

The FLLAC Educational Collaborative 2013-2014 Annual Report

**FLLAC Educational Collaborative
Central Office
2 Narrows Road, Suite C 105
Westminster, MA 01473
www.flac.org**

Leadership at FLLAC Educational Collaborative

FLLAC Executive Board Members

(Appointed Representatives and Superintendents of the Member School Committees)

Supt. Ralph Hicks, Ashburnham-Westminster RSD

Supt. Carl Mock, Ayer Shirley RSD (Vice-Chair)

Supt. Terrance Ingano, Clinton Public Schools

Supt. Andre Ravenelle, Fitchburg Public Schools

Supt. Carol Daring, Gardner Public Schools (Chair)

Supt. James Jolicoeur, Leominster Public Schools

Supt. Loxi Jo Calmes, Lunenburg Public Schools

Supt. Maureen Marshall, Quabbin RSD

Supt. Darryll McCall, Wachusett RSD

Supt. Elizabeth Schaper, West Boylston Public Schools

Supt. Salah Khelifaoui, Winchendon Public Schools

FLLAC Executive Board Sub-Committees

Budget: Dr. Carol Daring, Dr. Ralph Hicks, Mr. James Jolicoeur

Personnel: Ms. Loxi Jo Calmes, Dr. Elizabeth Schaper

Governance: Mr. Carl Mock, Dr. Andre Ravenelle

Space: Dr. Ralph Hicks, Mr. Terrance Ingano

Warrant Committee: Ms. Loxi Jo Calmes, Mr. Carl Mock, Dr. Salah Khelifaoui

FLLAC Advisory Board

(Directors of Special Education)

Ms. Kathy Veroude, Ashburnham-Westminster RSD

Ms. Teresa Babetski, Ayer Shirley RSD

Ms. Kathy Buchanan, Clinton Public Schools

Ms. Roanne Demanche, Fitchburg Public Schools

Mr. John Salovardos, Gardner Public Schools

Mr. Edward Pratt, Leominster Public Schools

Ms. Julianna Bahosh, Lunenburg Public Schools

Ms. Kristin Campione, Quabbin RSD

Dr. Kim Merrick, Wachusett RSD

Ms. Sherri Traina, West Boylston Public Schools

Ms. Cindy Landanno, Winchendon Public Schools

FLLAC Administration

Dr. Richard Murphy, Executive Director

Ms. Julie Bragg, Caldwell Elem. Program Supervisor

Ms. Terri Burchfield, Business Manager

Mr. Gary MacCallum, Caldwell Alternative Principal

Ms. Jenn Gates, 45-Day Program Coordinator

Mr. Steve Bicchieri, ASD/DD Program Supervisor

Mission Statement

The mission of FLLAC Educational Collaborative is to meet the current and evolving needs of our member school districts.

Vision

The focus of the Collaborative is to develop and provide high quality, cost effective, educationally related programs, professional development and other services that strengthen and enhance the educational offerings of our member districts.

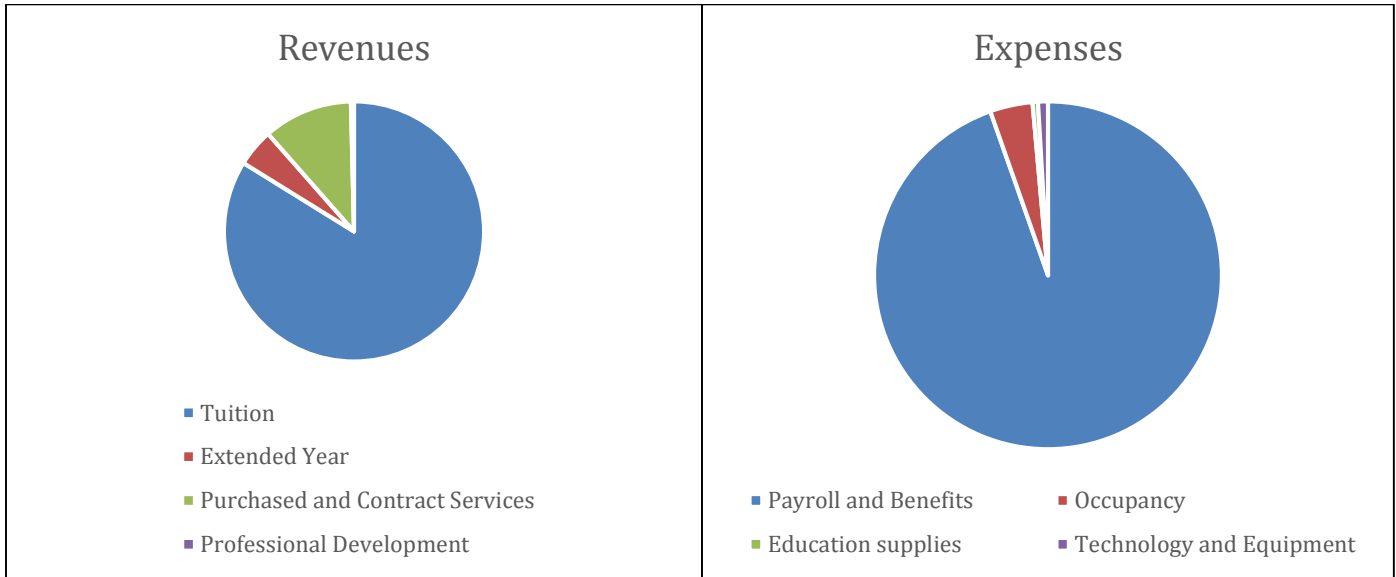
The overall objectives of the Collaborative include, but are not limited to, the following and are subject to the approval of the Board:

- To improve the academic achievement of all students in the least restrictive environment.
- To develop and offer a variety of quality professional development opportunities to general and special education teachers, paraprofessionals, school administrators and related service providers that are designed to enhance instructional practices.
- To provide other educationally related programs, supports and services to our member districts and surrounding communities that are of high quality and cost effective, as directed by the FLLAC Board of Directors.

Guiding Principles

- We believe our programs and services should be of the highest quality and should continue to be responsive to the changing needs of our member districts
- We believe that our students should be provided with the highest level of quality programs and services that will allow each of them the opportunities to reach their highest potential and demonstrate ongoing, measurable progress and independence.
- We believe that all students should be challenged to learn in a caring, inclusive environment that respects diversity and values life-long learning.
- We believe all students should be provided educational programs and services in the least restrictive environment and work closely with each district to return students to their home district whenever it is appropriate.
- We believe high quality, ongoing and relevant professional development is essential for growth and the success of the educational process.
- We recognize the need to involve and support families in order to facilitate the educational process.
- We believe student assessment and program evaluation are essential for continuous improvement.
- We recognize the need to support the social and emotional well-being of our students.
- We embrace collegiality and a sense of shared commitment and recognize that we accomplish more collectively than separately.
- We recognize and celebrate the unique contributions and accomplishments of each individual in our collaborative community.
- We encourage and accept a diversity of opinions to stimulate innovative and creative ideas and effective solutions.

