



NORTHSHORE
EDUCATION
CONSORTIUM

Annual Report 2017-2018

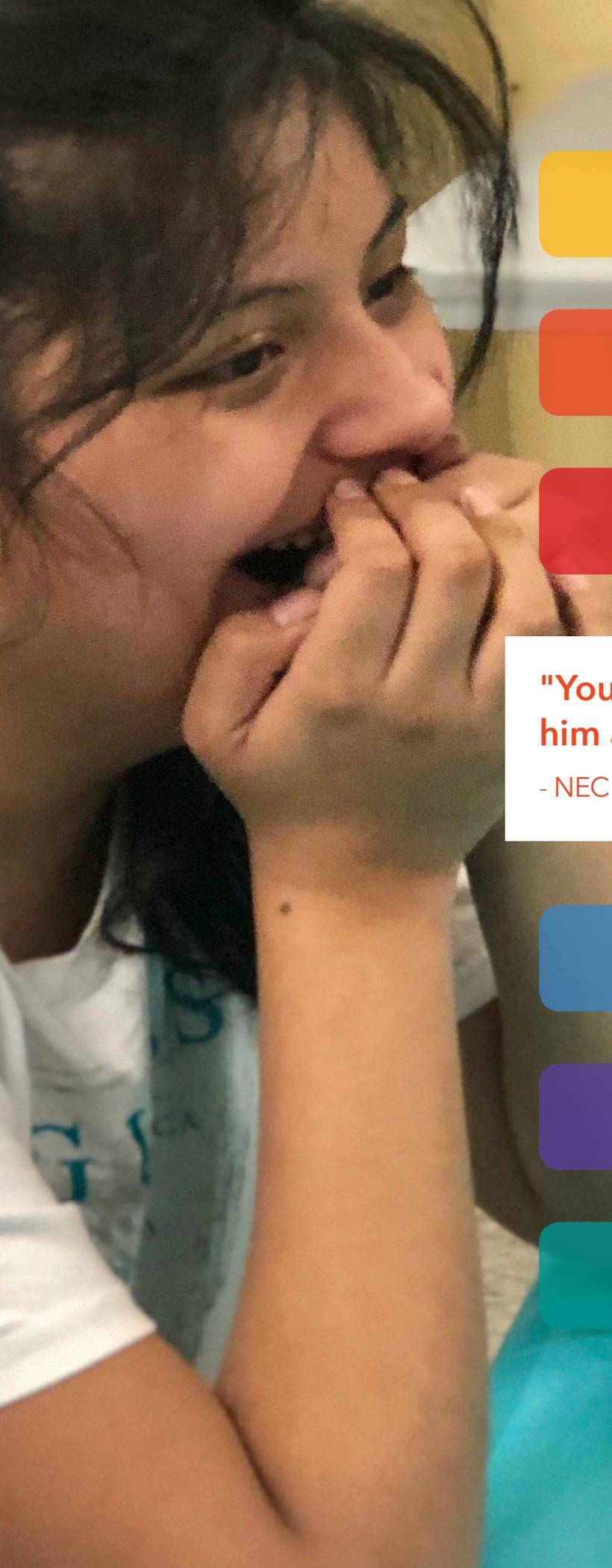


Northshore Education Consortium

112 Sohier Road, Beverly, MA 01915

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

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



"You gave my child hope. You gave him acceptance. Thank you"

- NEC Parent





4	MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
5	COLLABORATIVE INFORMATION
	History
	Member Districts/ Board of Directors 2017-2018
	Administrative Leadership Team 2017-2018
6	MISSION/VISION/CORE VALUES & BELIEFS
	Mission
	Core Values
	Guiding Beliefs
	Long-Range Vision
7	SCHOOL PROGRAMS 2017-2018
8	DEMOGRAPHICS
9	KEVIN O'GRADY SCHOOL
10-11	NORTHSHORE ACADEMY UPPER SCHOOL
12	NORTHSHORE ACADEMY LOWER SCHOOL
13	TOPSFIELD VOCATIONAL ACADEMY
14	NORTHSHORE RECOVERY HIGH SCHOOL
15-16	TRANSITION PROGRAMS: EMBARK, SOAR & STEP
17	CONSULTATION & CONTRACT SERVICES
17	FAMILY & PROFESSIONAL LEARNING CENTER
18	COST EFFECTIVENESS OF PROGRAMS & SERVICES
19	PROGRESS TOWARD ACHIEVING PURPOSE & OBJECTIVES
	Strategic Goals 2015-2018
20	FINANCIAL SUMMARY FY 2017-2018

Message From the Executive Director

Dear Northshore Education Consortium Members;

I am pleased to share this report highlighting the activities and accomplishments of the 2017-2018 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 over 500 students, from 20 member and 40 non-member 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!

