

John F. Doherty, Ed. D.
Superintendent of Schools

82 Oakland Road
Reading, MA 01867
Phone: 781-944-5800
Fax: 781-942-9149



Christine M. Kelley
Assistant Superintendent

Jennifer A. Stys, Ed.D.
Director of Student Services

Gail Dowd, CPA
Chief Financial Officer

Reading Public Schools

Instilling a joy of learning and inspiring the innovative leaders of tomorrow

TO: Reading School Committee

FROM: John F. Doherty, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

DATE: December 9, 2019

TOPIC: 2019 Northshore Education Consortium Annual Report

Please find attached a copy of the final copy of the NEC 2019 Annual Report that was approved on December 4th.

If you have any questions, please contact me.



Administrative Offices

112 Sohier Road, Beverly, MA 01915 • tel: 978-232-9755 ext 1253 • fax: 978-232-9449 • frosenberg@nsedu.org

Francine H. Rosenberg M.Ed.
Executive Director

December 10, 2019

Dear Superintendent;

Included in this packet you will find two copies of the completed and approved 2019 Annual Report. One copy should be shared with your School Committee. If you need additional copies, we would be happy to provide them. This report has been submitted to DESE and has been publicly posted on the NEC Website.

Wishing you all the best at this holiday season. Thank you for your ongoing support of NEC!

Yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Fran Rosenberg".

Fran Rosenberg

2018-2019

ANNUAL REPORT



NORTHSHERE
EDUCATION
CONSORTIUM



Northshore Education Consortium

112 Sohier Road, Beverly, MA 01915

Tel: 978-232-9755 | www.nsedu.org



"I can't imagine a greater place for our son to be at this time in his life."

- NEC Parent



**NORTHSORE
EDUCATION
CONSORTIUM**

Member School Districts: Beverly, Danvers, Gloucester, Hamilton-Wenham Regional, Ipswich Public Schools, Lynn, Lynnfield, Manchester-Essex Regional, Marblehead, Masconomet Regional, Nahant, North Reading, Peabody, Reading, Rockport, Salem, Swampscott, Triton Regional, Tri-Town Union (Boxford, Middleton, Topsfield)

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Message From the Executive Director

Dear Northshore Education Consortium Members,

I am pleased to share this report highlighting the activities and accomplishments of the 2018-2019 school year.

Northshore Education Consortium remains committed to the core mission of providing high quality, cost effective public programs, support services, and resources to assist member districts in meeting the needs of students who require specialized educational services.

This past year was an excellent one for our Collaborative. Our public day programs served close to 500 students, from over 50 districts. We saw excellent outcomes in terms of student progress, we provided training and consultation to support our member districts, and we remained financially stable!

We are very proud that 30 students graduated from our three high schools with diplomas from their districts and an additional 16 received Certificates of Completion when they reached their 22nd birthday. All of our eligible students participated in MCAS-Alt or Computer-Based MCAS testing, with a high rate of success.



Some exciting developments this year included:

- The creation of our first district-wide Director of Educational Technology position to help us move forward with integrating current technology into every part of our work. This has included upgrading business functions, giving staff more efficient and effective tools to do their work, and most importantly, making sure that all of our students have access to the appropriate technology. Our Director has worked closely with teachers to move forward with helping students develop the necessary skills for technological literacy, and for making sure that we are providing the best possible Assistive Technology and Augmentative Communication devices for our students.
- The development of a district-wide Diversity and Equity Task Force which hosted several events for staff, students, and parents.
- Working with the Tower Foundation to create a pilot program for clinical wrap-around support for students and families in our member districts.
- Working with our partners at the YMCA and JRI to create the very successful PASS (Positive Alternatives to Student Suspension) program.
- Hosting several legislative breakfasts to help our elected officials understand issues related to the costs of special education and to learn more about the issues facing Recovery High Schools.

We continued to make great use of our professional development time this year, with employees receiving ongoing training in Trauma and Learning, Collaborative Problem Solving, Wellness, and Mental Health First Aid. Sixteen new educators participated in our mentoring and induction program

Throughout the year, educators engaged in ongoing work to provide our students with high quality academic curriculum, vocational training and clinical supports. We are extremely proud that in addition to following the curriculum frameworks in the core academics areas and addressing student IEP goals, we also provide numerous opportunities for students to participate in the arts, sports, community field trips, internships and vocational opportunities, and a wide range of enrichment activities. These activities build upon our students' many strengths and assure that even those being educated in separate classrooms have opportunities for full inclusion in their communities.

I feel privileged every day to work with such talented colleagues, students, and families.

With thanks for your ongoing support,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Francine H. Rosenberg". The signature is fluid and cursive, with "Francine" and "H." being more stylized and "Rosenberg" being more clearly legible.

Francine H. Rosenberg
Executive Director

Collaborative Information

HISTORY

Founded in 1974, the Northshore Education Consortium was one of the first regional collaboratives in Massachusetts and is the largest provider of intensive special education services to children and youth with emotional, behavioral, and developmental disabilities on the North Shore.

GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

Northshore Education Consortium is governed by a 19-member Board of Directors, representing the 21 districts served (Tri-Town School Union is represented by their shared Superintendent.) All districts are represented by their Superintendent. The full Board meets six or seven times per year. Each board member also serves on one of four subcommittees: Finance, Facilities, Policy and Personnel. Each subcommittee meets several times during the year.

The administrative leadership team meets two or three times each month, to oversee the daily operations of the Consortium and its programs.