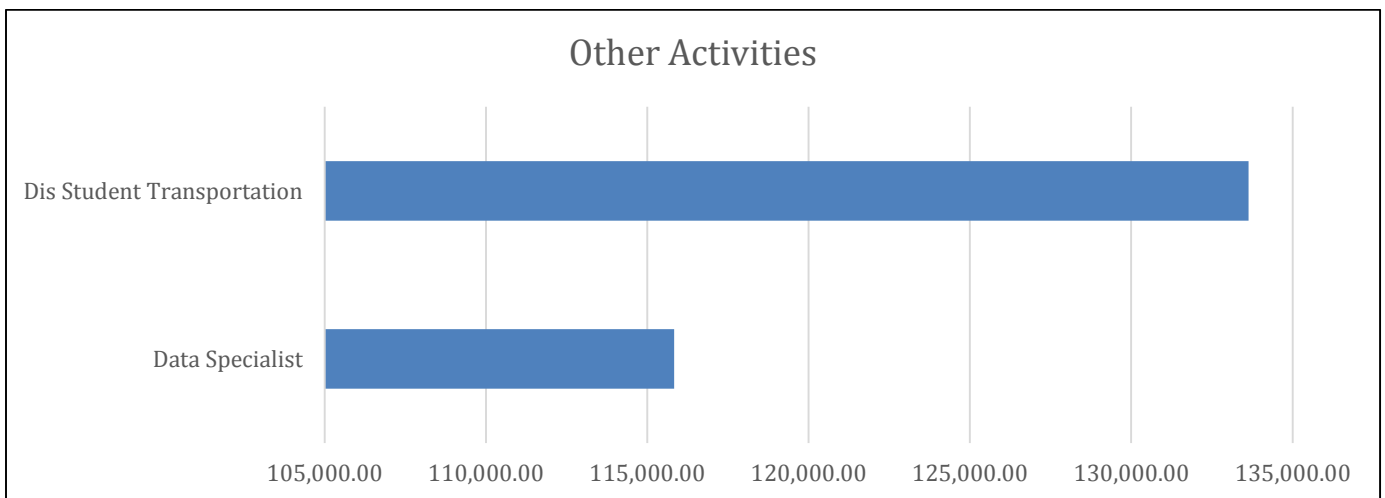
Financial and Enrollment Information



Tuition	\$4,730,066
Extended Year	\$264,638
Purchased and Contract Services	\$626,822
Professional Development	\$21,410

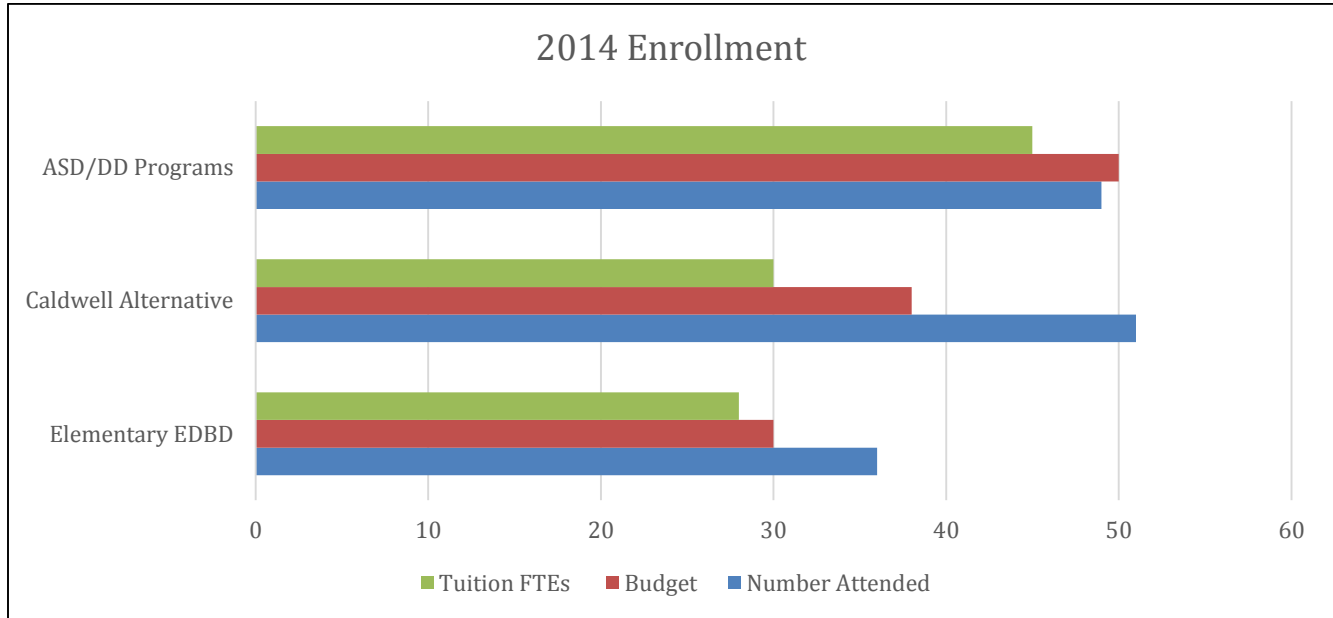
Better than 90% of Collaborative expenses continue to be related to staffing.

The primary activities of the Collaborative are running school year programs for students with special needs (Tuition), summer school programs (Extended Year), providing specialized staff for services to our member districts (Purchased and Contract Services), and providing Professional Development opportunities to member district staff.