Some highlights of the year included the integration of the Topsfield Vocational Academy into our array of services, and the purchase of the property on Boston Street in Topsfield. We also completed the Lobby Renovation at 112 Sohier Road, improving security and creating a more functional and welcoming space for our students and families.

While our students have a wide range of abilities, we are very proud that forty-three students graduated from our three high schools with diplomas from their districts. All of our eligible students participated in MCAS-Alt or Computer-Based MCAS testing, with a high rate of success.

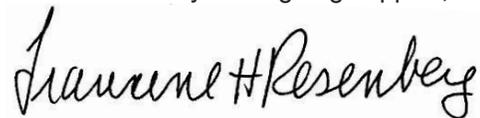
Many exciting professional development initiatives took place over the past year:

- 30 educators completed a course on Trauma and Learning offered by Lesley University.
- Thanks to a grant from the The Peter and Elizabeth C. Tower Foundation, a group of 17 educators participated in a customized week-long intensive TEACCH Autism training titled, "Transitioning Adolescents with Autism and Intellectual Disabilities to Meaningful Vocational and Community Settings".
- 150 educators completed a full day training on Collaborative Problem Solving with Dr. Stuart Ablon from MGH.
- 100 educators completed a full day training on team work and conflict resolution.
- 300 educators attended a full day of training on topics such as Culturally Competent Family Engagement and Universal Design for Learning.
- 15 new educators participated in the mentoring and induction program.
- We continued to provide regional professional development through our Family Center, Behavioral Health Conference, and Youth Mental Health First Aid Training.

And, of course, 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, 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,



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 an 18-member Board of Directors, representing the 20 districts served (Tri-Town School Union is represented by their shared Superintendent.) All districts are represented by their Superintendent. The full Board meets six times per year. Each Board member also serves on one of four subcommittees: Finance, Facilities, Policy and Personnel. Each subcommittee meets as needed.

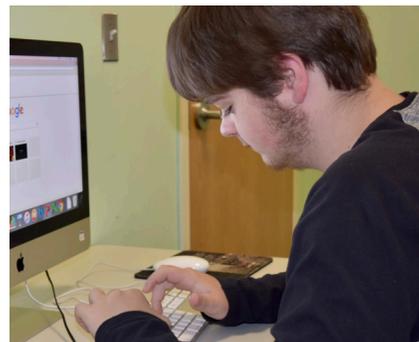
The administrative leadership team meets two or three times each month, to oversee the daily operations of the Consortium and its programs.

Member Districts/ Board of Directors 2017-2018

-  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**
-  Lynn Public Schools- **Dr. Catherine Latham**
-  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- **Dr. Herb Levine**
-  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 2017-2018

-  **Francine Rosenberg**, Executive Director
-  **Glenn Bergevin**, Chief Financial Officer
-  **Thomas Miller**, Director Kevin O'Grady School
-  **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
-  **Ellen Heald**, Director Embark, SOAR, and STEP
-  **Norman Roberts/ Monique Bourgault**, Director of Facilities



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.

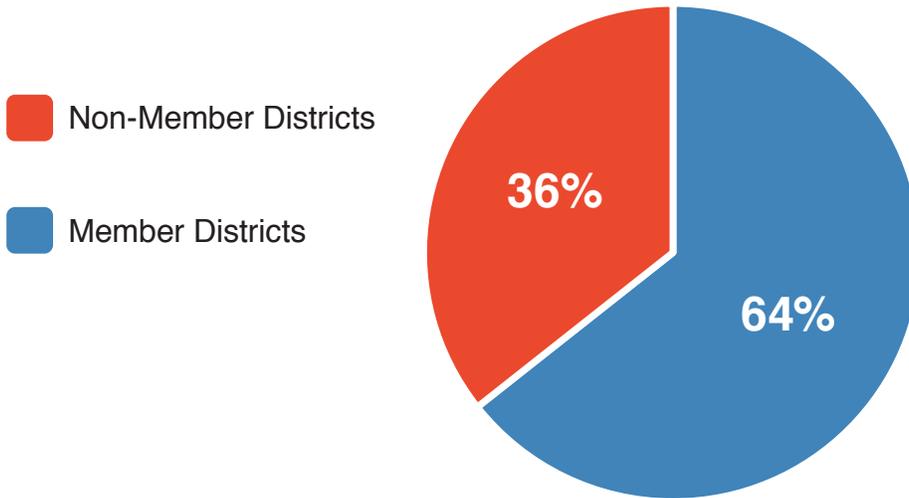
We will achieve this vision by continuously developing the following:

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.