MEMBER DISTRICTS/ BOARD OF DIRECTORS, 2018-2019

-  Beverly Public Schools- **Dr. Steven Hiersche**
-  Danvers Public Schools- **Dr. Lisa Dana**
-  Gloucester Public Schools- **Dr. Richard Safier**
-  Hamilton-Wenham Public Schools- **Dr. Michael Harvey**
-  Ipswich Public Schools- **Dr. Brian Blake**
-  Lynn Public Schools- **Dr. Patrick Tutwiler**
-  Lynnfield Public Schools- **Ms. Jane Tremblay**
-  Manchester-Essex Public Schools- **Ms. Pamela Beaudoin**
-  Marblehead Public Schools- **Ms. Maryann Perry**
-  Masconomet Regional- **Dr. Kevin Lyons**
-  Nahant Public Schools- **Mr. Anthony Pierantozzi**
-  North Reading Public Schools- **Mr. Jon Bernard**
-  Peabody Public Schools- **Ms. Cara Murtagh**
-  Reading Public Schools- **Dr. John Doherty**
-  Rockport Public Schools- **Mr. Robert Liebow**
-  Salem Public Schools- **Dr. Margarita Ruiz**
-  Swampscott Public Schools- **Ms. Pamela Angelakis**
-  Tri-Town School Union- **Dr. Scott Morrison**
-  Triton Regional School District- **Mr. Brian Forget**

ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM, 2018-2019

-  **Francine Rosenberg**, Executive Director
-  **Glenn Bergevin**, Chief Financial Officer
-  **Andrea Holt**, Assistant Director, Kevin O'Grady School
-  **Stephanie Couillard**, Assistant Director, Kevin O'Grady School
-  **Kenneth Letzring**, Director, Northshore Academy Upper School
-  **Tracy Farraher**, Director, Northshore Academy Lower School
-  **Michelle Lipinski**, Director, Northshore Recovery High School
-  **Charles LeBuff**, Director, Topsfield Vocational Academy & STEP
-  **Ellen Heald**, Director, Embark & SOAR Programs
-  **Monique Bourgault**, Director of Facilities
-  **Eric Aldrich**, Director of Educational Technology

Mission/Vision/Core Values & Beliefs

MISSION

The mission of the Northshore Education Consortium is to support member districts by offering high quality, cost-effective school programs, consultation, professional development, support services and resources to ensure that districts can provide successful learning experiences for all students, including those with complex or low-incidence special needs.

CORE VALUES:

1. Individualized, Strength-Based Education
2. Compassion and Respect
3. Teamwork and Collaboration
4. Excellence and Lifelong Learning

GUIDING BELIEFS:

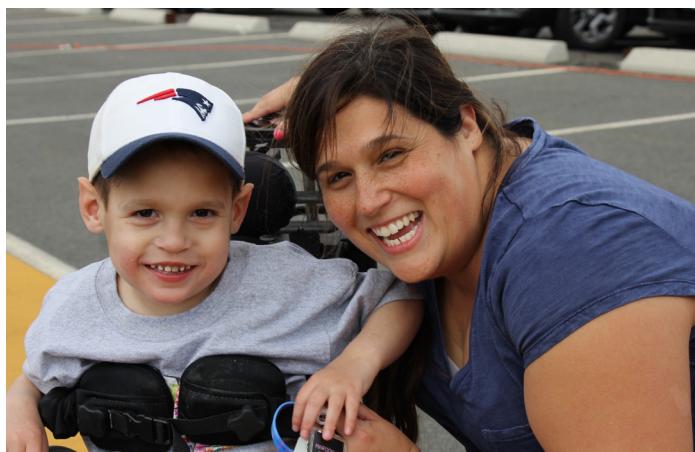
1. Communities need a broad continuum of options for children with disabilities and other risk factors.
2. All children deserve an education that allows them to achieve their full human potential, whether that means preparation for college or career, or maximum independent functioning and quality of life.
3. All children deserve an education that is individualized, strength-based, and has high expectations for achievement.
4. People with disabilities and their families deserve to be treated with compassion and respect.
5. Best outcomes are achieved through multi-disciplinary teamwork and collaboration between families, educators, and community partners.
6. Every member of the community, regardless of age, role, or ability should be engaged in a continuous learning process with a commitment to the highest level of excellence.

LONG-RANGE VISION:

Our vision is to provide a continuum of services for our region, to ensure the best possible outcomes for all students, particularly those with risk factors or disabilities. We will strive to do this by providing outstanding educational programs, but also by becoming the “go to” resource in the region for individuals looking for consultation, training, information or guidance around helping children with special needs.

We will achieve this vision by continuously developing the following:

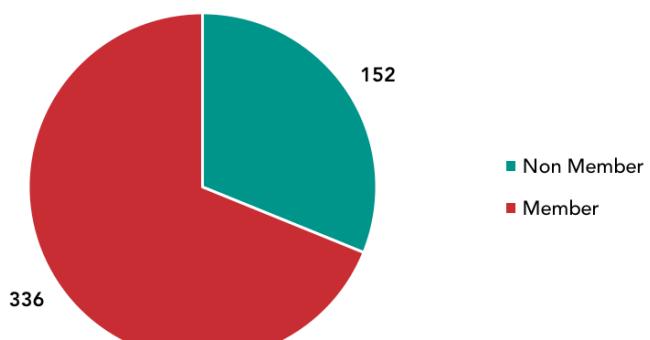
1. High quality, specialized programs for children with complex special needs, addictions, or other unique challenges. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - a. Assuring that our programs utilize the latest evidence-based practices.
 - b. Assuring that high standards are set for all students, regardless of disability, and that we are continuously measuring our success in meeting those standards.
 - c. Assuring that we have access to current technology, adaptive equipment, and other resources necessary for preparing our students for college, career, citizenship, and maximum independent functioning.
 - d. Providing opportunities for students to experience a rich array of opportunities beyond the core curriculum, including arts, fitness and wellness, community trips and activities, service learning, internships and supported work opportunities, etc.
 - e. Maintaining strong connections to community organizations that provide medical and mental health services.
 - f. Providing supports and services for families of children with special needs.
2. State-of-the-art professional development opportunities for our own staff and those from our districts, enabling them to stay up-to-date on best practices for complex youngsters.
3. Consultation, home, and school-based services that respond to the needs of our districts.
4. Partnerships with other schools and collaboratives, colleges, state and community agencies to advocate for and promote the interests of children and young adults with complex needs and their families.



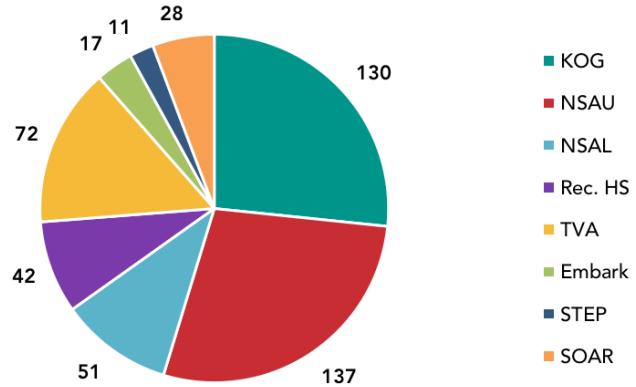
School Programs 2018-2019

During the 2018-2019 school year, Northshore Education Consortium's approved day schools served 488 students from 21 member and 35 non-member districts.