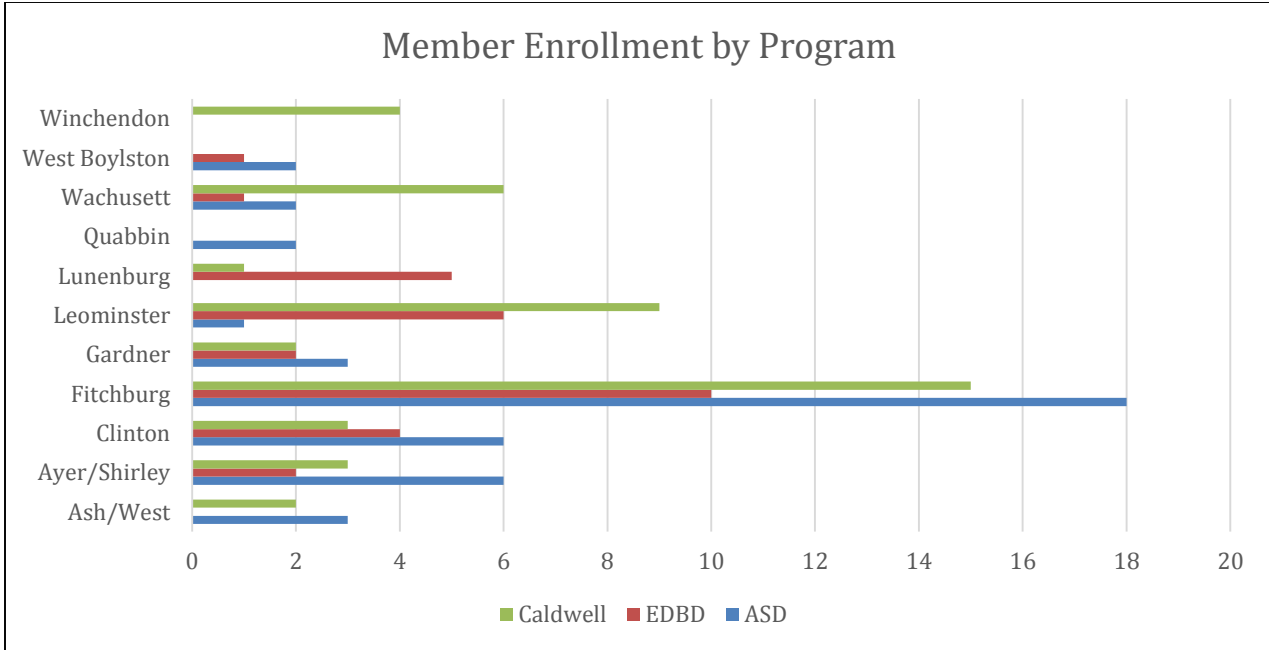
In other activities, the Collaborative brokered transportation for students from districts requesting such services, and continued to act as fiscal agent for the state's area DSAC contract, which supports 2 Data Specialists.

The heart of the organization is the educational programming provided through our programs.

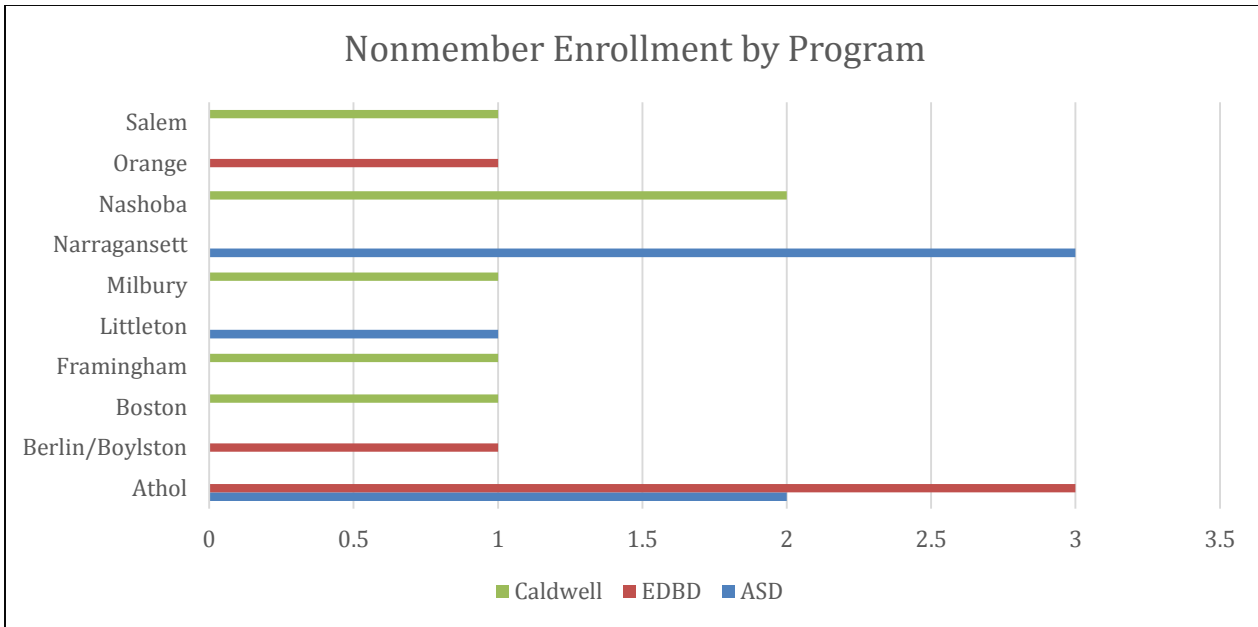


	Number Attended	Budget	Tuition FTEs
Elementary EDBD	36	30	28
Caldwell Alternative	51	38	30
ASD/DD Programs	49	50	45

Tuition program budgets were set based on anticipated enrollments as delineated by the area Special Education Directors, and previous usage. In the chart above, the 'Number Attended' refers to the total number of students who passed through a program. Some of those students attended only part of the year, for a variety of reasons; aging out, transitioning back to district or due to participation in the 45 day assessment placements available at the Elementary EDBD and Caldwell Alternative programs. 'Tuition FTE's' refer to the total attendance as reflected by tuitions collected. This lets us anticipate where we might need to initiate spending holds as we recognize potential revenue shortfalls.



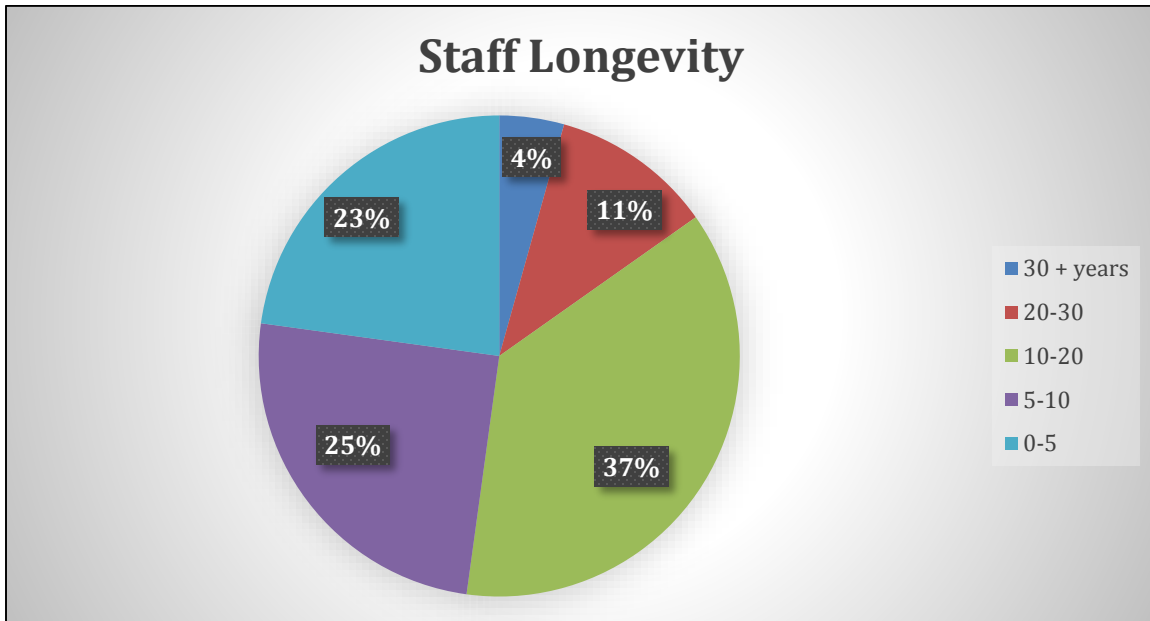
Fitchburg continues to be the primary source of referrals to our special needs programs.



