C  
Passages: 5 for 5 and ECO  
ACT

## Specialized Expertise

Home-Based  
Therapeutic  
Program

Consultation and  
Evaluation Services  
for Districts and  
Schools

Professional  
Development  
for Educators

## Services

Transportation for  
Special Education  
Students

Medicaid  
Reimbursement  
Services for Towns

VHS Online  
(Virtual High School)  
Online Learning

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## By The Numbers

**117** students educated in school-based programs

**103** students benefited from Extended School Year summer programs

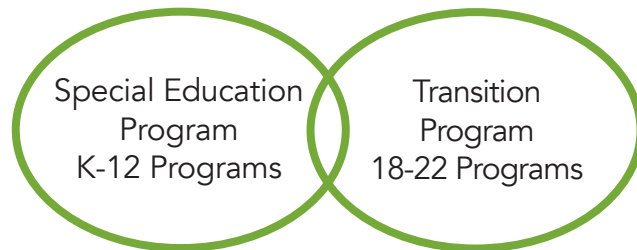


## Our Expert Staff Includes

- Master's level educators
- Reading specialists
- Board Certified Behavior Analysts
- School and clinical psychologists
- Psychiatrist for consultation
- Licensed Mental Health Counselors
- Licensed Social Workers
- Speech pathologists
- Occupational Therapists
- Physical Therapists
- Registered Behavior Technicians (RBT)

# SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

ACCEPT special education programs provide customized learning environments to meet the unique needs of students.



## OUR SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS OFFER

- Specialized therapeutic supports
- A team of experts to provide behavioral interventions
- High academic expectations
- Technology integrated into learning opportunities
- Ongoing district and family communication

## 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, and science and technology, using the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks as a guide. Additionally, social/emotional, behavioral, and communication skills development is an integral component of the curriculum. When appropriate, students receive instruction on daily living activities which is integrated throughout their day. 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 use 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.

## SPECIALIZED SERVICES

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

## NURSING SERVICES – AN INTEGRAL AND VALUED BENEFIT OF ACCEPT SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

ACCEPT's healthcare team of registered nurses provides direct nursing services to students, including routine and urgent care, health screenings, medication management, health assessments, coordination of referrals, and ancillary services.

All teachers and assistants are trained and supervised by the healthcare team in seizure management and protocols for managing and treating life-threatening allergies. Additionally, each location has multiple staff members trained in the use of CPR and AED. Our healthcare team promotes health and safety in the school environment, provides case management services, and performs health promotion through education.

The healthcare team works collaboratively with the educational team to support the physical, behavioral and social health of our students. Our students benefit from:

- Specialized hearing and vision screenings
- Dental screenings
- Coordination of referrals
- Coordination of care after hospitalization
- Specialized health education
- Physical therapy
- Occupational therapy
- Speech and language therapy
- Vision therapy

## ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROGRAMS

### ACADEMY (THERAPEUTIC PROGRAM)

- Emotional/Behavioral

Pittaway School, 75 Central Street, Ashland, MA

Grades: K – 5

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.

#### Elementary Academy Tuition

**Member Tuition:** \$44,556

**Non-Member Tuition:** \$53,467

**Member Savings:** \$8,911

#### Comparison Tuition Rates Average Private

**School Tuition:** \$76,083

**Average Savings  
Over Private School:** \$31,527

## ACADEMY (INCLUSION PROGRAM)

- Emotional/Behavioral

Burke-Memorial School, 16 Cassidy Lane, Medway, MA

Grades: K – 5

Academy is a substantially separate therapeutic program with opportunities for inclusion in a public elementary school. Students may experience a range of mental health issues, school adjustment difficulties, inappropriate social functioning, in 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 issues at hand, practice positive replacement behavior alternatives and enhance their academic skills, allowing them to be successful when they return to their sending school.

### Elementary Academy Tuition

**Member Tuition:** \$44,556

**Non-Member Tuition:** \$53,467

**Member Savings:** \$8,911

### Comparison Tuition Rates Average Private

**School Tuition:** \$76,083

**Average Savings  
Over Private School:** \$31,527

## ACADEMY ACES (ACCEPT'S CLASSROOM FOR ESSENTIAL SKILLS)

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

Burke-Memorial Elementary School, 16 Cassidy Lane, Medway, MA

Grades: K – 5

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.

### ACES Tuition

**Member Tuition:** \$44,556

**Non-Member Tuition:** \$53,467

**Member Savings:** \$8,911

### Comparison Tuition Rates Average Private

**School Tuition:** \$80,430

**Average Savings  
Over Private School:** \$35,874

## IDEAL (INDIVIDUALLY DESIGNED EDUCATION TO ACCESS LEARNING)

- Global Impairments Medically Involved

Burke-Memorial Elementary School, 16 Cassidy Lane, Medway, MA

Grades: K – 5

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. Frequent communication between our IDEAL nurse and outside healthcare providers ensures a smooth transition to school and continuity of care.