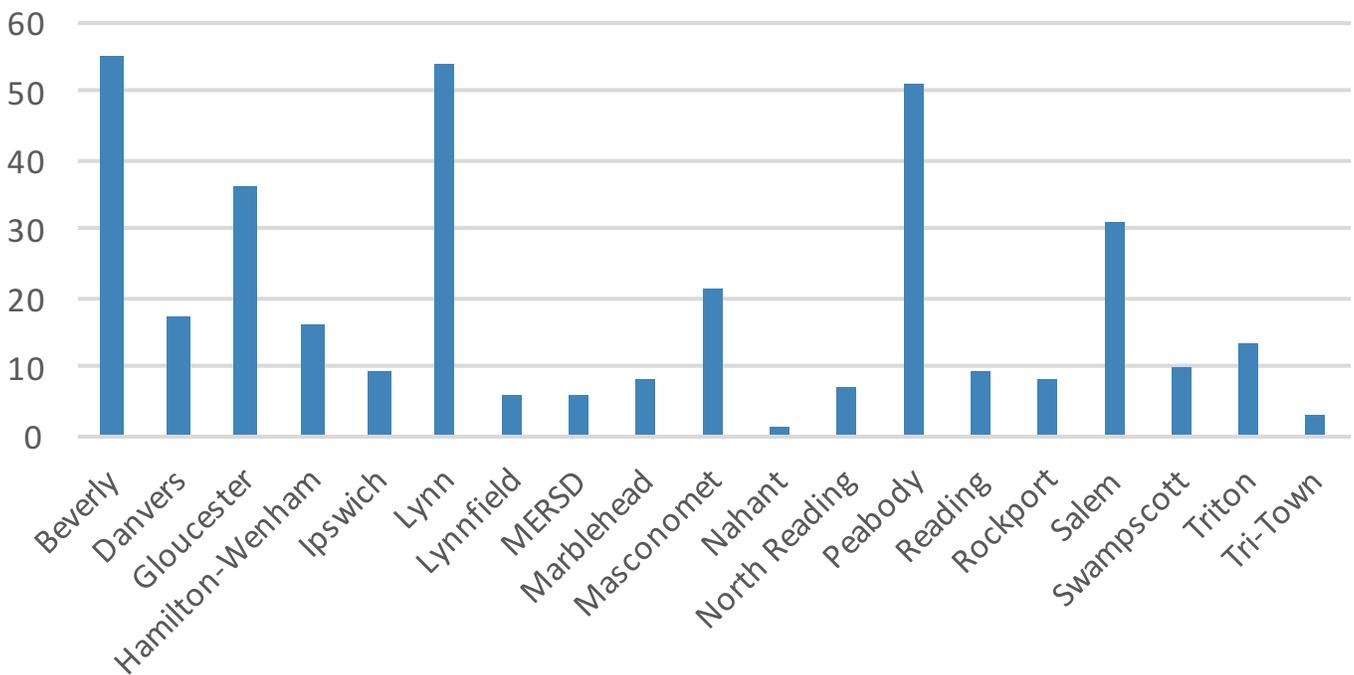
School Programs 2017-2018

During the 2017-2018 school year, Northshore Education Consortium's approved day schools served 505 students from 20 member and 40 non-member districts.

Students from Member and Non-Member Districts



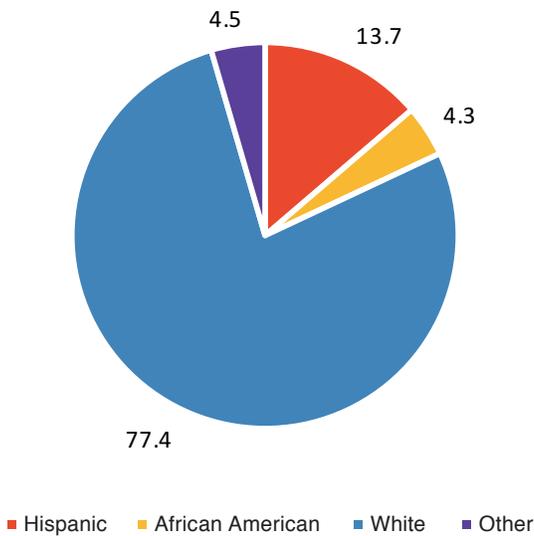
Students Served by Member Districts



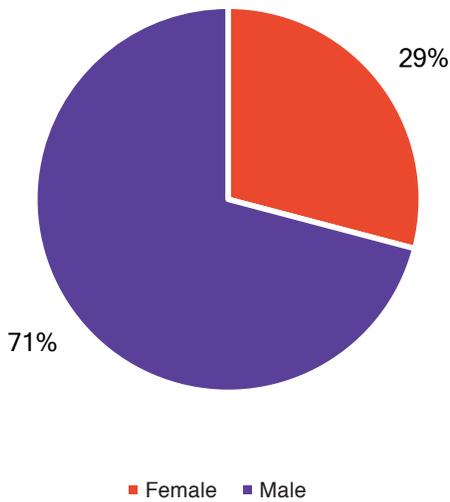
Demographics

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

Race & Ethnicity



Gender



"The caring and attention provided to each student enables them to excel not only academically but socially"