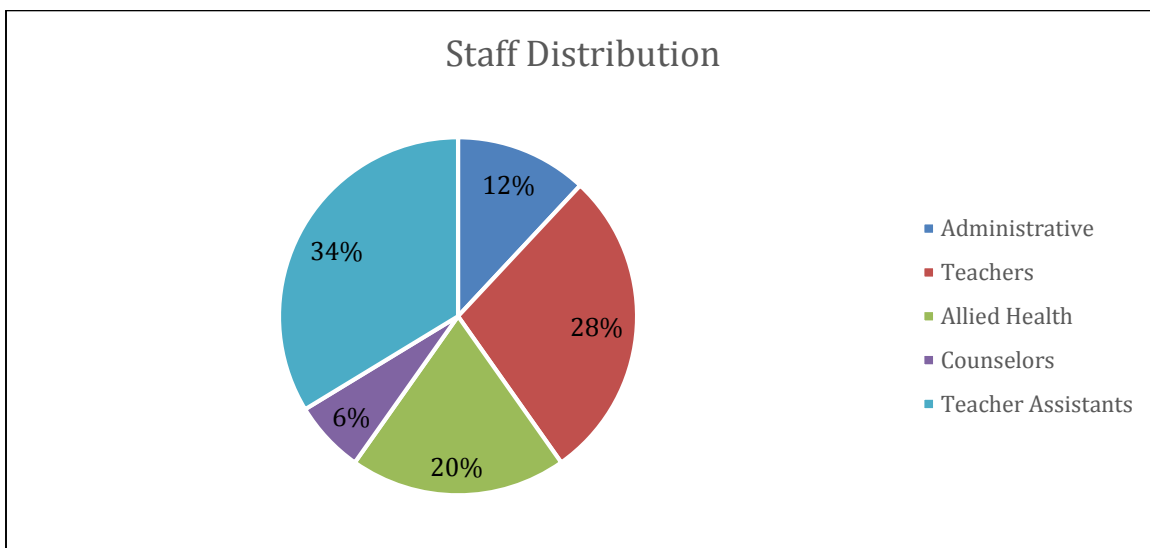
While some placements are from districts within our region, we have noted out of region placements tied to residential programs for students requiring alternative education placements.

Staff Information

As the chart below illustrates over half of FLLAC staff have been working for the collaborative for over ten years. FLLAC is fortunate to have such a dedicated and experienced group of educators who are truly dedicated to serving the students in our programs.



The vast majority of FLLAC staff work directly with students, as illustrated in the chart below.



Allied Health Professionals include Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech/Language Pathology and Nursing staff.
88% of Collaborative staff have direct and daily contact with students in our programs, or in the public schools where we provide specialized staff including PTs, OTs, Teachers of the Visually Impaired and Orientation and Mobility Instructors.

Effectiveness

Cost Comparisons

FLLAC Special Education Programs remain highly cost effective relative to private special education programs serving students with similar special education needs. Every year FLLAC does a cost comparison with similar private special education programs serving similar students located within one hour of north central Massachusetts (when possible). Before these comparisons are made the schools FLLAC compares itself to are vetted by the FLLAC Special Education Advisory Board. This is done in order to ensure that comparisons are fair and represent private schools that districts would have to send student to if FLLAC programs were not available.

FLLAC Collaborative 11-5-13

Cost Comparisons

Program/Population	FLLAC Tuition	Private School Avg.*	Savings
Developmental Disabilities/Life Skills	\$47,183	\$74,727	\$27,544
PDD/Autism	\$47,183	\$73,423	\$26,240
Caldwell Elementary Emotional/Behavioral	\$47,772	\$60,243	\$12,471
Caldwell Alternative Emotional/LD	\$43,313	\$55,602	\$12,289
45 Day Extended Evaluation Pr.	CE \$11,943	\$15,060	\$3,117
	CA \$10,828	\$14,073	\$3,245

OSD Rate Sheet 10-16-13

*Private School Costs are determined by averaging the tuition of 3 approved private day schools within 1 hr of Central MA (if possible).

Serving students with needs similar to those of the FLLAC students.

Costs are based on day rate x180 days or 45 days if compared to FLLAC 45 Day Extended Evaluation Program.

Life Skills/DD: Cotting School \$71,955, Mercy Center \$84,607, B.C. Campus \$67,621

Autism/PDD Programs: New England Center for Children \$58,520, Nashoba Learning \$82,918, Crossroads (Natick) \$78,831

Caldwell Elementary Program: Franklin Perkins \$50,861, Walker Home \$68,333, Lighthouse \$61,536

Caldwell Alternative School: Mclean Arlington Academy \$59,256, RFK Day \$46,015, Lighthouse \$61,536

Special Education Administrator Satisfaction Survey Results

FLLAC conducted a satisfaction survey of our member district Special Education Administrators in November/December of 2014 using Survey Monkey. Since the majority of the work we do is in support of special education programs and services, feedback from Special Education Administrators is critical to determining our overall effectiveness as an organization. Seven of eleven of our member district Special Education Administrators replied to the survey.

The results of this survey indicate that there is a high level of satisfaction with our special education programs and services and, equally important, that FLLAC is a caring, responsive and effective organization that meets the demands of districts for efficient, effective and local options.

When asked whether:

- FLLAC programs and services are effective in meeting the needs of the students they serve, 100% of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.
- FLLAC programs and services are cost effective, 100% of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.
- It is important to me that FLLAC provides programs that are located in my district or in a district nearby, 100% of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.
- FLLAC staff are experienced, skilled and knowledgeable in meeting the needs of the students they serve, 100% of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.
- FLLAC Program Staff are responsive to my needs, 100% of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.
- FLLAC staff are effective when dealing with families, 100% of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.
- The FLLAC Administration is responsive to the needs of my district, 100% of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.
- FLLAC staff provide services in a caring and respectful manner, 100% of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.
- How likely are you to recommend FLLAC Programs to other district administrators 58% of respondents said they would be extremely likely to do so, 14% said they would be very likely to do so and 28% said they would be moderately likely to do so.