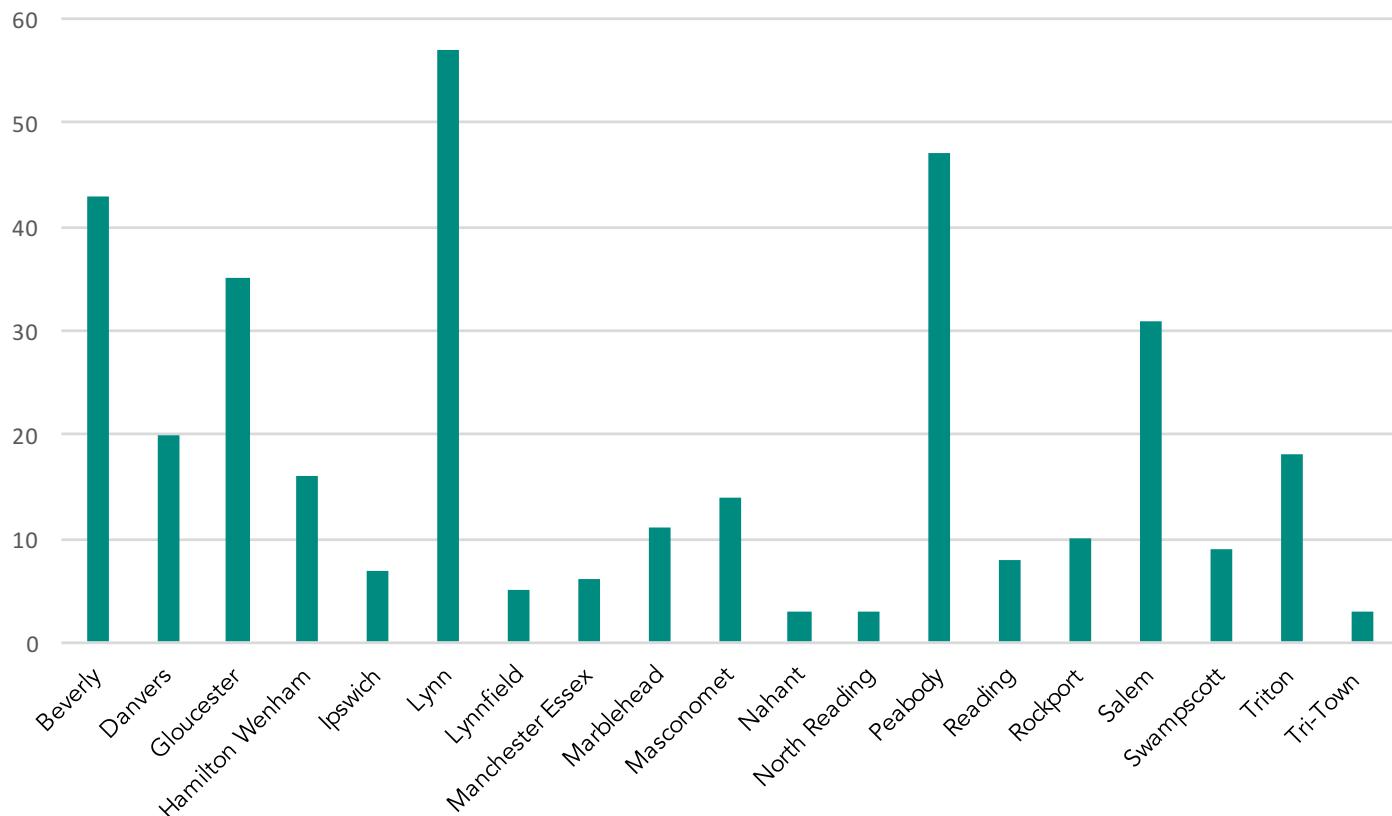
STUDENTS FROM MEMBER & NON-MEMBER DISTRICTS



STUDENTS BY PROGRAM



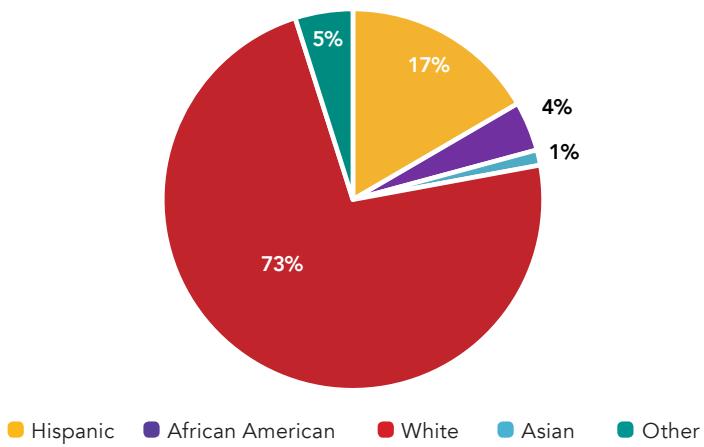
STUDENTS SERVED BY MEMBER DISTRICTS



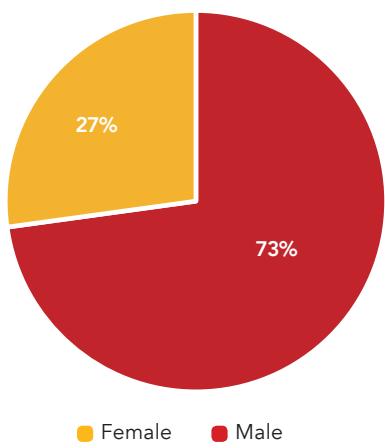
Demographics

The following information is based on DESE School and District Profile Data.

RACE & ETHNICITY



GENDER



ADDITIONAL DATA

First Language not English	8 %
English Learner	1 %
Economically Disadvantaged	52 %

"The teachers have consistently worked with our family to provide the best possible growth experiences for our son" - NEC Parent



Kevin O'Grady School

112 SOHIER ROAD | BEVERLY, MA

The **Kevin O'Grady School (KOG)** serves students age 3-22 with significant developmental disabilities including:

- Intellectual impairments
- Autism
- Multiple disabilities
- Physical disabilities
- Complex medical needs
- Sensory impairments
- Visual impairments
- Deafblindness

The Kevin O'Grady School focuses on developing academic and life skills to maximize students' educational potential and increase opportunities for meaningful participation in home and community activities.