### IDEAL Tuition

**Member Tuition:** \$56,415

**Non-Member Tuition:** \$67,698

**Member Savings:** \$11,283

### Comparison Tuition Rates Average Private

**School Tuition:** \$95,062

**Average Savings  
Over Private School:** \$38,647

## MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAMS

### ACADEMY (THERAPEUTIC PROGRAM)

- Emotional/Behavioral

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

Grades: 6 – 8

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.

#### Middle Academy Tuition

**Member Tuition:** \$44,556

**Non-Member Tuition:** \$53,467

**Member Savings:** \$8,911

#### Comparison Tuition Rates Average Private

**School Tuition:** \$80,430

**Average Savings  
Over Private School:** \$35,874

### PALS (PROGRAMS FOR ACADEMIC AND LIFE SKILLS)

- Language and Skills Development

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, and career exploration.

#### PALS Tuition

**Member Tuition:** \$44,556

**Non-Member Tuition:** \$53,467

**Member Savings:** \$8,911

#### Comparison Tuition Rates Average Private

**School Tuition:** \$99,196

**Average Savings  
Over Private School:** \$54,640

### STAR (STRATEGIES AND TOOLS FOR ACADEMIC REWARDS)

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

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

Grades: 6 – 8

The STAR program prepares students for a successful middle school experience focused on language and social skills development. Language-based learning difficulties are a common cause for students' academic difficulties. Language and communication is the common thread present throughout all academic content areas. Thus, weak language skills may hinder comprehension and communication for students across their academic areas. STAR provides support centered on developing oral and written language skills to enhance communication and the comprehension of academic content. Reading instruction is provided through multisensory, language-based, structured, sequential reading programs. Staff work with students, families, schools, and community agencies to provide support services that meet the unique needs of students. Skills targeted through this program include communication and social skills, academic skills with provided individualized supports for each student level, executive functioning skills, and compensatory strategies to increase student independence.

#### STAR Tuition

**Member Tuition:** \$44,556

**Non-Member Tuition:** \$53,467

**Member Savings:** \$8,911

#### Comparison Tuition Rates Average Private

**School Tuition:** \$56,386

**Average Savings  
Over Private School:** \$11,830

# HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAMS

## ACADEMY (THERAPEUTIC PROGRAM)

- Emotional/Behavioral

Franklin High School, 218 Oak Street, Franklin, MA

Grades: 9 – 12

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.

### High School Academy Tuition

Member Tuition: \$44,556

Non-Member Tuition: \$53,467

Member Savings: \$8,911

### Comparison Tuition Rates

#### Average Private

School Tuition: \$64,312

#### Average Savings

Over Private School: \$19,756

## ACCESS APP

- Moderate Disabilities

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

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, supports 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.

### ACCESS APP Tuition

Member Tuition: \$44,556

Non-Member Tuition: \$53,467

Member Savings: \$8,911

### Comparison Tuition Rates

#### Average Private

School Tuition: \$99,196

#### Average Savings

Over Private School: \$54,640

## PALS (PROGRAMS FOR ACADEMIC AND LIFE SKILLS)

- Autism Spectrum and other Neurological Disorders

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.

### High School PALS Tuition

Member Tuition: \$44,556

Non-Member Tuition: \$53,467

Member Savings: \$8,911

### Comparison Tuition Rates

#### Average Private

School Tuition: \$99,196

#### Average Savings

Over Private School: \$54,640

## 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.

### SOAR Tuition

Member Tuition: \$12,605

Non-Member Tuition: \$15,126

Member Savings: \$2,521

### Comparison Tuition Rates Avg Private

School Tuition: \$16,078

#### Average Savings

Over Private School: \$3,473

# TRANSITION PROGRAMS

## AGES 18-22

# ANNUAL

## REPORT

Transition programs prepare students for successful transition to adult living. They provide career/vocational skill development, job coaching, person-centered planning, specialized instruction, and transition and vocational assessments. Staff work with students, families, schools, and community agencies to provide support services that meet the unique needs of students. The development of skills related to functional academics and independent living is fostered by tailoring the program to each student's vocational and transitional goals. ACCEPT staff identify appropriate work sites in the community and determine necessary accommodations to ensure positive experiences for students.

## TRANSITION PROGRAMS

### 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. Staff work with students, families, schools, and community agencies to provide support services that meet the unique needs of students.

