

The FLLAC Educational Collaborative 2014-2015 Annual Report

**FLLAC Educational Collaborative
Central Office
2 Narrows Road, Suite C 105
Westminster, MA 01473
www.fllac.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. Mary Malone, Ayer Shirley RSD
Supt. Terrance Ingano, Clinton Public Schools	Supt. Andre Ravenelle, Fitchburg Public Schools
Supt. Denise Clemons, Gardner Public Schools	Supt. James Jolicoeur, Leominster Public Schools (Chair)
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 Khelfaoui, Winchendon Public Schools	

FLLAC Executive Board Sub-Committees

Budget:	Mr. Andre Ravenelle, Dr. Ralph Hicks, Mr. James Jolicoeur
Personnel:	Ms. Loxi Jo Calmes, Dr. Elizabeth Schaper
Governance:	Ms. Loxi Jo Calmes, Dr. Andre Ravenelle
Space:	Dr. Ralph Hicks, Mr. Terrance Ingano
Warrant Committee:	Dr. Ralph Hicks, Mr. Darryll McCall, Dr. Salah Khelfaoui

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. Joyce West, 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
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.

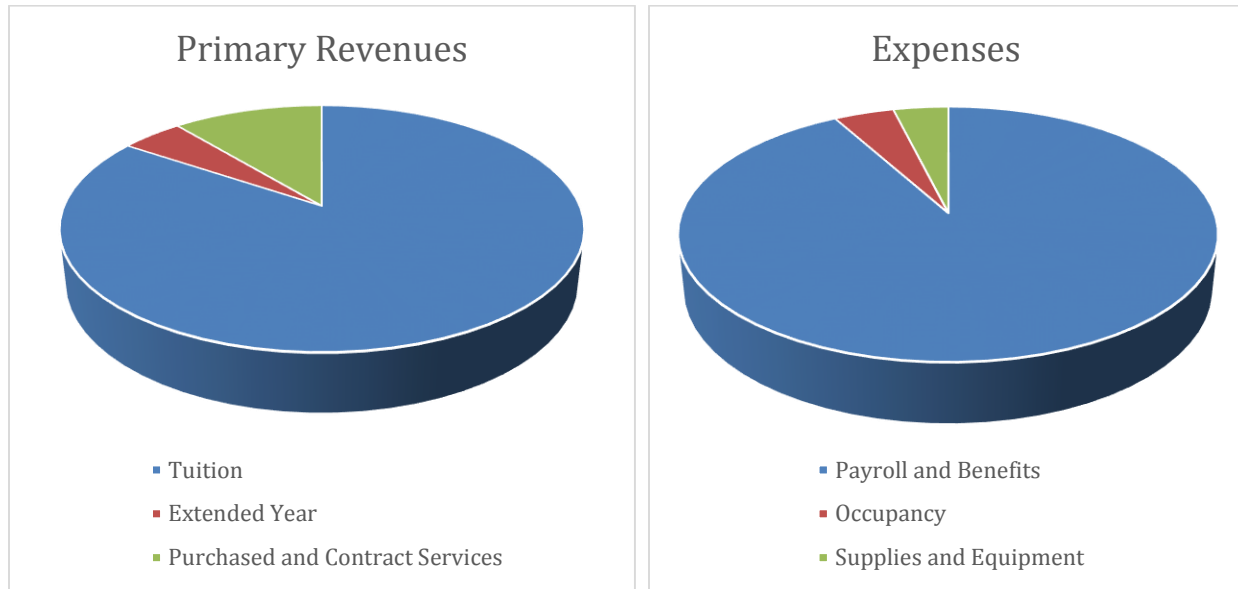
The overall objectives of the Collaborative include, but are not limited to, the following and are subject to the approval of the Board:

- 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.