During the 2018-2019 school year, the Kevin O'Grady School served 130 students. 8 students "graduated" on their 22nd birthdays, received certificates of completion and moved on to adult service programs.

MCAS-Alt. Portfolios were submitted for all eligible students in grades 3 through 10.

APPROACH

At the Kevin O'Grady School, each student's program focuses on developing these core skills:

- Communication (including augmentative and assistive technology)
- Movement & functional mobility
- Activities of daily living
- Social & leisure skills
- Pre-vocational & vocational skills
- Adaptive behavioral skills

SPECIALIZED SERVICES:

- Vision, orientation & mobility and deafblind services
- Support groups & workshops for families
- Home services
- Augmentative & assistive technology assessments
- Brace & wheelchair clinic

THE ARTS

Throughout the year, KOG students benefited from a grant-funded collaboration with Young Audiences and the Massachusetts Cultural Council. This included several wonderful musical performances. In addition, students were able to participate in a wide range of community field trips and vocational opportunities. Fifteen students participated in a new swim program at the YMCA as part of the Diverse Abilities Aquatics Program. And, the annual Art on the Hill event was a great success with over 70 visitors.



PROGRAMS:

Foundations Integrated Preschool - Following a theme-based curriculum, children with disabilities along with peer models learn developmentally appropriate skills to allow for transitions back to their neighborhood schools or to other specialized classrooms.

Access - For students age 6-22 with multiple impairments and complex medical needs. Nursing services and therapies are integrated into the classroom. Adaptations including sensory diets, augmentative communication systems, adaptive equipment and environmental supports enable students to actively engage in all parts of their day.

Reach - For students age 6-13 with autism, developmental, or intellectual impairments. Through systematic instruction, including research-based teaching methodologies and applied behavior analysis, students acquire the academic, communication, social-emotional, and self-help skills needed to reach their full potential.

Strive - For students age 14-22 with autism, intellectual impairments, and other complex needs. Students acquire the self-help, sensory, self-regulation, leisure, and pre-vocational skills needed to reach their full potential. The emphasis is on active learning through systematic instruction using research-based teaching methodologies.

Target - For students age 14-22 on the autism spectrum or with intellectual impairments who are ready for vocational job opportunities. Students focus on academic, communication, social-emotional, self-help, pre-vocational/vocational and life skills needed for successful transition to adult services. Along with comprehensive vocational assessment, systematic skill instruction occurs in in-house vocational areas, community based vocational internships, and through community outings.

Northshore Academy Upper School

126 SOHIER ROAD | BEVERLY, MA

Located in Beverly, **Northshore Academy Upper School (NSAU)** serves students in grades 7 through 12 who struggle with a variety of social, emotional, and psychological challenges. Students may also have learning disabilities, be diagnosed with Autism Spectrum disorders, or be dealing with several of these challenges simultaneously. The Academy served 137 students from 38 districts during the 2018-2019 school year. Seventeen students graduated in 2019.

At the Academy, clinical and behavioral supports are fully integrated into the students' day, enabling them to focus on academic progress while also building social skills and skills for coping and self-regulation.

In addition to providing a challenging academic curriculum, the Academy's programs and services have been designed to help students enhance social skills, acquire new knowledge and develop supportive relationships within their school and communities, preparing them for their return to their home school, college, and/or job placement. This is accomplished through assigning each student to a Multi-Disciplinary Team of professionals and specialists, who, along with the student's parents, work together to meet the individual student's needs through the use of innovative educational programming, clinical support, and specialist services. All students have an Individual Educational Plan and are referred through the Special Education Department of the student's sending school district.

Programming at Northshore Academy Includes:

ACADEMICS:

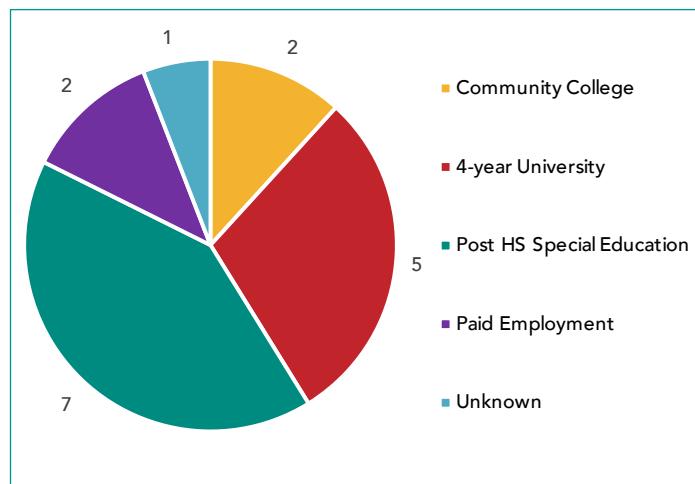
- An integrated curriculum, which includes multi-sensory learning, art, drama, and music education, project, based learning and opportunities for physical and recreational development, including a dynamic outdoor adventure program.
- Small classroom size which provides a more intensive and focused learning environment for students
- Enhanced computer and technology programming exposing students to a broader educational experience
- Academic testing to more accurately assess the educational strengths and needs of each student
- Vocational programming and work study opportunities presenting college and/or employment options to students

CLINICAL SERVICES:

- Psychosocial assessment to accurately determine social, emotional and behavioral interventions needed to support student success in the classroom
- Case management coordinating school-based services and/or facilitating referrals to outside agencies for substance abuse treatment, psychiatric assessment, and individual and/or family therapy
- Family supports
- School based counseling
- Psycho-educational groups (i.e. life skills, anger management, transition to young adulthood, teen health, social skills, college and career preparation, social thinking curriculum-based groups, etc.)
- Art/expressive therapy
- Speech and language, occupational therapy, or physical therapy if needed



POST-GRADUATION PLANS



The Academy served 137 students from 38 districts during the 2018-2019 school year. Seventeen students graduated in 2019.