#### C2C Tuition

**Member Tuition:** \$44,556

**Non-Member Tuition:** \$53,467

**Member Savings:** \$8,911

#### Comparison Tuition Rates

##### Average Private

**School Tuition:** \$106,161

##### Average Savings

**Over Private School:** \$61,605

## 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.

#### Passages Tuition

**Member Tuition:** \$34,861

**Non-Member Tuition:** \$41,833

**Member Savings:** \$6,972

#### Comparison Tuition Rates

##### Average Private

**School Tuition:** \$73,451

##### Average Savings

**Over Private School:** \$38,590

Thanks to the many community organizations and businesses who provided ACCEPT vocational experiences and community outings. Some of them include:

- St. Joseph's Church-Medway
- Nick's Pizza-Ashland
- Morse Institute Library-Natick
- Powisset Farm-Dover
- Medfield Public Library-Medfield
- Kindred (Gentiva) Hospice-Marlborough
- Blessing Barn-Milford
- Medfield Council on Aging
- Millis Library
- TC Scoops-Medway
- Ashland Pizza Palace
- Hopkinton Lumber
- WAITT-We're All in This Together-Ashland
- Purple Ink Insurance-Ashland
- Westborough Boroughs Branch YMCA of Central MA
- MetroWest Wellness Center-Framingham
- Freedom Printing-Ashland
- MetroWest Medical Center-Framingham
- Bay State Support (now SimpliTiTy)-Ashland
- Sunrise Assisted Living – Wayland
- Courtyard Marriott – Westborough
- Putts & More-Holliston
- Hampton Inn-Natick
- Belmont Council on Aging
- Bethany House-Millis
- Milford Meals on Wheels
- Tower Hill Botanical Garden-Boylston
- Grafton Community Farm
- Lil' Folk Farm-Holliston



## Celebrating Success – Our Students

At ACCEPT, the annual award ceremony and frequent celebrations of success reinforce achievement and confidence-building. One prized award is the annual Michael J. Palladino Award presented to a student who exemplifies the Collaborative's commitment to minimizing the impact of a disability and maximizing opportunities in the community.

The 2016-17 recipient was Cedric Binelli-Messi from Framingham. Cedric demonstrated significant growth in independence and maturity during his time with us. He was always a pleasure to work with – hard-working, polite, and respectful. During his time in the Transition Program he worked at St. Joseph's Church, Courtyard Marriott, The ACCEPT Pony and Offices, Natick Library, Blessing Barn, St. Vincent DePaul, Hampton Inn, and the Milford Meals on Wheels. With his work experiences and independence skills Cedric completed the ACCEPT program ready to succeed in adult life.



# EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR

During Summer 2016, 103 students participated in Extended School Year programs. These students include both school year ACCEPT students as well as students from member districts who benefit from continued summer programming.

Each summer, staff selects a theme and plans curriculum, activities, and community outings with that in mind. The 2016 theme was GO, ACCEPT, GO – with activities and celebrations linked to the Summer Olympics.

The Extended School Year 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 students' Individualized Education Programs. In summer 2016 all programs were located at Ashland Public Schools. Transition programs also included community sites.

# ANNUAL REPORT

## Value and Cost Comparisons

On average, ACCEPT Extended School Year programs are 13% less expensive than similar programs offered by private schools. Full day programs are in most programs \$549 less and half-day programs \$290 less. We serve students in our school year programs and also accommodate district requests for summer only placements.

Program Location	Types of Impairment(s)	Member Summer Tuition	Average Private School Tuition	Average Savings Over Private School
Elementary School				
<b>IDEAL</b>	Global Impairments Medically Involved	\$7,835	\$11,697	\$3,862
<b>Academy Therapeutic Program</b>	Emotional/Behavioral	\$6,188	\$6,737	\$549
Middle School				
<b>PALS Program</b>	Autism Spectrum and other Neurological Disorders (Moderate to Severe)	\$6,188	\$6,737	\$549
<b>Academy Therapeutic Program</b>	Emotional/Behavioral	\$6,188	\$6,737	\$549
High School				
<b>PALS Program</b>	Autism Spectrum and other Neurological Disorders (Moderate to Severe)	\$6,188	\$6,737	\$549
<b>Academy Therapeutic and Stabilization Component</b>	Emotional and Behavioral	\$3,713	\$4,035	\$322
Transition Programs				
<b>C2C (Classroom to Community),</b>	Autism Spectrum and other Neurological Disorders (Severe)	\$6,188	\$6,737	\$549
<b>PASSAGES 5 for 5 (5th Year Transition)</b>	Learning Disabilities and Asperger's Syndrome	\$3,094	\$3,369	\$275
<b>PASSAGES ECO</b>	Mild to Moderate Disabilities	\$3,094	\$3,369	\$275

# ANNUAL REPORT

## By the Numbers

**64** families benefited from home-based services

**113** consultations and evaluations conducted for **32** districts

**1,359** educators were enrolled in **33** workshops and courses



*“ Nikee never looks for recognition and works tirelessly for the benefit of her students, exuding the ACCEPT Advantage every day. ”*

- ACCEPT Colleague

## SPECIALIZED EXPERTISE

Our school consultants, home-based providers, and professional development experts include leading educators and members of the ACCEPT senior staff. Among our key distinguishing characteristics is our commitment to respond quickly and effectively to district needs. Continued growth in these areas is just one indicator of high quality and widespread satisfaction.