- NEC Parent

Additional Data

First Language not English	6.7%
English Learner	0.8%
Economically Disadvantaged	49.6%



Kevin O'Grady School

The **Kevin O'Grady School** 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

Located at 112 Sohier Road in Beverly, 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 2017-2018 school year, the Kevin O'Grady School served 127 students.

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 Include:

- Vision, orientation & mobility and deafblind services
- Support groups & workshops for families
- Home services
- Augmentative & assistive technology assessments
- Brace & wheelchair clinic
- Occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech & language pathology, and board certified behavior analysts

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.



The Arts: Throughout the year, KOG students benefited from a grant-funded collaboration with Young Audiences and the Massachusetts Cultural Council. This included two concert-assemblies and an interactive art project with an artist-in-residence, resulting in a beautiful multisensory mural that is displayed in the lobby.

Northshore Academy Upper School

Northshore Academy Upper School 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. Located in Beverly, the Academy served 142 students from 37 districts during the 2017-2018 school year. 19 students earned their high school diploma, and all left with a plan for continuing education or employment.

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.

Educational Programming:

- 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:

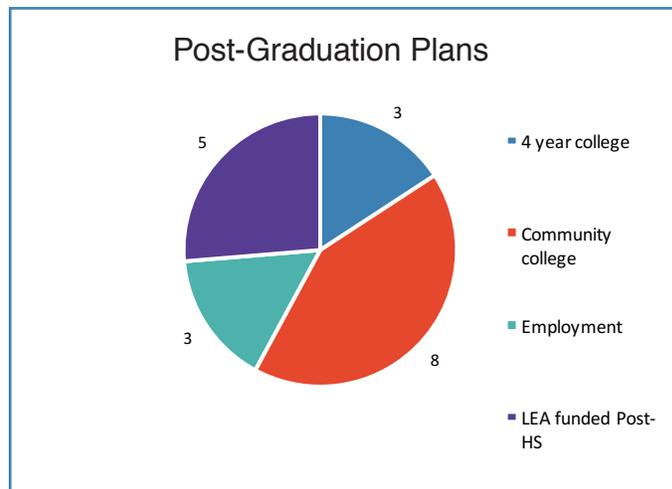
- Psychosocial assessment to accurately determine social, emotional and behavioral interventions needed to support student success in the classroom
- Case management coordinating school-based services and/or facilitating referrals to outside agencies for substance abuse treatment, psychiatric assessment, 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

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



In 2018, nineteen students earned their high school diploma, and all left with plans for continuing education or employment.





"I go on as many trips as I can. It is all about the adventure!"

- NSAU Student

NSAU Services Cont'd

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 2017-2018 year

A dynamic enrichment program including:

- Intramural High school basketball 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 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 furniture restoration, technology, culinary arts, fine arts, music, and drama

College Preparation Activities

- Visits to Salem State University, Northern Essex, and UMASS Lowell
- 25 students took PSATs and 6 took SATs
- College & career planning night for students and parents
- Dual enrollment

Vocational Experiences

- School store
- Culinary business program
- Internships at NEC schools and local businesses

School Spirit Days and Field Trips

Northshore Academy Lower School

The **Northshore Academy Lower School** 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. Located in West Peabody, the Lower School served 58 students from 25 districts during the 2017-2018 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.

In addition, students benefit from the services of an occupational therapist, speech and language pathologist, and reading specialist who provide direct services as needed and consult to teachers. In addition to their academic classes, students have opportunities to participate in art therapy, yoga and mindfulness activities, as well as a wide range of enrichment opportunities. Visits from Charlie Brown, the therapy dog are also very popular!