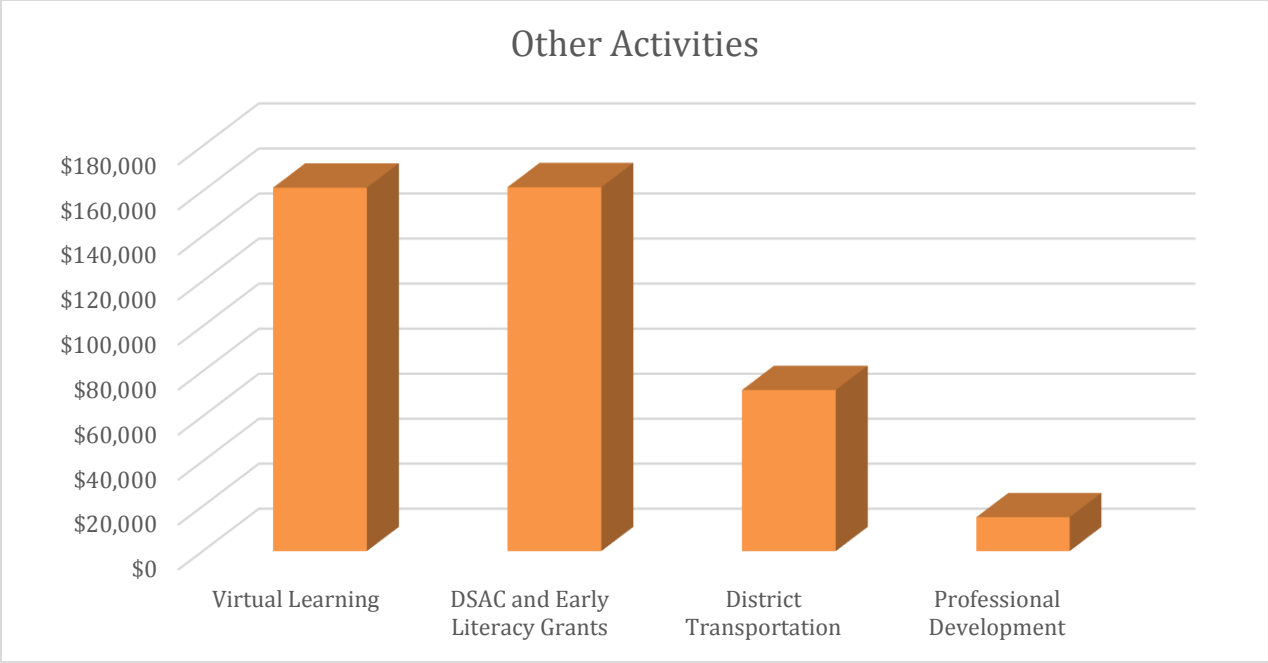
Financial and Enrollment Information



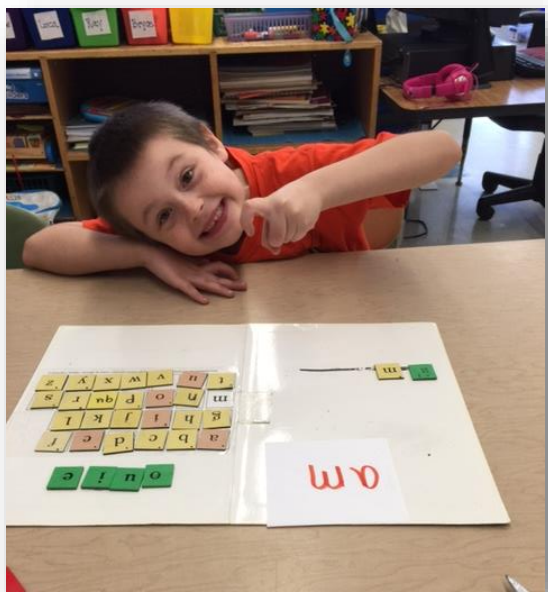
Better than 90% of Collaborative expenses continue to be related to staffing.

Tuition	\$5,425,482
Extended Year	\$293,050
Purchased and Contract Services	\$710,149