## Celebrating Success – Our Teachers

At the heart of ACCEPT and its quality programs are the professionals who, through training and experience, have the specialized expertise to identify student needs quickly and develop a plan of action to help them reach their potential. Each year, ACCEPT honors one of our exceptional educators with the Susan S. Rees Award for Excellence in Teaching and Learning. This year, Nikee Gugnani was selected by her peers to be recognized for her outstanding work with her students, as well as her contributions to the Collaborative. Nikee started at ACCEPT as a teaching assistant, completed the ACCEPT/Simmons M.Ed. program, and is now a classroom teacher. Colleagues describe her as a kind and great collaborator, passionate about teaching, working with children, and supporting new teachers.



# HOME-BASED SERVICES

## ANNUAL REPORT

### HOME-BASED SERVICES

Home-based services 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 Assessments

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

- Home-based assessment
- Home FBA (Functional Behavioral Assessment)

#### Home-based Objectives

With goals established through the assessment, specific objectives are identified that may include:

- Language / Communication and Social Skills
- Behavior Management
- Adaptive Daily Living
- Play and Leisure
- Community Participation Skills
- Transition to school

#### 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.

### Value and Cost Comparisons

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 for a district can be as much as \$2,300 for a single assessment.

“ I was very pleased with the ABA services. Our therapist was wonderful. ”

- ACCEPT Parent

### By the Numbers

**64** families received home-based services

**53** families benefited from services and **8** received home assessments

**11** families received parent training

**13** families successfully transitioned from home-based services

**14** of ACCEPT's **16** member districts and **3** non-member districts utilized home-based services.

# ANNUAL REPORT

## Value and Cost Comparisons

ACCEPT's consultation and evaluation services rates for member districts are 25% – 30% lower than the rates of comparable private agencies. For non-member districts, rates are 10% –15% lower than private agencies.



## By the Numbers

**113** contracts with **32** districts for consultation and evaluation.

Of those **12** were member districts and **20** non-member districts

**11** districts utilized on-site professional development services

# 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-specific needs, or to provide program-wide consultation or evaluation. Our team of experts has an average 15 years of experience and the majority are also college faculty.

Consultation and evaluation services continue to expand to meet the growing needs of member and non-member districts. Our consultation staff provide 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 student-specific and program-wide evaluations.

### Offerings include:

- District Program Evaluations (e.g., Autism Programs, Transition Programs, Inclusive Preschool Programs, etc.)
- Expert Consultation Services
- Functional Behavior Assessments (FBA)
- Transition and Vocational Assessments
- Psychological Assessments
- Speech / Language Assessments
- Social Skills Assessments
- Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy
- Onsite professional development to build in-district capacity.

### 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 inclusive practices, 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.

# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

ACCEPT programs for educators are grounded in the 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.

## Growing Interest in In-District, Online, and Hybrid Courses

Over the last few years, ACCEPT has responded to increased requests for in-district professional development provided by ACCEPT staff. This cost-effective way of meeting a district's training needs has garnered high praise from administrators and teachers alike. MoodleRooms provides a platform for our Paraprofessional, Behavior Technician and Mentoring courses. In-district programs, coaching, and program evaluations and consultation are an efficient way for districts to provide high quality professional development at their own site, reducing the out-of-class and office time for teachers and administrators.

## Institute for New Special Education Administrators

Twenty-five new Special Education Directors from across Massachusetts took part in the 14<sup>th</sup> year-long Institute designed specifically for new Special Education Directors. The Institute has four elements that together create a highly-valued first year for new Directors. Elements include a week-long summer Institute that covers all the skill/knowledge essentials for new Directors as well as leadership training, followed by a year of mentoring by a seasoned Special Education Director and Problems of Practice seminars that give new Directors an ongoing professional learning community, and finally a capstone project that uses data and a cycle of inquiry to improve special education practices in-district. Graduates of the Institute are invited to return to the group Problems of Practice workshops to continue their learning as well. The program is made possible by a grant from the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

# ANNUAL REPORT

## Value and Cost Comparisons

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.

“ I was engaged and interested in the activities and thrilled to take the strategies back to the classroom! Thank you! ”

- Workshop Attendee

## By the Numbers

**1,359** educators took part in **33** workshops and courses

**206** participants in “Differentiating in Inclusive Classrooms” workshops

**224** Paraprofessionals enrolled in online training from **5** districts

# ANNUAL REPORT

## By the Numbers

**\$3,930,553** returned to municipalities in Medicaid reimbursements

**560** students transported to **92** locations

**605** students enrolled in innovative online VHS courses

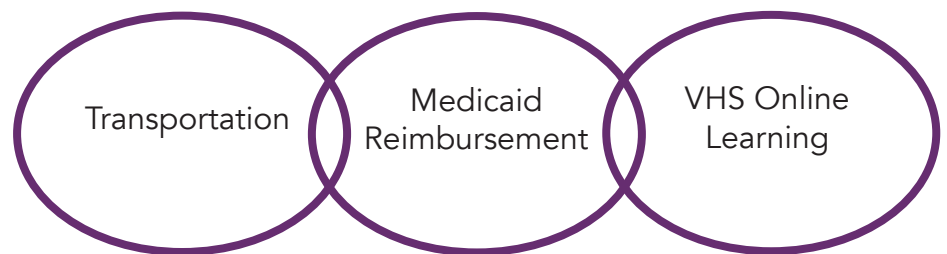


## VALUE AND COST COMPARISONS

ACCEPT utilizes an assessment model to price transportation for member districts. This allows districts to pay a fee equivalent to the actual cost of providing special education transportation services to the students in their district. Assessments are calculated annually, providing districts with the data necessary to budget accurately and allowing ACCEPT to meet its costs, an advantage not available from for-profit transportation vendors. Further, efficiencies are maximized and cost savings are enhanced by the districts and ACCEPT working in partnership.