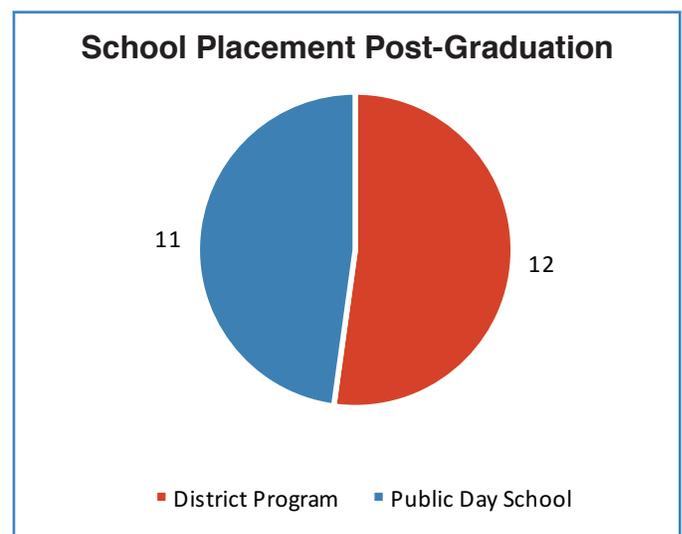
The Lower School has filled a need for districts to provide comprehensive, short-term assessment for young children in crisis. These students receive a comprehensive multi-disciplinary assessment and the district receives concrete recommendations on what the child will need to make educational progress 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 2017-2018 school year, 23 students “graduated” from the Lower School... either because they were ready to return to a less restrictive environment, or because they completed 6th grade. Twelve of these students returned to an in-district setting, while 11 moved onto another public day school.



"My daughter has done great at Northshore Lower School and is ready to go back to the public school. Thank you for all that you do!"

- NSAL Parent



During the 2017-2018 school year, 23 students “graduated” from the Lower School; either because they were ready to return to a less restrictive environment, or because they completed 6th grade. Twelve of these students returned to an in-district setting, while 11 moved onto another public day school.

Topsfield Vocational Academy

Topsfield Vocational Academy is located in Topsfield and serves 6th-12th grade students with a range of learning and social-emotional, and behavioral health challenges.

During the 2017-2018 school year, the first year in which the program was part of NEC, Topsfield Vocational Academy educated 73 students from 27 districts. Despite significant learning challenges, 100% of tenth graders passed ELA and Math MCAS, and 14/18 passed science. Eleven seniors earned their diplomas and went on to continuing education or employment.

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.

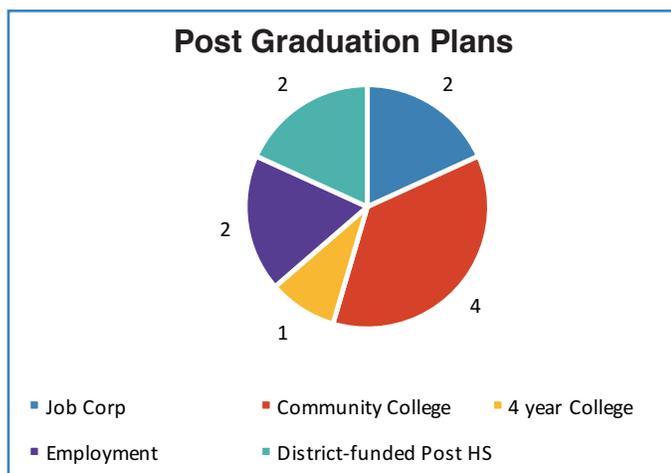
Highlights of the 2017-2018 School Year

- A group of students helped to build and launch a dory at Essex Shipbuilding Museum.
- Several students participated in the Marine Endangered Species Art Contest.
- Students raised money to support their "sister school" in Zimbabwe.
- Woodshop students built several special chairs for their physically disabled peers at the Kevin O'Grady school, and planters for their peers at Northshore Academy Lower School. In addition, students built and donated a bench to the Gloucester Maritime Society.
- Students visited the Topsfield Fair and the New England Aquarium.



" NEC is willing to be creative and flexible in addressing students needs"

- Public School Liaison



Despite significant learning challenges, 100% of tenth graders passed ELA and Math MCAS, and 14/18 passed science. Eleven seniors earned their diplomas and went on to continuing education or employment.



Northshore Recovery High School

Northshore Recovery High School (NSRHS), 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, NSRHS 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 NSRHS 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 2017-2018 school year, NSRHS served 54 students from 26 communities. Eleven students graduated in June.

Program Details:

- NSRHS 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 NSRHS 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 NSRHS 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.
- NSRHS 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 NSRHS, students and their parents will be accountable to develop and maintain their own recovery plan with the support and recommendations of NSRHS staff.
- All students participate in clinical groups and drug testing as part of the program.
- Substance abuse counseling will be provided to students after school hours by an outside substance abuse treatment agency. NSRHS Counselors will be available for onsite support and referral recommendation and facilitation as needed.