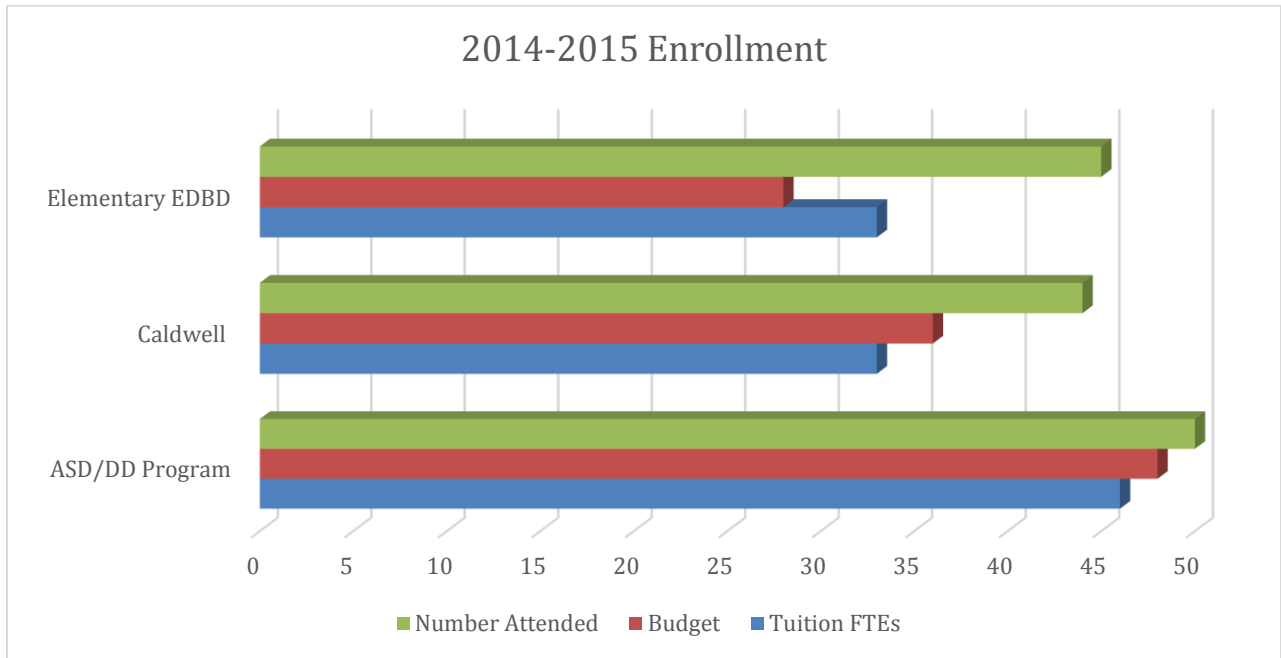
The primary activities of the Collaborative are running school year programs for students with special needs (Tuition), summer school programs (Extended Year), providing specialized staff for services to our member districts (Purchased and Contract Services), and providing Professional Development opportunities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

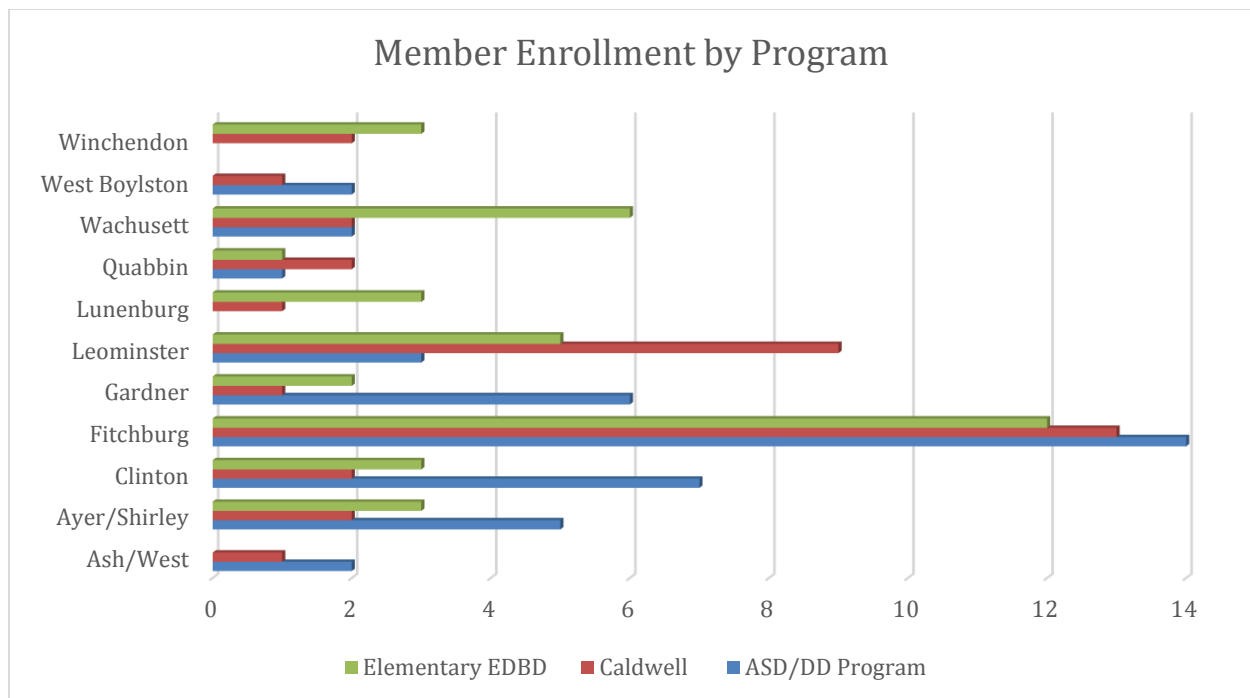


The heart of the organization is the educational programming provided through our programs.