## SERVICES

We offer a range of services to our member districts including transportation, Medicaid reimbursement, and access to The Virtual High School (VHS). As an extension of the district we have intimate knowledge of their challenges and readily customize services to meet the specific need. Our demonstrated ability to respond to the evolving environment and regulatory changes are true differentiators of ACCEPT services.



## TRANSPORTATION

ACCEPT Education Collaborative has provided specialized transportation services for our member school districts for more than 40 years. Each school day, we deliver safe and reliable transportation services for over 560 students traveling to 92 different locations, all at a significant discount as compared to for-profit specialized transportation providers.





“ My child’s driver and monitor are both respectful and have a wonderful rapport with my child. ”

- ACCEPT Parent

## THE IMPORTANCE OF SPECIALIZED TRANSPORTATION

Transitions from home to school, and back again, can be challenging for any child. For students with disabilities, the ride can be even more challenging.

ACCEPT’s robust transportation program has evolved over the past four decades in response to district requests. Even with a fleet of 150 vans, 100 drivers, 40 monitors, and about 20 classroom teachers and assistants who drive students to internships and community activities, ACCEPT cannot fully meet the demand from member districts. We are constantly looking for ways to streamline processes and improve the quality of the experience. Safety, our number one priority, has been enhanced in recent years with the adoption of new technologies including GPS systems, cell phones, and cameras. All ACCEPT drivers undergo a complete pre-employment screening, including fingerprinting, criminal background checks, and driving safety verification. Additionally, drivers and monitors are provided regular in-service education on disability awareness, how to handle difficult student behaviors and situations, and other relevant topics.

Transporting such a large number of students with disabilities requires a complex and finely tuned system:

- Each of the 560 students has an individual set of needs and an individual route.
- 560 students are transported, typically with 2-4 students per van, requiring coordination of a number of factors including routes, need for a monitor, begin/end time of the school day, avoiding an overly long ride, and a myriad of other small, but consequential, details.
- Routes change daily and communication is key. If a child’s transportation changes or a van is running late, a web of communication is required. With no room for error, two dispatchers keep track of the daily schedule for every student, van, driver, and monitor at all times.
- A wide range of situations can occur while on the road including medical emergencies, mechanical failures, detours, traffic jams, an absent parent/caregiver upon arrival, and more. Policies and procedures are constantly reviewed and updated to provide staff with direction on how to manage a variety of situations.
- Hiring and retaining van drivers and monitors is an ongoing challenge. Competition for hard-working, patient, compassionate staff is intense, especially since most of our staff work an unconventional schedule of an early morning route, a break mid-day, and an afternoon route. Perks such as personal use of the vans, paid training, CPR certification, a variety of bonus programs, and paid commercial licenses help us retain good drivers.

# ANNUAL REPORT

**ACCEPT** works 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. Districts are eligible to claim:

- Costs of eligible direct services as well as some administrative costs
- Out-of-district tuitions paid for eligible students, both residential and day
- Reimbursement for medical ABA services provided to eligible students with Autism



## By the Numbers

**18** districts participated in the Medicaid reimbursement program

Annual direct service reimbursements ranged from **\$23,129** to **\$1,140,337**

Annual administrative reimbursements ranged from **\$5,633** to **\$621,957**

# MEDICAID REIMBURSEMENT

In 1994, ACCEPT Education Collaborative established the School-Based Medicaid Reimbursement Program (formerly Municipal Medicaid Reimbursement) for member and non-member districts to recoup money spent on school-based health and related medical services. Over the past twenty-two years this program has returned over \$56 million to participating cities and towns.

### Our Medicaid Reimbursement Services include:

- Program set-up and ongoing maintenance
- Quarterly identification of eligible students
- Submission of electronic claims for direct services
- Follow-up with out-of-district programs to obtain service documentation for students
- Calculation of and prepare quarterly administrative claims on behalf of the district
- Calculation of annual Direct Service Cost report
- Help districts understand constantly evolving state regulations and changes to the program
- Creation of custom reports for districts
- Unlimited training for district staff on the Medicaid reimbursement process and systems
- Assistance for the district if selected for an audit

## VALUE AND COST COMPARISONS

During Fiscal Year 2017 these districts received a total of \$3,930,551 in Direct Service and Administrative Claim reimbursements.