Northshore Academy Upper School

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES:

- Social skill development specific to classroom and community interaction (anger management, decision making, critical thinking)
- Crisis management
- Behavioral and emotional support targeted at keeping the student in their classroom

TRANSITION PLANNING SERVICE:

- Career awareness and exploration activities (job shadows, Junior Achievement, class sessions, mini-workshops)
- Career center workshop
- College planning and preparation throughout the year
- Internships
- Classes on employment and career development skills
- Numerous college and trade school tours and information sessions
- Transition Planning Night for parents to provide information about college exploration, career preparation, digital portfolio use, the IEP process and transition planning, and how to use community resources and supports to prepare students for life after high school.
- Close collaboration with the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR INCLUDED:

A dynamic enrichment program including:

- Intramural basketball and soccer teams
- Thanksgiving football and spring field days
- Saturday and School Vacation hiking trips, including a winter overnight trip, nine hikes, and three other overnight trips
- Drivers Education provided on-site in collaboration with Triad Driving Academy
- After-school “LAN” parties (Local Area Network) which give students an opportunity to come together and develop social skills while engaging in a variety of gaming activities
- Electives including technology, culinary arts, fine arts, music and drama
- A new rock-climbing program thanks to the donation of the Coolidge Rock Wall

College Preparation Activities

- Visits to Salem State University, Northern Essex, and UMASS Lowell
- 21 students took PSATs and 11 took SATs on site
- College and Career Planning Night for students and parents
- 9 students participated in dual enrollment

Vocational Experiences

- 22 students maintained paid jobs on-site as technology or maintenance assistants, or working in the kitchen or snack bar.

School Spirit Days and Field Trips



Northshore Academy Lower School

83 PINE STREET | PEABODY, MA

The **Northshore Academy Lower School (NSAL)** is located in West Peabody and serves students in grades K through 6 who struggle with a variety of social, emotional, and psychological challenges. Students may also have learning disabilities, be diagnosed with Autism Spectrum disorders, or be dealing with several of these challenges simultaneously. The Lower School served 51 students from 19 districts during the 2018-2019 school year.

The Academy Lower School features small self-contained classrooms with a great deal of individual support. Clinical and behavioral support staff work closely with each classroom team, creating a closely connected multi-disciplinary team working with each student and their family.

The Lower School has filled a need for districts to provide comprehensive, short-term assessment for young children in crisis. These students receive a comprehensive multi-disciplinary assessment and the district receives concrete recommendations on what the child will need to make educational progress and/or return to a less restrictive placement.

Many students who attend the Academy Lower School, whether for a short or a longer-term placement, are able to return to a less restrictive environment.

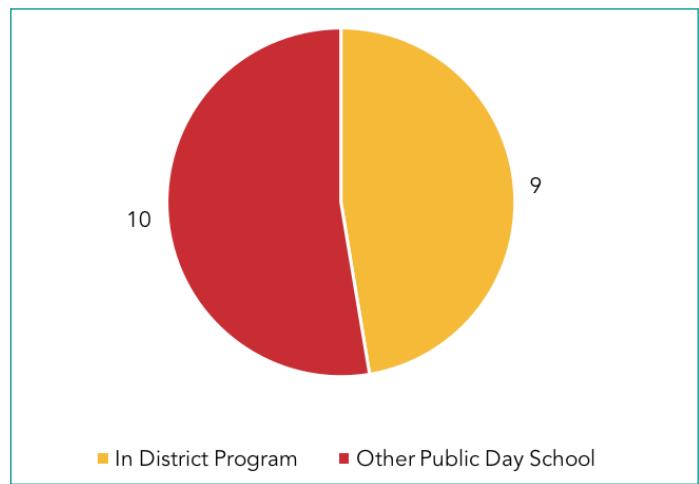
During the 2018-2019 school year, 19 students “graduated” from the Lower School; either because they were ready to return to a less restrictive environment, or because they completed 6th grade. 9 of these students returned to an in-district setting, while 10 moved onto another public day school.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR INCLUDED:

- Increased staff training on positive behavioral supports, trauma and learning, and collaborative problem solving resulted in an increase in student time in class and time on learning, and a decrease in the number of restraints and time outs
- Field trips to Topsfield Fair, Brooksby Farm, and Peabody Essex Museum
- The addition of therapy dog Charlie Brown, a Golden Doodle who visits the school three days each week
- Working with Backyard Growers to plant a garden
- Participating in several service projects to support our troops and to help animals in local shelters



SCHOOL PLACEMENT POST GRADUATION



During the 2018-2019 school year, 19 students “graduated” from the Lower School; either because they were ready to return to a less restrictive environment, or because they completed 6th grade. 9 of these students returned to an in-district setting, while 10 moved onto another public day school.

Topsfield Vocational Academy & STEP Program

248 BOSTON STREET | TOPSFIELD, MA

Topsfield Vocational Academy (TVA) is located in Topsfield and serves 8th-12th grade students with a range of learning and social-emotional, and behavioral health challenges.

In 2018, the STEP program, moved to the Topsfield Site and the two programs began to share resources and programming, given the similar needs of the student populations.

During the 2018-2019 school year Topsfield Vocational Academy educated 72 students from 27 districts, and an additional 11 students were enrolled in the STEP Program. Six students graduated and went on to community college, paid employment, or post-HS special education at the SOAR program.

In addition to academic and clinical programming, Topsfield Vocational Academy features on-site vocational shops in the areas of culinary arts and carpentry, and a wide variety of community based vocational internships.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR INCLUDED:

- Building an historic claming skiff at the Essex Shipbuilding Museum
- Participating in a competition through the Boston Society of Architects to design and build a bird house
- Raising money to support furloughed coast guard members and to support Hope Academy in Mozambique
- The development of a new Senior Seminar



"I graduated with more than grades on my report card; I left with values and life lessons that could never be graded." -NEC Student

Northshore Recovery High School

112 SOHIER ROAD | BEVERLY, MA

Northshore Recovery High School (RHS), located in Beverly, is designed to meet the needs of high school students who have had a history of substance abuse but who have made a firm commitment to recovery. Funded by the State Department of Public Health and local school districts, RHS provides students a high school environment with the specialized clinical supports needed by students who are struggling with issues related to recovery, and often other mental health or learning challenges.

Students can be referred to RHS by schools, parents, courts/state agencies, drug & alcohol treatment agencies and residential programs. Students must have a recent diagnosis of a substance abuse disorder, be committed to an individual plan of recovery and, along with their parents or other caring adult, must be willing to sign an accountability contract.