Highlights of the 2017-2018 School Year

- Students 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.
- Trauma informed Yoga and Mindfulness were incorporated into the curriculum. A special field trip enabled students to participate in "Goat Yoga".
- Several "Open Mic Night" events gave students a safe and sober forum for playing and listening to music.
- The school hosted its annual prom which was a great success.

"I am thankful for my school. My school has held me and loved me at my worst and best. They make me want to continue living an fight to one day get into college, have a car, have healthy relationships, and gain years of true sobriety"

- RHS Student

Transition Programs

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

Embark Program

Program Components

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 2017-2018, Embark served 16 students.

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 based on SCANS (Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills). These skills are the core of EMBARK's curriculum and include:

- 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

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

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

SOAR was a new program that started in 2012 with 3 students, in response to requests from member districts. During the 2017-2018 school year, 24 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

- Career skills through paid & unpaid community based internships
- Life skills & skills for independent functioning
- Curriculum (self awareness & self advocacy)
- Time management
- Physical education (self-calming, self regulation, yoga, swimming, basketball, etc.)
- Study skills and test preparation
- Class etiquette & social skills
- Independent living orientation program (residing in the dorms on campus)
- After school enrichment classes
- Raw arts (therapeutic art program)
- Group skills
- Negotiating & problem solving skills
- Transportation
- Leisure
- Skills for appropriate social relationships (including hygiene, dating, roommates)



Transition Programs

STEP Program

Students enrolled in the **STEP Program** demonstrate a variety of challenges and diagnoses such as: Intellectual Impairment, Social-Emotional Disability and Learning Disabilities.

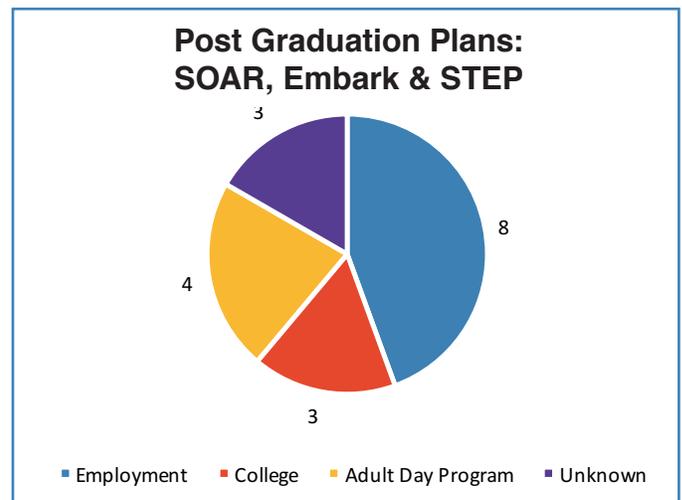
The STEP Program enrolls 15-18 year olds whose combination of disabilities has made it hard for them to succeed in other alternative settings, as well as 18-22 year olds with similar challenges.

During the 2017-2018 school year, STEP served 12 students.

The goal of the STEP Program is to enable students to achieve a high level of success and independence in a classroom setting and then transfer their skills in the community.

Programs Components

- Functional academics
- Therapeutic supports
- Behavior management (Individualized Incentive/behavior plans)
- Completing graduation requirements
- Wellness
- Vocational skills training
- Community based internships
- Travel training
- Summer programming
- Exposure to community resources



"In the three years I've been at SOAR I've learned quite a lot. I've learned to handle college classes, I've learned to forge friendships with confidence and kindness, but most importantly I've learned to be myself"

- SOAR Graduate

Consultation & Contract Services

During the 2017-2018 school year, NEC provided vision, orientation and mobility to 69 students who attend schools in member districts and provided home training for 7 students.

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.

"NEC provides us with valuable, knowledgeable vision consultants"

- Public School Liaison

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.

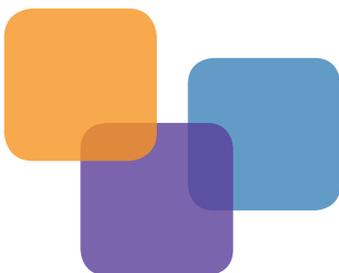
Professional Development

During the 2017-2018 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 is also 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.

NEC Family Center

Our Family Center hosted 11 small Family Workshops on topics such as Transition to Turning 18, Special Needs Financial Planning, Everyday Strategies for Students with Autism, and Vaping: Information for Parents. Each workshop was attended by approximately 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.



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 programs is to compare them to private special education placements that serve similar populations, as we do in the charts below.