School District	Direct Service Cost	Administrative Activity Claims
Ashland	\$52,739	\$67,663
Auburn	-	\$71,245
Bedford	\$41,300	\$41,311
Carlisle	-	\$5,633
Foxboro	\$80,522	\$50,792
Framingham	\$1,140,337	\$621,957
Franklin	\$131,081	\$143,060
Holliston	\$66,409	\$60,550
Hopkinton	\$23,129	\$24,604
Lincoln/Sudbury Regional	-	\$51,474
Littleton	\$49,172	\$41,863
Medfield	\$27,148	\$28,632
Medway	\$46,903	\$35,251
Millis	\$28,392	\$34,426
Natick	\$276,078	\$133,251
Northern Berkshire Regional	-	\$21,410
South Middlesex Regional	\$37,079	\$25,164
Walpole	\$363,087	\$108,889
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,363,376</b>	<b>\$1,567,175</b>

# VHS (VIRTUAL HIGH SCHOOL)



VHS provides districts with a wide range of high quality online courses that offer flexible credit recovery, opportunities for accelerated students, unique electives, career-focused coursework, summer courses, and more.

VHS is also well-suited to the needs of students at ACCEPT High School Academy. ACCEPT teachers customize the courses utilizing blended learning that accommodate the individual learning needs of each student. The VHS modules are rigorous and meet graduation credit and syllabus requirements.

More information is available at [vhscollaborative.org](https://vhscollaborative.org)

Some of the courses include:

- Astronomy
- Algebra 1
- Bioethics
- Computational Science and Engineering Using Java
- Contemporary Issues in American Law and Justice
- Criminology
- Engineering Principals
- French, German, Italian and Spanish Language and Culture
- Forensic Science
- Genes and Disease
- Geometry
- Ghoulies, Ghosties, and Long-Legged Beasties
- Investing in the Stock Market
- Mandarin Chinese Language & Culture
- Meteorology
- Music Listening and Critique
- Nuclear Science
- Oceanography
- U.S. History
- Web Design

## ANNUAL REPORT

### VALUE AND COST COMPARISONS

As part of the Consortium, teaching membership districts paid \$135 per VHS seat. Rates for districts who purchase seats only range from \$250-\$400 depending upon the number of seats purchased. These rates compare very favorably to a district's costs for in-school classrooms, especially in classes with lower enrollments. In addition, a high quality online course is an efficient solution for students who have individual needs that do not fit the usual school offerings and calendar.



### By the Numbers

**605** seats in **106** innovative  
online courses

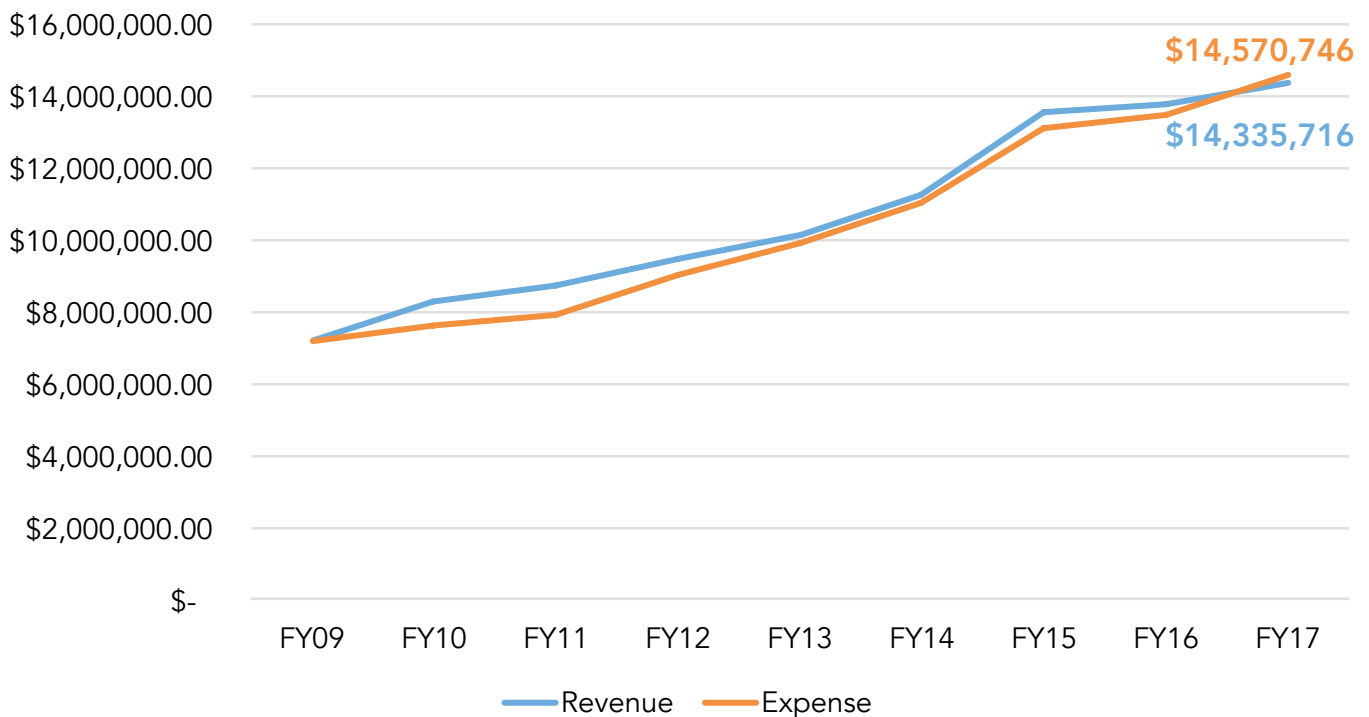
**584** high school and **21** middle  
school students benefit from courses