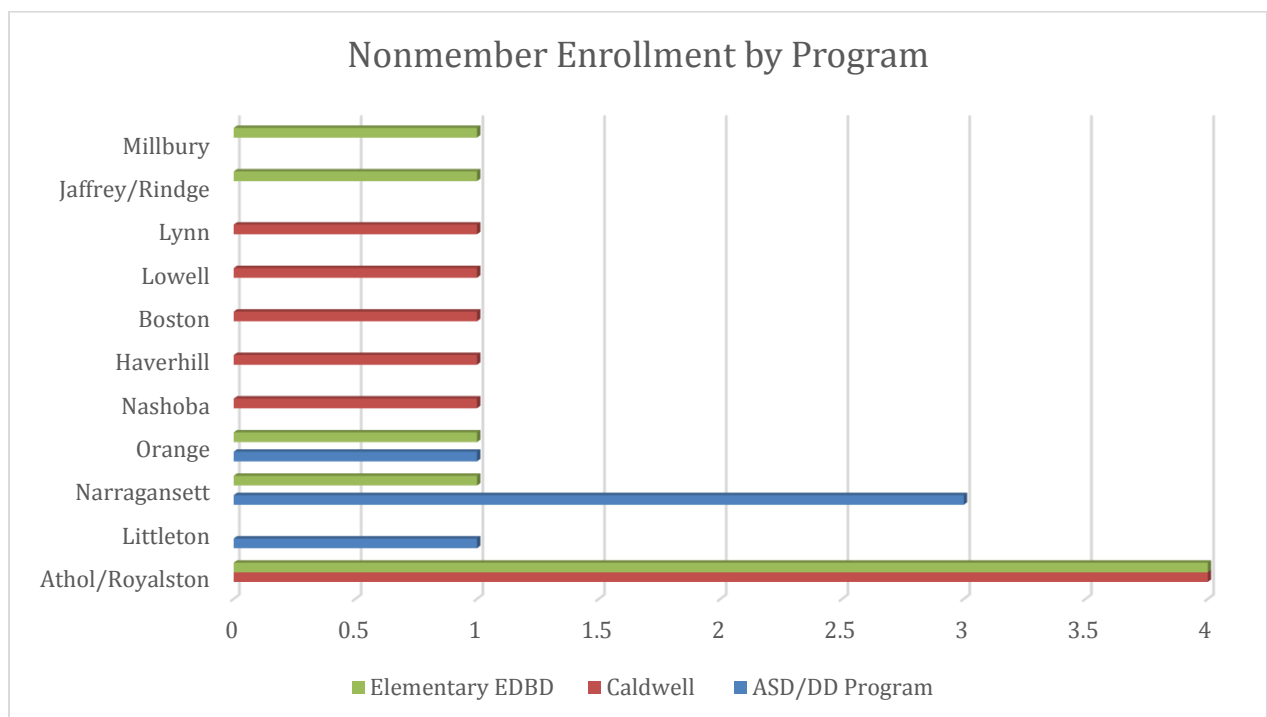


	Tuition FTEs	Budget	Number Attended
ASD/DD Program	46	48	50
Caldwell	33	36	44
Elementary EDBD Program	33	28	45

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.