During the 2018-2019 school year, RHS served 42 students from 19 communities. Eleven students graduated in June. Nine of these students enrolled had plans to enroll in higher education, and ten of them were employed in part-time or full-time jobs.

PROGRAM DETAILS:

- RHS aligns with Massachusetts State Standards, MCAS testing protocols and the course requirements of Northshore Education Consortium's member school districts.
- Curriculum is designed to meet the complicated needs of the enrolled students. Students work on a competency-based curriculum that adheres to the CES Principles.
- While not a special education placement, staff at RHS are able to meet the needs of students with IEPs who require accommodations and/or specially designed instruction.
- Students are eligible for graduation from their sending school district. The Guidance Counselor of RHS is responsible for coordinating requirements and credits needed for graduation with sending districts.
- Guidance staff work closely with districts, treatment providers and other residential placements to provide an accurate transcript for enrolled students.
- RHS provides wrap-around case management for students who have complex histories with court, DCF and other community adolescent and adult serving agencies.
- Students must be committed to and actively working on a valid individual program of recovery.
- Supporting the recovery culture of RHS, students and their parents will be accountable to develop and maintain their own recovery plan with the support and recommendations of RHS staff.
- All students participate in clinical groups and drug testing as part of the program.
- Substance abuse counseling will be provided to students during after school hours by an outside substance abuse treatment agency. RHS Counselors will be available for on-site support and referral recommendation and facilitation as needed.



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR INCLUDED:

- Students once again performed at the Wang Center as part of the Express Yourself Program.
- Students attended regional recovery day and several events with other Recovery High Schools. Several students engaged in advocacy at local events and at the State House.
- Two students were recognized as “Upstanders” by the Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies at Salem State University.
- The annual Prom was a great success.
- Students helped to train Franklin, a therapy dog, who became an important and beloved part of the school community.
- Five students participated in dual enrollment at North Shore Community College.
- A group of students performed their original music at the Sonia (Middle East) Café in Cambridge.

Transition Programs

SALEM STATE UNIVERSITY | 121 LORING AVENUE | SALEM, MA

NEC's **Transition Programs (SOAR & Embark)** prepare young adults with moderate learning, psychiatric or intellectual disabilities for successful independence and employment, and in some cases, continuing education.

Seven students graduated in 2019. Two of these students passed MCAS and earned diplomas, while five received certificates of completion. 100% of students achieved independent travel skills using public transportation. All students went on to paid employment or to adult programs.

This year, SOAR and Embark students participated in a variety of newly developed or expanded internships including recycling, culinary arts, and working in a variety of local retail establishments. In addition, students participated in after-school yoga and music activities, and enjoyed several dances and parties along with their "Best Buddies" from Salem State. The bi-weekly production of the SOAR and Embark Network News (SENN) was a huge success. Once again, the Overnight Program in Atlantic Hall, was a highlight of the year, helping many students realize that independent living might indeed be a possibility for them.

Embark Program

The **Embark** program is located at the Enterprise Center at Salem State College and is geared toward students with learning delays and intellectual disabilities. Students use the college campus resources (such as the library, bookstore, wellness center, and food court) to enhance their academic, vocational, and physical education. In 2018-2019, Embark served 17 students.

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

The Embark experience has two major components; independent life and occupational development. The components are integrated and together contribute to the successful transition of each student from home and school to independent life.

Independent Life

The Independent Life component focuses on foundation skills:

- Using resources within the community
- Public transportation training
- Consumer skills
- Social skill training and application
- Leisure options
- Oral & written communication; computer literacy
- Current events and issues
- Health issues & issues pertaining to adult sexuality



Occupational Development

The Occupational Development component includes foundation skills, vocational/career preparation and placement, occupational assessment and advisement; internship opportunities.

Students must attend Embark for a minimum of two years, up to a maximum of four years. The program sequence is individualized and includes the following:

- Vocational assessment
- Internship and/or job placement
- Residential living preparation
- Transition related issues
- Maintaining employment



SOAR Program

SOAR is a specially designed transition program for students aged 18-22 with Asperger's Syndrome, anxiety disorders and related diagnoses.

Transition Programs

SOAR was a new program that started in 2012 with 3 students, in response to requests from member districts. During the 2018-2019 school year, 28 students attended the program.

The goal of the program is to assist students in transitioning to college and the world of work and to support students in becoming confident contributing members of society.

PROGRAMS COMPONENTS

- Life skills (contract with parents, student, and school)
- Curriculum (self-awareness, self-disclosure, self-advocacy)
- Time management
- Physical education (self-calming, self-regulation, yoga)
- Study skills (test preparation)
- Class etiquette (how to speak with different levels/relationships, etc.)
- Organizing work
- Group skills
- Raw arts (therapeutic art program)
- Group skills
- Negotiating (Compromising skills teaching brain function, language)
- Transportation
- Leisure (drugs, alcohol, sex, social networking)
- Social Skills (dating, roommates, hygiene)
- Vocational



"This school has given me the tools and support I need to move forward in my life"

-NEC Student



Consultation & Contract Services

During the 2018-2019 school year, NEC provided vision, orientation and mobility to 52 students who attend schools in member districts, provided home training for 5 students and educated 3 students who required home-bound instruction.

NEC employees also consulted to several districts around mental health issues, restraint prevention, creating positive behavioral supports, and assistive technology. In addition, our social workers provided clinical supervision to staff in one member district and conducted informal and formal consultations on complex student situations in several districts.

Family & Professional Learning Center

The **Consortium's Family and Professional Learning Center** sponsors regional professional development, family education, and family support. In addition, the Family Center maintains a comprehensive resource library filled with books, pamphlets, and other materials on a wide range of disabilities and special education, mental health, and substance abuse issues. These resources are available for parents and professionals throughout the region.

Professional Development

During the 2018-2019 year, approximately 150 individuals, in addition to our own employees, benefited from our regional professional development offerings. NEC hosted several sessions of Youth Mental Health First Aid training, an Orton Gillingham training, a seminar for New and Aspiring Special Education Team Leaders, and a full day Behavioral Health Conference.

NEC Family Center

Our Family Center hosted 10 small family workshops on topics such as Vaping, Toilet training, Managing Challenging Behaviors, and Person Centered Planning. Each workshop was attended by approximately five to ten parents and/or professionals from the region. The Family Center also sponsored several monthly support groups, including one specifically designed for Spanish speaking Latino Families.