Program Descriptions

FLLAC offers four programs designed to meet the needs of specific student populations as identified by our member districts. Two programs, the Caldwell Alternative Middle and High School (gr. 7-12) and the Caldwell Elementary Program (gr. K-6), are DESE approved Public Day Programs and provide educational and therapeutic programming for students with learning disabilities, emotional issues, behavioral issues and, increasingly, complex mental health issues. All students in these two programs have been identified as needing special education services.

The FLLAC Autism Spectrum Disorders and Developmental Disabilities (ASD/DD) Program serves students ages 5-22 in public school classrooms located in member districts. The programs serve students who have more complex, low incidence, intellectual, communication, related service, behavioral, academic and self-help needs that districts are unable to meet. All of the students in the ASD/DD Program have been found eligible for special education services.

The FLLAC 45-Day Program provides 45-day evaluation services to students who are referred by school districts. Students in the program attend either the Caldwell Alternative Program or the Caldwell Elementary Program and receive academic and therapeutic services as part of the school program. In addition students in the 45-Day Program receive evaluation and assessment services based on the needs of the students and as requested by the sending district. Students who complete the program receive an evaluation package designed to help the district determine the appropriate placement for that student. Students referred to the program may have previously been found in need of special education services but many have not been found to need such services. While in the program students can be provided with educational evaluations, projectives, psychological, risk assessment and behavioral evaluations and other assessments as determined by the referring team.

Caldwell Alternative School

44 Wanoosnoc Road, Fitchburg, Massachusetts 01420

Tel: 978-345-5250

www.flac.org

Fax: 978-342-9583

Goals and Purpose

The mission of the Caldwell Alternative School is to provide an educational experience for students with special needs that fosters academic growth, social responsibility, and emotional health. Caldwell orients its programming and instruction around the three areas of *safety, respect, and effective learning*.

Some students will return to their public schools depending on performance and needs; others may complete their education at Caldwell. For students entering Caldwell in their junior or senior year, our mission is to assist in the successful completion of graduation requirements of their sending school districts, and prepare graduates for a successful transition to college and/or the world of work.

Referrals

Caldwell began the year with twenty-two (22) students enrolled and ended the year with thirty-five (35) students. During School Year 2013-24, referrals and dispositions are as follows:

<u>Referrals for Caldwell</u>	<u>Enrolled</u>	<u>Not Enrolled</u>	<u>Referrals for 45 Day</u>	<u>Enrolled</u>	<u>Not Enrolled</u>
43	24	Other program - 14, Stayed in District - 1, Declined - 2, Moved from District - 2	17	11	Other 45 day - 6

Graduates/Transitions/Discharges

Caldwell graduated 4 seniors with diplomas; 1 is attending community college, 2 entered the world of work and the fourth transitioned to adult services with the Dept. of Mental Health. During the academic year, 3 students transitioned to more restrictive school settings, 8 transferred to another day school, 1 was placed in a secure settings, 1 transitioned to "Night School" (Fitchburg Alternative School), and 5 returned to district.

Coordination with 45 Day Evaluation Program

Students enrolled in the 45 Day Program are assigned to Caldwell Alternative classrooms and participate in the daily school program to facilitate assessment with their peers. This program received 17 referrals for evaluations; 11 were enrolled and 9 remained enrolled at Caldwell.

Population

Students are referred to Caldwell Middle and High School as a result of being unsuccessful in general education, or as a step-down from a more restrictive setting. Students present with a variety of academic, social and behavioral challenges and/or emotional impairments requiring instruction in an adult-intensive, highly-structured setting with small class sizes and consistent support, encouragement and praise.

Typical conditions seen in the school population include: general and specific learning disabilities, attention deficit hyperactive disorder, suicidal ideation/depression, anxiety disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, bipolar, oppositional defiant, Asperger's Syndrome (and some other spectrum disorders), or a combination of these.

Opportunities for academic improvement and satisfactory completion of graduation requirements

- *MCAS prep activities in ELA, Math and Science and Technology*
- *Writing Workshop,*
- *IXL online math education aligned with Core Curriculum Frameworks.*
Virtual Education using the Edgenuity virtual learning platform

Career and social learning opportunities: Caldwell continues to maintain relationships with local agencies and institutions to supplement student learning and skills:

- *Health groups with Pro-Health*
- *College Fairs and campus visits*
- *Transition planning and career education*
- *Community job sites - Birchwood Manor Nursing Home*
- *Wood shop and production crew.*

Programs

Caldwell Alternative School enrolls a total of 38 students between the Middle School and High School (grades 7-12).

Caldwell Middle School (grades 7 & 8) generally serves 14 students in two classrooms, each staffed with a Teacher and a Teacher Assistant. These classrooms are self-contained thus students receive instruction in the core content curriculum within the room. Students leave the classroom for art and physical education.

During the 20-13-2014 school year Caldwell Alternative counselors have been able to provide social skills groups for all students; these are offered by grade level. Depending on the make-up of each group, curriculum can vary in skill development in areas of language pragmatics, trust-building, self-advocacy, personal growth and social problem solving.

Reading Program

A full-time Reading Specialist is available for grades seven to twelve (7-12).

Tier I - Novel-based reading

Tier II - LANGUAGE! - a total literacy program for students with deficits

Tier III - LANGUAGE! and individual pull-out instruction.

Staff Professional Development

Staff training focused on better understanding of the nature and needs of the student population and providing skill building in best instructional practices. Topics included:

- Crisis Management
- Educator Evaluation
- District Determined Measures
- Working with students from poverty and/or with a history of trauma

Caldwell Elementary School – EDBD Program

1025 Massachusetts Avenue
Lunenburg, MA 01462

Philosophy

We believe that every child can learn and acquire the social skills required for success in school and in the community. We further believe that each child is unique and that each child has the potential to make progress academically and emotionally.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Caldwell Elementary School is to help each child discover his or her strengths, improve coping mechanisms and develop social and academic skills. The goal of the program is to provide each student with the behavioral and academic skills required to return to a less restrictive educational setting.

Student Population

The Caldwell Elementary Program's strengths are in its small size and high staff/student ratio. Students are placed in multi-age classrooms according to their developmental needs and academic skills. Students are referred to the program because they demonstrate challenging emotional and/or behavioral concerns. Students also present with learning and psychological challenges including ADD/ADHD, Learning Disabilities, PTSD, PDD and Oppositional Defiant Disorder.