Based on an analysis of private schools serving similar populations, **member districts can save up to \$275/day (over \$49,000/year, not including transportation costs) by sending a student to an NEC program.** (All rates are based on OSD FY 2018 data, compared to NEC 2018 rates, and are based on daily rates for day programs, and rounded to the nearest dollar). NEC tuition rates include all therapy services.

Severe Disabilities	Autism	Multiple Disabilities/ Medically Fragile
NEC Kevin O'Grady: Member	375	390
NEC Kevin O'Grady: Non-Member	455	460
Melmark	470	
Nashoba Learning Center	490	
Hopeful Journeys	531	
Perkins School for the Blind		535 (medically impaired) 667 (severely impaired)
Kennedy Day School		431
BC Campus School		448
Beverly School for the Deaf: Children's Communication Center		436

Emotional Disability (grades K-12)

Northshore Academy, TVA & STEP: Member	220
Northshore Academy, TVA & STEP Non-Member	264
Manville	498
Walker	404
Dearborn	386
Lighthouse School	400
Arlington School (McLean)	350
Community Therapeutic Day School	420
New England Academy	312

Intellectual Disability / Autism (ages 18-22)

Embark/SOAR: Member	190
Embark/SOAR: Non-Member	213
Riverview	261
Cardinal Cushing	34

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

BCBA, Vision/Orientation/Mobility, Other Professional Consultation

NEC Member Rate - \$110/hr.	Perkins School for the Blind/Carroll Center - \$125/hr.	Walker Partnerships - \$175/hr.
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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 68 to \$109/ 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 \$498/day (Manville School)

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 2017-2018 school year, Friends of NEC raised over \$165,000 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.

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 she represents MOEC at the Children’s League of Massachusetts. 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 for 2015-2018

During the 2017-2018 year, substantial progress was made toward achieving the strategic goals set by the Board.

Goal 1: Strengthen internal process of utilizing data to assess program quality and student outcomes in all NEC programs.

Progress:

- All schools implemented new systems for tracking behavioral data including but not limited to restraints, time-outs, and suspensions, enabling us to be compliant with state expectations and to begin to use this data in a more systemic manner for program quality improvement.
- Technology upgrades enabled us to complete CBT for MCAS and to become SIF compliant for state reporting.
- Strong outcomes were demonstrated through academic data, and the number of students who made progress on their IEP objectives and transition goals.

Goal 2: Strengthen NEC financial status and infrastructure for long-range sustainability

Progress:

- NEC ended the school year with an operating surplus, and therefore did not need to increase tuition rates beyond 2%.
- The integration of the Topsfield Vocational Academy and the purchase of its home building were significant accomplishments in this area.
- Ongoing capital improvements have been successfully completed.
- NEC successfully pursued private contributions and grant funding as discussed above.

Goal 3: Strengthen NEC’s ability to respond to district needs and serve as a regional resource.

Progress:

- On an annual survey, special Education Directors reported a high level of satisfaction with NEC programs and services.
- NEC provided or hosted Orton Gillingham trainings in response to district requests and offered a course for New and Aspiring Team Leaders.
- NEC specialists provided consultation to districts in the areas of mental health, assistive technology, and vision services.
- NEC served as a community resource by providing space for a community organization to provide Mental Health First Aid training for police officers, providing space for community organizations to run therapeutic groups, and by participation in the Youth at Risk Conference in Essex County.

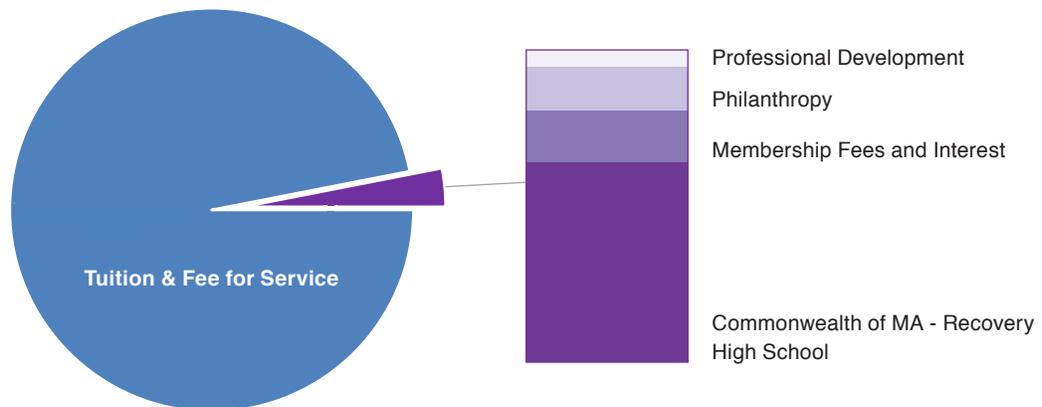
Financial Summary FY 2018

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 2018 Revenue Sources

Source	Dollars	Percentages
Tuition and Fee for Service	\$ 22,555,503	95.29%
Commonwealth of MA - Recovery High School	\$ 713,899	3.02%
Membership Fees and Interest	\$ 192,032	0.81%
Philanthropy	\$ 166,628	0.70%
Professional Development	\$ 42,293	0.18%