NEC is proud to have a wide variety of student teachers, interns, and trainees from several different universities and in a number of disciplines including special education, social work, speech and language pathology, and occupational therapy.

We are also proud to be able to host ongoing training for Police Departments on the North Shore through the CIT Jail Diversion Program.



2-day staff training for 150 staff members on the Think:Kids Collaborative Problem Solving method of dealing with problem behaviors in the classroom.



NEC's annual Behavioral Health Conference - Spring 2019

"I liked the variety of topics and the fact that they were all relevant to K-12 education"

-Conference Attendee

Cost Effectiveness of Programs & Services

NEC's approved day programs are both cost-effective based on a clear financial analysis of rates, but also enable districts to save on transportation costs by keeping students closer to home, and they are able to provide a higher quality service to students by pooling specialized expertise within one central location.

The simplest way to discuss the cost-effectiveness of NEC approved public day programs is to compare them to private special education placements that serve similar populations, as we do in the charts (see opposite page).

Based on an analysis of private schools serving similar populations, member districts can save up to \$300/day (over \$50,000/year, not including transportation costs) by sending a student to an NEC program. (All rates are based on OSD FY 2019 data, compared to NEC 2019 rates, and are based on daily rates for day programs, and rounded to the nearest dollar). NEC tuition rates include all therapy services.

COST EFFECTIVENESS OF RECOVERY HIGH SCHOOL

It is difficult to articulate the cost-effectiveness of RHS based on financial analysis. There are only five Recovery High Schools in MA, and there are not a lot of similar programs or schools to compare them to.

By providing a regionalized Recovery High School, we are able to offer highly specialized services to a targeted group of high risk teenagers and enable these students to receive the needed supports to earn their diplomas. Most districts would be unable to provide these services within districts, as the cohort of students who need the service would be too small.

Districts were charged tuition of \$70 to \$113/ day depending on special education needs and member status. The full cost of providing clinical and recovery services is subsidized by the DPH grant. Many of the students, prior to enrollment at RHS were utilizing extensive mental health services within their public schools, or were enrolled in public or private day schools with tuitions ranging from \$220/day (Northshore Academy) to \$500/day (Manville School)

COST EFFECTIVENESS OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Our professional development offerings are cost effective as they enable us to bring experts to our region. Without these offerings, districts would have to pay individual staff members to travel to trainings given by these providers or by private, often for-profit, entities.

SUBSIDIZING THROUGH PHILANTHROPY

Given our desire to keep tuition rates affordable and to provide the highest quality programs and services for our students, we have expanded our capacity to seek private philanthropic dollars to supplement and enhance what we are able to provide. During the 2018-2019 school year, Friends of NEC raised over \$140,000 through grants and private donations. This enabled us to provide staff training, purchase new technology and sensory equipment as well as to support a wide range of extracurricular and enrichment activities without having to utilize tuition revenue.



NEC's annual road race, Festivus 5K for Autism, supports educational and enrichment opportunities for our students.

Cost Effectiveness of Programs & Services

Severe Disabilities

SCHOOL	DAILY RATE FY 19
NEC Kevin O'Grady: Member	403
NEC Kevin O'Grady: Non-Member	485
Melmark	485
Nashoba Learning Center	501
Perkins School for the Blind	679
BC Campus School	458
Beverly School for the Deaf: Children's Communication Center	445

Emotional Disability (grades K-12)

EMOTIONAL DISABILITY (GRADES K-12)	DAILY RATE FY 19
Northshore Academy, Topsfield Vocational & STEP: Member	227
Northshore Academy, Topsfield Vocational & STEP: Non-Member	273
Manville	506
Walker	413
Dearborn	395
Lighthouse School	410
Arlington School (McLean)	358
Community Therapeutic Day School	430
New England Academy	319

Intellectual Disability / Autism (ages 18-22)

INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY / AUTISM (AGES 18-22)	DAILY RATE FY 19
Embark/SOAR: Member	196
Embark/SOAR: Non-Member	220
Riverview	267
Cardinal Cushing Vocational	351

Similarly, contract and consultation services are more cost effective for member districts through the Collaborative as indicated below:

Vision/Orientation/Mobility, Other Professional Consultation

NEC Member Rate - \$110/hr.

Perkins School for the Blind/Carroll Center - \$125/hr.

Walker Partnerships - \$175/hr.

Progress Toward Achieving Purpose and Objectives

The purpose and objectives of NEC are stated in the Collaborative Agreement as:

PURPOSE:

The Consortium exists to provide education and related services as requested by its member districts, including, but not limited to programs and services for children with low-incidence disabilities and professional development for teachers and other related service professionals. These programs and services will also be available for non-member districts.

The collaborative Board of Directors (herein, “the Board”) has the authority to decide that the Consortium should provide services, programs, and/or assistance for its member districts in addition to those outlined in the first paragraph, consistent with applicable laws and regulations related to educational collaboratives.

Focus:

The focus of the Consortium is to provide innovative, high quality, cost-effective educational services for students with complex or low-incidence disabilities, to provide resources for member districts, and to serve as a regional center for planning and problem solving for member districts.

OBJECTIVES:

The overall objectives of the Consortium are:

1. To play a leading role in defining the future role of collaboratives in the Commonwealth.
2. To strengthen and expand the Consortium programs and services in a cost-effective manner that meets the needs of students and faculty in member districts and the region.
3. To develop new programs for students, particularly those with special needs, allowing them to meet the highest academic, social, and life-skill objectives in accordance with emerging evidence based practices.
4. To provide high quality, highly relevant professional development for the employees of the Consortium and member districts.

In terms of objective 1, the Executive Director is a regular participant in MOEC state-wide and regional meetings, and is a regional representative to the MOEC Board. In addition, she convenes regular meetings of regional SPED administrators and maintains connections to the region’s universities and child-serving state agencies.

Progress toward meeting objectives 2-4 is generally assessed in an ongoing way by looking at utilization of programs and services, gathering both formal and informal data about student outcomes, and gathering both formal and informal feedback from consumers including school district personnel and parents. Information about utilization, outcomes, and cost effectiveness is contained in each of the program descriptions in earlier sections of this report.



Strategic Goals, 2019-2021

Over the past year, our team made substantial progress toward our newly developed strategic goals for 2019-2021.