Referrals

Referrals are made to the Program through the Special Education Directors of the sending school districts. Students may be placed within the Program on a long-term basis or for a 45 Day Assessment.

School Staff

Each classroom is staffed with a certified teacher and an appropriate number (average = 2) of teacher assistants to allow for a low ratio of students to adults. There are two counselors on site to provide individual and/or group therapy to each student, as well as consultation to staff. The clinician acts as a liaison to the sending school districts and is available to provide support to parents and guardians. The Caldwell Elementary program is located in the former T.C. Passios building in Lunenburg. We have an onsite Licensed Practical Nurse available to our students. The FLLAC Program Supervisor has overall administrative responsibility for the Caldwell Elementary Program.

Academics

Classes are taught in self-contained classrooms. All students are taught per their IEP and at their individual instruction level. The curriculum of the Caldwell Elementary Program is aligned with the MA Curriculum Frameworks with appropriate modifications and/or adaptations to meet the needs of individual students. Related services such as speech or occupational therapy are provided according to each student's IEP. Our students also participate in the MCAS process with appropriate modifications and/or adaptations for each student.

Activities

Community based field trips to promote the social integration of our students into the community, while incorporating academic material into self-guided visits and tours, for grades K-6. Such opportunities offer the ability to develop focused connections between curriculum and event sites.



Behavior Management

Behavior Management at Caldwell Elementary School is based on respect for each individual, setting appropriate and consistent limits, and reasonable and positive expectations. Students will be given as much positive reinforcement as possible to promote pro-social behaviors. A variety of positive reinforcement strategies are employed including both tangible (stickers, toys etc.) and intangible (verbal praise, access to desired activities etc.) reinforcers. Students receive awards on both individual and group levels.

Each class has a daily behavior chart point system, which enables the student to earn points or stickers for appropriate behaviors in the areas of academics, behaviors and adult and peer interactions. If the student has achieved 80% of possible points or stickers for the day, he or she may choose a prize/activity.

If needed, individual behavioral support plans are developed by each child's team in consultation with the Program Supervisor and/or counselor. The services of contracted Behavioral Psychologists are available on an as needed basis. Behavioral support plans and data are reviewed and updated routinely by the program staff.



Martial Art Instructors came to our school to demonstrate the importance of self-control and being one with yourself. They also showed us some of the introductory parts of the practice of karate.

Activities

We had Lunenburg Fire Department visit our school to talk about fire safety and prevention. They showed us some of the tools they use in the community to help keep people safe, and actually got a called while they were here so we got to see them in action as they left!



ASD and DD Programs

150 School Street, Clinton, Ma. 01510

Program Phone: 978-368-1431

www.flac.org

Program Fax: 978-368-1507

The Autism Spectrum Disorder classrooms and Developmental Disabilities classrooms continue to provide intensive services to students with special needs, in the context of the public school setting. All referrals made to these classrooms come through the district child-study process where it was determined that the student required a more intensive educational setting in order to make effective progress.



Referrals:

The ASD and DD programs receive referrals from both member and non-member school districts.

2012-2013 total school year referrals: 10

2013-2014 school year referrals: 7

2012-2013 Students accepted for placement: 7

2013-2014 students accepted placement: 5

Reasons for non-placement: Parent/District chose private day placement instead of Collaborative option.

Three-year trends in referrals have demonstrated the greatest number of students referred for placement have been elementary school aged with a primary diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder. 2013-2014 referrals demonstrated a significant decrease in this student category.

Transitions/Discharges:

The ASD and DD Programs recognize that every student has the right to receive educational services in their home district. It is the objective of every classroom teacher and related service provider to assist in the development of skills that each student will need in order to be successfully returned to their home school district.

2013-2014 school year transitions back to their in-district public school: 2 students

Transitions to adult services: 3 students, Transitions to a more restrictive setting: 1 student

Census:

The ASD and DD programs receive budgetary support based on 50 students.

During the 2013-2014 school year the student census averaged 43 students.

Staffing:

The staff that supports the ASD and DD programs are professionally licensed, highly qualified and endlessly committed to students and their families.

DESE licensed staff: 9 teachers, 6 therapists, 3 therapy assistants, 1 social worker, 1 administrator
ParaPro, ABA and CPI trained Paraprofessionals: 19

Highly qualified administrative staff: 1 program secretary

Program Initiatives:

The ASD and DD programs are committed to remain current in the most effective practices employed in the substantially separate, special education classroom.

Teacher Training:

All classroom teachers meet monthly and receive formal training in the policies and procedures of the FLLAC Collaborative as well as current topics in special education, i.e., Differentiated Instruction, Evaluation and Assessment of Students, Core Curriculum and Time-on-Learning, MCAS-Alt Assessment, Teaching Team Management and Leadership Training.

Paraprofessional Training:

All Paraprofessionals receive ongoing support through weekly teaching team meetings as well as formal training in related topics, i.e., Strategies to Support the Inclusion of Special Students, Classroom Behavior Management, Applied Behavioral Analysis and Crisis Prevention training.

Reverse Inclusion:

All ASD and DD Classrooms have established opportunities for regular education students to participate in activities and lessons within the substantially separate special education classroom. These activities include Cooking Group, Music Therapy, Games Group, Social Skills Group, Book Buddies and Panther Pals.

Family Services:

FLLAC Social Worker, Kelly Vokey, has worked successfully and effectively with every family to develop systems of support and resources that include the Department of Developmental Services, the Autism Resource Center, the Department of Children and Families, Community Health Links, summer camp resources, vacation activity calendars, Challenger Sports Leagues, respite care, therapeutic mentors, and monthly Parent Support Group.

Vocational Services:

The ASD and DD programs offer vocational training activities that support the development of a positive work attitude, job skills and work endurance. These activities include the FLLAC Dog Biscuit Company, Ayer-Shirley Mail Delivery and Honey Pot Bakers. Fourteen students have graduated to community work site experience that includes Tiny's Restaurant, Nashoba Park Assisted Living, Cell Treats at Phoenix Park, the Perkins School Laundry, Ayer Police Station and the Ugly Omelet Diner.

Field Trips and Community Exploration:

The ASD and DD programs have accessed community businesses and recreational venues in an effort to develop greater safety skills, community awareness, social exposure and career awareness. Community trips have included Red Apple Farm, Hannaford Supermarket, Dunkin Donuts, Ayer Police Department, Shirley Fire Department, Fitchburg Art Museum, the Butterfly Place, Acton Bowling, McDonald's, and Davis Farmland.