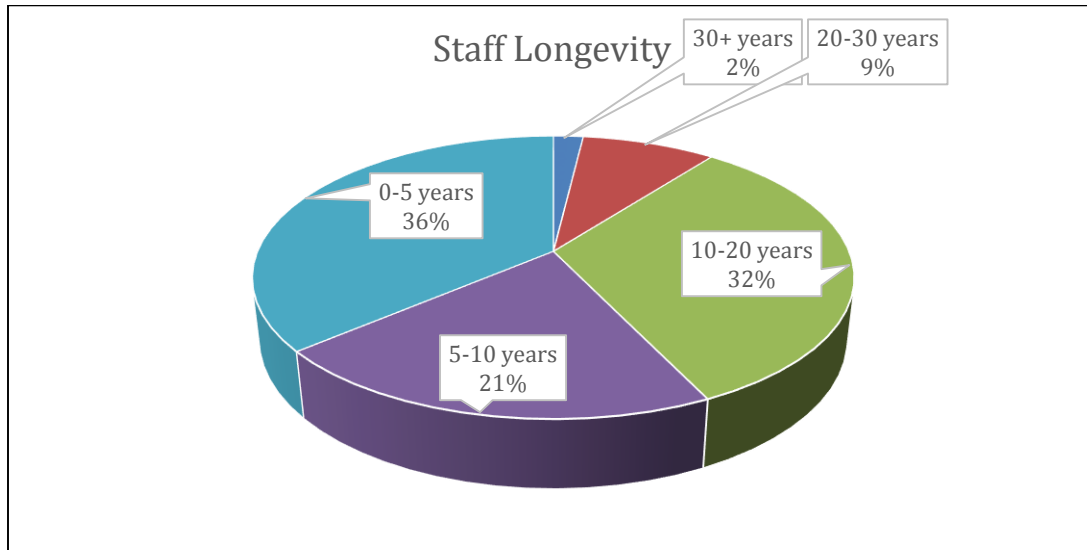
Fitchburg continues to be the primary source of referrals to our special needs programs.



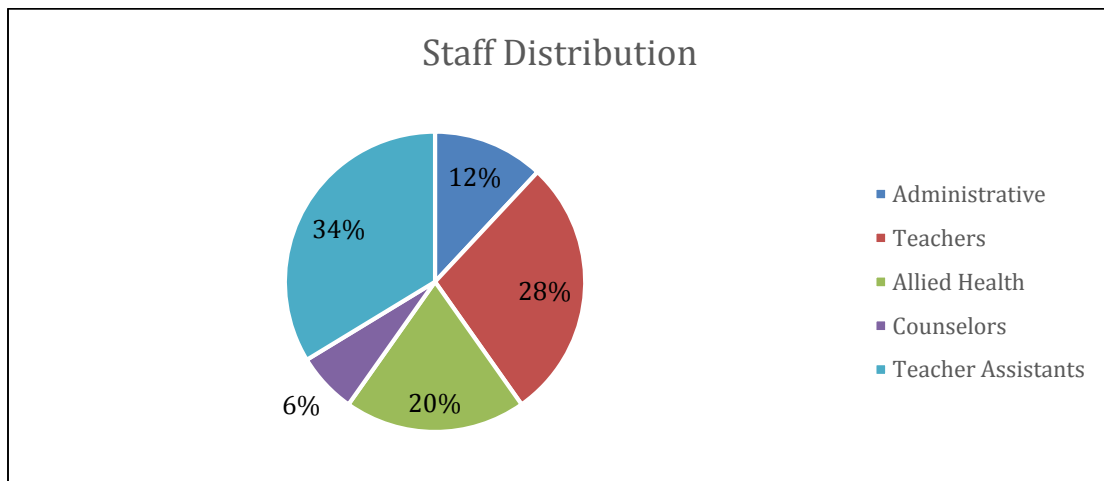
While some placements are from districts within our region, we have noted out of region placements tied to residential programs for students requiring alternative education placements.

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

FLLAC has a reputation for providing high quality, cost effective programs and services to our member districts. We provide an annual cost comparison survey to our Board to demonstrate cost effectiveness and conduct a satisfaction survey of our Special Education Administrators every fall to determine the extent to which they are satisfied with our programs and services and to determine how responsive the collaborative has been to district needs. We also take our commitment to providing quality professional development by providing evaluations to participants of all of our professional development offerings.

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 reviewed by the FLLAC Special Education Advisory Board to ensure that comparisons are fair and represent private schools that districts would have to send students to if FLLAC programs were not available.