# ANNUAL REPORT

# FINANCIALS

FISCAL YEAR 2017	Revenue	%	Expense	%
School Year Tuition & Services	\$5,507,593	38.42%	\$5,118,860	35.13%
Transportation	\$6,419,249	44.78%	\$7,217,695	49.54%
Home-Based Services	\$845,362	5.90%	\$743,873	5.11%
Professional Development	\$151,700	1.06%	\$153,638	1.05%
School Consultation/Evaluation	\$342,213	2.39%	\$346,595	2.38%
Extended Year Tuition & Services	\$593,935	4.14%	\$498,084	3.42%
Medicaid Reimbursement	\$252,991	1.76%	\$183,369	1.26%
Administration	\$73,773	0.51%	\$187,682	1.29%
Technology	\$148,900	1.04%	\$120,950	0.83%
	\$14,335,716	100.00%	\$14,570,746	100.00%

Total Annual Revenue and Expense Trend



# ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

# ANNUAL REPORT

Job-alike advisory groups comprised of district leaders in Special Education, Technology, Curriculum, and Business Operations provide input into the development and implementation of ACCEPT programs and services. Members work collaboratively, as a professional learning community, throughout the school year to support each other as 21st century educational leaders.

## SPECIAL EDUCATION

Chris Brumbach, ACCEPT Facilitator  
Kathryn Silva, Ashland  
Christine Smith, Dover/Sherborn  
Laura Spear, Framingham  
Ildefonso Arellano, Framingham  
Deborah Dixon, Franklin  
Meg Camire, Holliston  
Karen Zalesky, Hopkinton  
Kathy Gaudreau, Medfield  
Kathleen Bernklow, Medway  
Sue Anne Marks, Millis  
Tim Luff, Natick  
Mary Lammi, Needham  
Terry Green, Sherborn  
Michael Dolan, South Middlesex Regional  
Denise Rochlin, Sudbury  
Lori Cimen, Wellesley

## TECHNOLOGY

Marcia Berkowitz, ACCEPT Facilitator  
Paul Carpenter, Ashland  
Anthony Ritacco, Dover/Sherborn  
George Carpenter, Framingham  
Tim Rapoza, Franklin  
Sara Ahern, Holliston  
Ashoke Ghosh, Hopkinton  
Eoin O'Corcora, Medfield  
Richard Boucher, Medway  
Kay Tessier, Millis  
Grace Magley, Natick  
Dennis Roche, Natick  
Mark Messias, Needham  
Michael O'Callahan, South Middlesex Regional  
Michael O'Brien, Sudbury  
Kathy Dooley, Wellesley

## CURRICULUM LEADERSHIP

Chris Brumbach, ACCEPT Facilitator  
Paul Vieira, Ashland  
Karen LeDuc, Dover/Sherborn  
Grace Wai, Framingham  
Joyce Edwards, Franklin  
Sara Ahern, Holliston  
Carol Cavanaugh, Hopkinton  
Kim Cave, Medfield  
Gabrielle Abrams, Medway  
Joan Lynn, Millis  
Anna Nolin, Natick  
Terry Duggan, Needham  
Daniel Hudder, South Middlesex Regional  
Kim Swain, Sudbury  
Joan Dabrowski, Wellesley

## BUSINESS OPERATIONS

William Hurley, ACCEPT Facilitator  
Barbara Durand, Ashland  
Dawn Fattore, Dover/Sherborn  
Edward Gotgart, Framingham  
Miriam Goodman, Franklin  
Keith Buday, Holliston  
Ralph Dumas, Hopkinton  
Michael LaFrancesca, Medfield  
Donald Aicardi, Medway  
April Yu, Millis  
Peter Gray, Natick  
Anne Gulati, Needham  
William Trifone, South Middlesex Regional  
Susan Rothermich, Sudbury  
Judy Belliveau, Wellesley

My favorite thing about  
ACCEPT is:

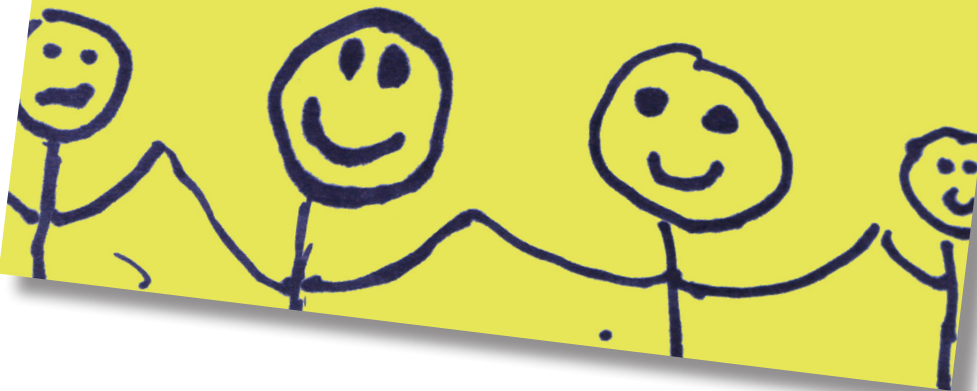
the space, talent &  
specifically vocational  
piece—

What ACCEPT means to me:

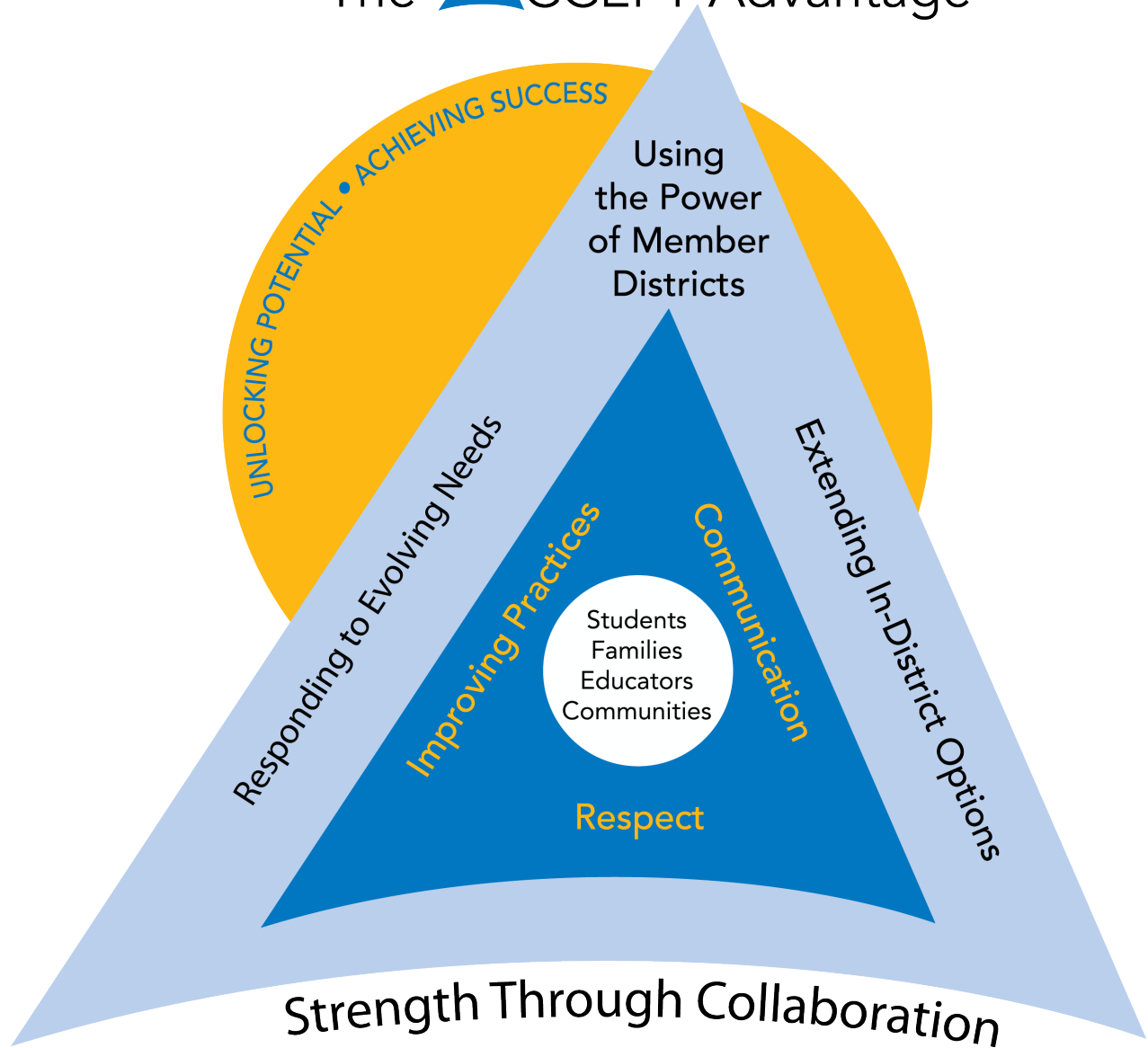
ACCEPT= hope,  
inclusion,  
opportunities,  
+ happiness

My hope for ACCEPT is:

Every body gets along  
and becomes Friends



# The CCEPT Advantage



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Executive Director  
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