2014-2015 Initiatives:

- Develop more community based work sites for students aged 18 – 22.
- Provide more professional development activities for teachers and paraprofessionals.
- Increase parent participation in Parent Support Group.
- Expand student performances such as Talent Show and Spring Extravaganza.
- Increase the support and training parents receive to manage their children at home.
- Increase our association with allied agencies and providers.

The FLLAC 45 Day Program

The FLLAC 45-Day Program has served of students from grades K through 12 and has worked with a number of member districts as well as a several students from nonmember districts. Over the course of the 2013-2014 year the 45-day program has supported students from Ashburnham/Westminster, Athol Royalston, Ayer/Shirley, Clinton, Fitchburg, Gardner, Leominster, Lunenburg, Nashoba, Quabbin, Wachusett, West-Boylston, and Winchendon.

The needs of the students that have been referred to the program have been complex. It is noteworthy that a large number of students have been referred due to incidents in their schools that have led the districts to specifically request risk assessments. Some of these have been situations where students have been excluded from their district school due to violations involving offenses around drugs, weapons, assault on staff and pending felonies. Others have been initial evaluations where the students' needs were of such a high level that the district felt that a 45-day assessment was warranted in order to determine if the student qualifies for special education services. Some sending districts have requested that the program collect data and observations in order to assist the district in making recommendations for appropriate educational programming and placement. The number of young students with significant social emotional and behavioral needs remains noteworthy. Based on ongoing feedback from districts the trend toward the program serving increasing complicated students will continue to grow.

The Program continues to work with numerous community agencies, including but not limited to, The Lipton Center, LUK, Health Alliance, The Spanish American Center, DCF, DYS, Juvenile Probation, and private counselors and physicians as well as STARR bed placements such as RFK and Cottage Hill. Ongoing communication with community providers enables 45-day staff to make certain that information from all providers is considered while completing evaluations. The program has an ongoing relationship with Dr. Caroline Cole who completes the majority of psychological evaluations and risk assessments. The Program works diligently to make certain that FLLAC is providing the sending district a report that is as comprehensive as possible.

The level and frequency of communication between the 45 day Coordinator and districts is integral to the success of the program and remains an ongoing strength. The 45-Day Coordinator makes a concerted effort to continuously stay in touch with the sending district throughout the time that the student is being evaluated. In most cases the Coordinator has been able to schedule intake/interviews within 2-3 days after receiving the referral. Efforts to keep districts and families informed throughout the intake process are important to successful referrals.

Feedback from sending districts regarding the 45-day program has been very positive. They report that the program has been exceptionally responsive and accommodating and that the program provides thorough reports that are assisting them with making the best programming decisions for their students. Through the joint efforts of the program coordinators, teachers and outside providers the program is able to produce quality assessments that are meeting the needs of the sending districts.

Services and Supports

Transportation Coordination

FLLAC coordinates special education transportation to FLLAC programs for two routes using a vendor solicitation process. By combining students on one run, participating districts are able to save on transportation costs and decrease the number of vehicles serving FLLAC programs. FLLAC managed two runs for the Leominster Public Schools and transported between 6 and 8 students over the course of the year. The cost of each run remained the same throughout the year and was not dependent on the number of students on a run thereby saving the district the cost of adding/dropping students and adjusting cost over the course of the year.

Cooperative Purchasing

FLLAC had traditionally coordinated the joint purchase of electricity and natural gas as a cooperative purchasing agent for interested member districts and municipalities. The Leominster Schools, The City of Leominster, Ashburnham-Westminster Regional Schools, The Town of Lunenburg, The Lunenburg Public Schools, The Town of Clinton, The Clinton Public Schools and FLLAC all participated. The contracts for natural gas and electricity negotiated in 2011 and 2012 are set to expire in October and November of 2014. FLLAC facilitated a Business Managers job alike in the spring of 2014 and the group agreed to have the City of Leominster and the Leominster Public Schools negotiate a contract on behalf of FLLAC and the participating districts. Those contracts have been negotiated and Tradition Energy will manage them on behalf of FLLAC and the participating districts for the 2014-2017 school years. FLLAC will continue to work with the Business Managers job a-like group from participating districts to determine if there are other opportunities for cooperative purchasing that could be facilitated through the collaborative.

Staff Training and Consultation

FLLAC staff continue to be recognized for their expertise by area school districts. During the 2013-2014 School Year FLLAC staff provided training, support, consultation and evaluations to district staff on restraint and de-escalation, working with paraprofessionals, developing inclusive practices and in supporting the development of reading and communication programs.

Home ABA Therapy and Tutoring

FLLAC provides in home tutoring and ABA training to a limited number of students in our districts on an "as available" basis. These supports are highly individualized and our flexibility in meeting the needs of district students has been appreciated by the districts. During the 2013-2014 year our ABA, and home tutors served approximately 3 students.

Extended Year Services

Many of the students FLLAC serves require extended year services. In order to maximize efficiencies and provide for greater activities we bring students from our ASD/DD programs and students from our districts together in the Ayer/Shirley Schools and our students from the Caldwell and Caldwell Elementary programs at the Caldwell Alternative School in Fitchburg for six and five week (respectively) summer programs. The programs run from Monday through Thursday and provide ongoing academic instruction, related services and fun, yet functional, activities. Over the 2013

summer period FLLAC served approximately 46 students in the ASD/DD extended year program, 9 students in the Caldwell Alternative program and 19 in the Caldwell Elementary Program. We expect to see the number of students requiring extended year services to increase, especially for the students in the Caldwell Elementary Program.