FLLAC Collaborative 11-23-15		Cost Comparisons		
Program/Population	FLLAC Tuition Member	Private School Avg.*	Savings	
Developmental Disabilities/Life Skills	\$50,832	\$71,850	\$21,018	
PDD/Autism	\$50,832	\$82,402	\$31,570	
Caldwell Elementary Emotional/Behavioral	\$51,607	\$62,036	\$10,429	
Caldwell Alternative Emotional/LD	\$48,099	\$57,438	\$9,339	
45 Day Extended Evaluation Pr.	CE \$12,901	\$15,509	\$2,608	
	CA \$12,025	\$14,764	\$2,739	

OSD Rate Sheet 9/10/15:

*Private School Costs are determined by averaging the tuition of 3 approved private day schools within 1 hour 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, \$74,100 Kennedy Day School \$69,550, B.C. Campus, \$71,899

Autism/PDD Programs: New England Center for Children \$80,632, Nashoba Learning \$85,392 Crossroads (Natick), \$81,181

Caldwell Elementary Program: Franklin Perkins, \$52,367, Walker Home, \$70,371, Lighthouse, \$63,370

Caldwell Alternative School: Mclean Arlington Academy, 61,021 RFK Day \$47,386, Lighthouse, \$63,370

Special Education Administrator Satisfaction Survey Results

FLLAC conducted a satisfaction survey of our member district Special Education Administrators in November of 2015 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. Six out of ten of our member district Special Education Administrators replied to the survey.

The results of this survey indicate that in 2014-2015 there was a high level of satisfaction with our special education programs and services and, equally important, that FLLAC continued to be 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, the respondents either agreed (67%) or strongly agreed (33%) with the statement.
- FLLAC programs and services are cost effective, 67% of the respondents either agreed (50%) or strongly agreed (17%) with the statement.
- “It is important to me that FLLAC provides programs that are located in my district or in a district nearby”, the respondents either agreed (17%) or strongly agreed (83%) with the statement.
- FLLAC staff were experienced, skilled and knowledgeable in meeting the needs of the students they serve, the respondents either agreed (66%) or strongly agreed (34%) with the statement.
- FLLAC Program Staff are responsive to my needs, the respondents either agreed (50%) or strongly agreed (50%) with the statement.
- FLLAC staff are effective when dealing with families, the respondents either agreed (20%) or strongly agreed (80%) with the statement.
- The FLLAC Administration is responsive to the needs of my district, the respondents either agreed (13%) or strongly agreed (87%) with the statement.
- FLLAC staff provide services in a caring and respectful manner, the respondents either agreed (67%) or strongly agreed (33%) with the statement.

- How likely are you to recommend FLLAC Programs to other district administrators, 50% of respondents said they would be extremely likely to do so, 17% said they would be very likely to do so and 33% said they would be moderately likely to do so.

Recommendations: Two Special Education Administrators recommended that FLLAC add additional vocational programs or increase transition supports for high school students. During the 2014-2015 school year FLLAC students in the ASD/DD programs 14 students participated in vocational or career exploration activities at 7 sites throughout the community. Students also visited over 12 community experience sites. Caldwell Alternative School graduated four students in 2015. Three are attending Mount Wachusett Community College and one is currently working in retail in his hometown. One student participated in a work study/internship at a local Doggie Day Care site.

Students and families were encouraged to be active participants in the transition process through participation in IEP meetings and by completing vocational/secondary education interest surveys through the team process. All students graduating or transitioning to adult services from FLLAC programs leave with a transition plan developed by the team with participation from the student and the student's family.



Program Descriptions

In 2014-2015 FLLAC offered four programs designed to meet the needs of specific student populations. Our member districts identified students from these populations as needing services the districts could not provide within the district. 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 substantially separate classrooms located in member districts. The programs serve students who have more complex, low incidence, intellectual, communication, related services, behavioral, academic and self-help needs that districts are unable to meet within district. 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. Students in the 45-Day Program receive evaluation and assessment services as identified by the student's educational team 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 and supports for that student. Students referred to the program may have previously been found in need of special education services but others 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. In 2014-2015 FLLAC did away with the single 45-Day Coordinator position and referrals were handled internally by a designated staff person in each program. This was done to speed admissions, facilitate better communication within the programs and provide continuity and consistency with program counselors and teaching teams.



Caldwell Alternative School

44 Wanoosnoc Road, Fitchburg, Massachusetts 01420

Program Phone: 978-345-5250 www.flac.org Program 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 the 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 (25) students enrolled and ended the year with thirty-eight (38) 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>
32	14	Other program – 8 More restrictive - 1 Declined - 4 Move from Dist. – 2 No show for intake-3	14	8	Other 45 day - 6

Graduates/Transitions/Discharges

Caldwell graduated 4 seniors with diplomas; 3 are attending Mount Wachusett Community College, and 1 entered the world of work. During the academic year, 3 students transitioned to more restrictive school settings, 3 transferred to another day school, 1 was placed in a more restrictive school setting, 1 transitioned to *Goodrich Academy* (Fitchburg Alternative School), and 1 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 daily school program to facilitate assessment with their peers. This program received 14 referrals for evaluations; 8 were enrolled and 6 remained enrolled at Caldwell after the evaluation process.