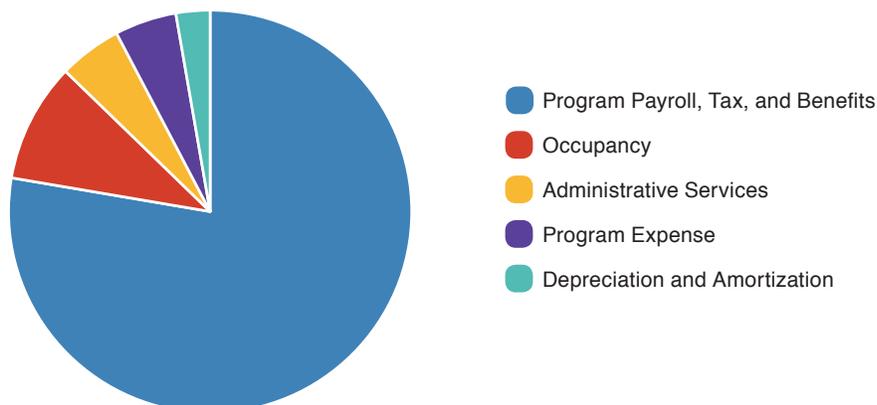
Total Revenue	\$23,670,355	100%
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FY 2018 Expense Categories

Category	Dollars	Percentages
Program Payroll, Tax, and Benefits	\$ 17,911,098	77.68%
Occupancy	\$ 2,208,123	9.58%
Administrative Services	\$ 1,164,591	5.05%
Program Expense	\$ 1,143,481	4.96%
Depreciation and Amortization	\$ 629,891	2.73%

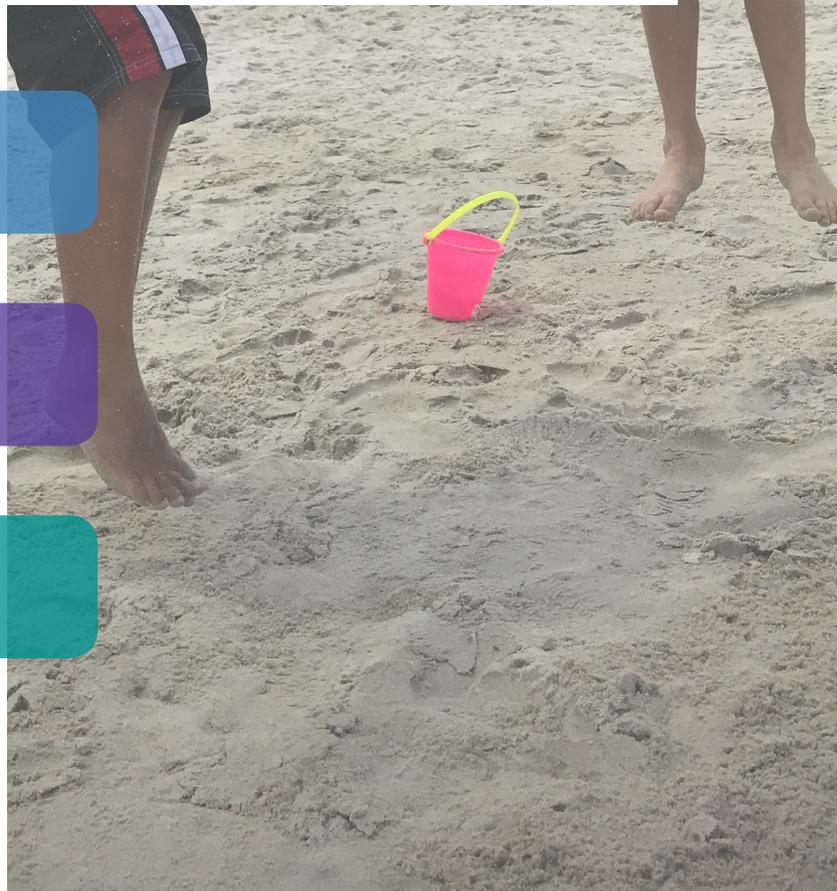
Total Expense	\$23,057,183	100%
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"For the first time my son is happy to go to school"

- NEC Parent





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