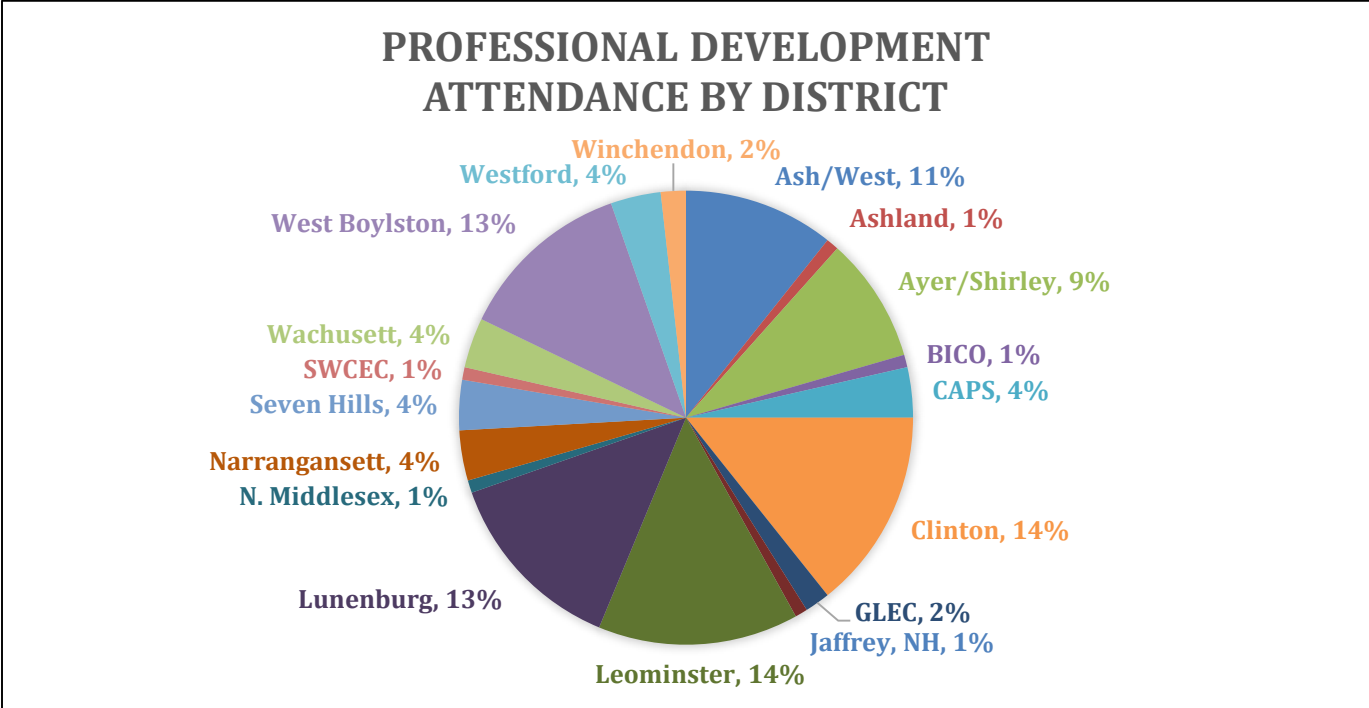
Virtual Education

Over the course of the 2013-2014 school year FLLAC worked closely with the Ashburnham-Westminster Regional Schools, the Narragansett Regional Schools, the Leominster Schools, the Winchendon Schools, the Gardner Schools and the CAPS Collaborative to create regional and cost efficient virtual learning opportunities for participating districts. A working group of representatives from these districts met over the course of the 2013-2014 year to determine the needs of districts, send out an RFP, select an appropriate vendor and establish a system to train staff to use and implement a virtual learning platform. After a careful review of several vendors the group selected Edgenuity. The FLLAC Collaborative agreed to act as the authorized fiscal agent on behalf of participating districts. During the spring and summer of 2014 training to district staff took place and will continue into the 2014-2015 school year.

Professional Development

FLLAC continues to provide professional development for our own staff and for staff from member districts, neighboring districts and private schools. Over the course of the 2013-2014 school year FLLAC provided the following trainings: Legal Issues for School Administrators, Applied Behavior Analysis for Educators, ABA for Para-Professionals, Crisis Prevention and Restraint, DDM Office Hours and McCarron-Dial Systems.

FLLAC Professional Development continues to receive outstanding feedback on evaluations.



Executive Director's Summary

The FLLAC Collaborative continued to work with our Board and our districts throughout the 2013-2014 school year to provide high quality, local, caring and responsive programs and services. Our collaborative remains a stable on ongoing concern but we did have a challenging year financially and had an operating loss of \$97,865. This loss was largely due to under-enrollment in our programs and we will be looking at enrollment trends as we build next year's budget. Details of our financials are included in our annual Audited Report for FY 2014.

The FLLAC Collaborative took the lead acting as the fiscal agent on behalf of six local school districts, the CAPS Collaborative and FLLAC for a regional virtual learning consortium. FLLAC and the participating districts chose to work with the Edgenuity virtual learning platform. We realize that virtual education opens up a range of options for our students, from credit recovery to vocational assessment programs and we look forward to continuing to grow our capacity to utilize this versatile learning platform.

FLLAC programs have remained relatively stable in terms of space for the last two years with public school classrooms in Ayer-Shirley and in Clinton. Our two public day programs, Caldwell Alternative and Caldwell Elementary, have adequate space. We continue to work with the Fitchburg Public Schools to replace the leaking roof on the Caldwell Alternative School office wing. We anticipate that the roof in this building will be replaced in the early winter of 2014-2015 and that we will continue to lease this building from the Fitchburg Public Schools. We are installing a new phone system and additional security features in the building. We are also in ongoing conversations with the Town of Lunenburg, Building Reuse Committee, regarding the use of the Passios School that currently houses our Caldwell Elementary Program. The Caldwell Elementary Program continues to grow and we added a fifth classroom this past year to meet the demand of increased referrals to both the 45 Day component and to the program itself.

The FLLAC Collaborative and the CAPS Collaborative continue to work together to meet regional needs. FLLAC is currently subleasing from and sharing office space with CAPS and our central office has moved from Shirley to Westminster. We anticipate that we will be able to increase the capacity of the individual organizations by pooling resources, sharing jobs and fostering ongoing communication and planning. FLLAC and CAPS now share an Information and Instructional Technology Specialist and a 45-Day Coordinator and will be examining the roles and responsibilities of other back office staff during the 2014-2015 school year. FLLAC and CAPS also support each other by providing related services to each other's programs and to each other's districts to meet short term or difficult to fill related service needs.

At FLLAC we are continually looking to anticipate the needs of our member districts. Based on discussions with our Administrative Team, the Special Education Advisory Board, representatives from CAPS and providers in the community, it is clear that there is a need for increased mental health supports. These supports would be provided to students in our own programs and to member districts as we all look to meet the needs of increasing numbers of students with complex mental health needs. We plan to increase our capacity to provide mental health supports by training staff as Mental Health First Aid Trainers. We have also entered in to discussions with a psychiatrist who

would act as a consultant to our clinical teams and, if time allows, be available to our member districts on a limited basis.

As an educational service agency we constantly face new challenges, however, with our caring, diligent and dedicated staff, our supportive boards and support from our families and school committees, I feel FLLAC will be able to continue our mission of providing cost effective, local, responsive and high quality services. We will continue to implement the recommendations of our Board to strengthen regional efforts, continue to address our need for adequate space and to develop new supports and services to meet the needs of an increasingly complex student population. We are, and want to remain, able “to meet the current and evolving needs of our member districts”.

FLLAC remains committed to improving the academic, social, emotional and self-help skills of our students, to preparing students to live meaningful and productive lives and to provide all of our services in a caring, responsive and professional manner. I remain proud of and impressed with our staff and the work that goes on each and every day at FLLAC. I am deeply appreciative of the support we receive from our Board, our special education administrators, school committees, families and community and I look forward to continuing our service to school districts.

Richard W. Murphy, Ph.D.
Executive Director