Goal 1: Continue to Strengthen Quality of Programs and Services

- Behavioral support in all programs will be clinically sophisticated, trauma informed, and culturally sensitive.
- Strengthen vocational and transition planning so that every student who graduates has an appropriate plan in place for his or her future.
- Continue to develop academic curriculum that maintains high expectations and is sophisticated at meeting complex needs and identifying learning challenges.
- Better articulate relationships between our programs, entrance and exit criteria, and identify gaps in service delivery.
- Create a Racial Equity task force to work with administration on developing an action plan for identifying and addressing achievement gaps or systemic biases that may affect student outcomes.

Accomplishments in 2019

- Staff in all “therapeutic programs” completed Tier 1 CPS training.
- A cohort of staff participated in a course on Trauma and Learning.
- Developed a transition task force to share and coordinate resources and best practices around transition assessment, vocational training, job-coaching, student internships, travel training, college planning, coordination with state agencies, etc.
- Expanded use of AT and AAC to support communication and learning.
- Monthly tracking and review of referrals whose needs we couldn’t meet and of students who left our programs unexpectedly.
- Task force was established, met regularly, and conducted a staff PD session, a student focus group and a parent focus group.

Goal 2: Maintain Financial and Leadership Stability for Long-Range Sustainability

- Develop a capital plan that addresses issues related to buildings, grounds, and technology.
- Negotiate a CBA for 2019-2023.
- Continue to develop the capacity of Friends of NEC to bring in private funds to support strategic initiatives.
- Work with local public safety officials to develop and maintain an updated District Safety Plan.

Accomplishments in 2019

- CBA was signed in September 2019.
- Capital plan was developed and discussed with board.
- Friends of NEC raised over \$200,000.
- Relationships with local police departments and school resource offices were strengthened and expanded.

Goal 3: Expand capacity to meet Regional Needs around Special Education and Youth at Risk and participate in larger scale efforts

- Expand consultation to districts in the areas of mental health, assistive technology, vision services, and home services.
- Explore the development of ASOST programs.
- Continue to provide Regional PD and Job-Alike groups.
- Provide an administrative home for the new and improved Curriculum and Staff Development Network.
- Participate in Regional Recovery and Alternative to Suspension Initiatives.
- Executive Director will continue to play a leadership role in MOEC and DESE statewide initiatives, regional committees, etc. and actively develop partnerships with universities, state agencies, and community youth-serving organizations.

Acomplishments in 2019:

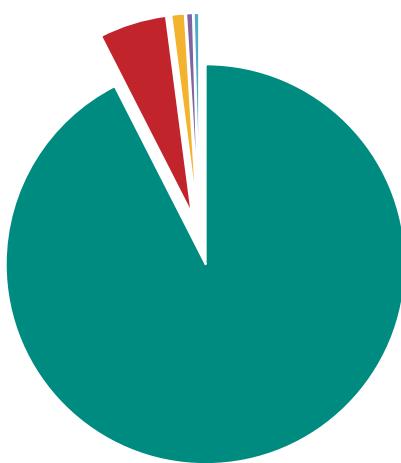
- All of the above goals were met with the exception of the development of ASOST programs.

Financial Summary FY 2019

A snapshot of NEC's financial performance is included below. For more detailed information please see the Audited Financial Statements and Uniform Financial Report.

FY 2019 REVENUE SOURCES

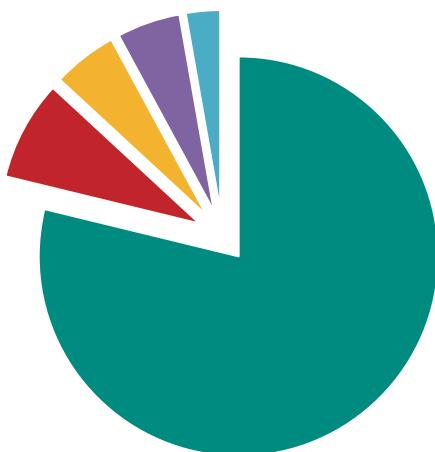
Source	Dollars	Percentages
Tuition and Fee for Service	\$ 23,518,535	94.65%
Commonwealth of MA - Recovery High School	\$ 911,980	3.67%
Membership Fees and Interest	\$ 235,762	0.95%
Philanthropy	\$ 140,621	0.57%
Professional Development	\$ 40,845	0.16%
Total Revenue	\$24,847,743	100%



- Tuition and Fee for Service
- Commonwealth of MA - Recovery High School
- Membership Fees and Interest
- Philanthropy
- Professional Development

FY 2019 EXPENSE CATEGORIES

Category	Dollars	Percentages
Program Payroll, Tax, and Benefits	\$ 19,289,029	78.79%
Occupancy	\$ 1,978,128	8.08%
Administrative Services	\$ 1,278,687	5.22%
Program Expense	\$ 1,257,059	5.13%
Depreciation and Amortization	\$ 678,054	2.77%
Total Expense	\$24,480,957	100%



- Program Payroll, Tax, and Benefits
- Occupancy
- Administrative Services
- Program Expense
- Depreciation and Amortization

**"Your school was one of the
places that always restored
my faith in humanity"**

- NEC Parent





**NORTHSORE
EDUCATION
CONSORTIUM**

Contact Information

Executive Director | Fran Rosenberg | frosenberg@nsedu.org

Executive Assistant & PD Coordinator | Kathy Mahoney | kmahoney@nsedu.org

Chief Financial Officer | Glenn Bergevin | gbergevin@nsedu.org

Director of Clinical Training & Consultation | Windi Bowditch | wbowditch@nsedu.org

Director of Facilities | Monique Bourgault | mbourgault@nsedu.org

Director of Educational Technology | Eric Aldrich | ealdrich@nsedu.org

Director of Development | Sarah Seiler | sseiler@nsedu.org

Kevin O'Grady School | Martha Krol | mkrol@nsedu.org

Northshore Academy Upper School | Ken Letzring | kletzring@nsedu.org

Northshore Academy Lower School | Tracy Farraher | tfarraher@nsedu.org

Northshore Recovery High School | Michelle Lipinski | mlipinski@nsedu.org

Topsfield Vocational Academy & STEP | Charles LeBuff | clebuff@nsedu.org

SOAR & EMBARK Programs | Ellen Heald | eheald@nsedu.org

Family and Professional Learning Center | Sheila Guiney | sguiney@nsedu.org