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 to 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.*

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 to Fitchburg State University and Mount Wachusett Community College,*
- *Development of transition planning and career education,*
- *Community job sites – Doggie Daycare*
- *Wood shop and production crew.*
- *Student run school store*

Programs

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

Caldwell Middle School (grades 7 & 8) enrolls students in two classrooms, each staffed with a Teacher or Instructor 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.

In addition to 1:1 weekly sessions with students, Caldwell Alternative School Counselors provided weekly social skills groups for all students; these are offered by grade level. The Social Skills curriculum includes language pragmatics, trust-building, self-advocacy,

personal growth and social problem solving. School Counselors provided milieu crisis intervention and consultation to classroom staff.

Reading Program

Caldwell continues to prioritize enhancing reading skill in our student population. The program seeks to strengthen and teach deficit skills as well as encourage reading as a leisure time activity.

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/Consultation

Caldwell has benefitted greatly with the addition of ongoing psychiatric consultation with Dr. Kerry Wilkins. Dr. Wilkins provides staff professional development opportunities, clinical and programmatic consultation as well as individual critical case review of identified students.

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:

- Trauma in the Classroom
- Restraint Prevention – Accommodating the New Regulations
- Time out and Seclusion Updates
- DBT Techniques and other Mindfulness as Coping Strategies
- Effective Behavioral Support



Caldwell Elementary School – EDBD Program

1025 Massachusetts Avenue, Lunenburg, MA 01462

Program Phone: 978-582-4206 www.fllac.org Program Fax: 978-582-4208

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.

In the fall, we visited Lanni Orchards in Lunenburg, MA. We had a wonderful time learning about the apple process and how they separate the apples per kind and size. We were able to see the production area and how they package their products. Our students were taken out to the apple fields by hayride and were able to pick a peck for themselves along with a pumpkin. Lanni Orchard's did a great job at educating our students on what they do to prepare for the fall season, and how they store their fruits for the remainder of the year.

Caldwell Elementary School also visited the Boston Children's Museum, where students and staff alike enjoyed hands-on activities. Every room was filled with the opportunity for our students to delve into science concepts. Some students put their hats on and became construction workers while others got their first moments of fame on the big screen. Other rooms brought students across the globe to experience an international market and play the steel drums for the audience. There was a new challenge and excitement behind every door of the museum for students to uncover. The biggest obstacle they faced was the three-story tall climbing structure and even some staff dared to explore their inner child in it. Every daring soul made it through, as students helped one another navigate through the maze of ropes. By the end of the day, smiles filled the bus ride home as they reminisced about their day of adventure. We are excited to see all of our new scientists go off and explore the rest of the world.



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.) re-enforcers. 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.

Planning for future initiatives

Caldwell Elementary has identified a need for increased technology. A technology cart has been purchased with laptops and iPads for each classroom. This will roll out in the upcoming year. We are also looking forward to bringing in Music Therapy to integrate into our classrooms. Music is a powerful tool for dealing with complex emotions, anxiety, and trauma. Music has also been identified by many of our students as a source of comfort and a valuable coping skill.



ASD and DD Programs

150 School Street, Clinton, Ma. 01510

Program Phone: 978-368-1431 www.fllac.org Program Fax: 978-368-1507

The Autism Spectrum Disorder classrooms and Developmental Disabilities classrooms continue to provide specialized services to students with special needs, in the context of the public school setting. All referrals made to these classrooms come through the 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.

2013-2014 total school year referrals: 7

2014-2015 total school year referrals: 6

2013-2014 Students accepted for placement: 5

2014-2015 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. 2014-2015 referrals demonstrated a 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.

2014-2015 school year transitions back to in-district public school: 3 students

Transitions to adult services: 2 students

Transitions to a more restrictive setting: 1 student

Census:

The ASD and DD programs receive budgetary support based on 48 students. During the 2014-2015 school year the student census averaged 45 students.

Classroom Census in June 2015

Elementary ASD Page Hilltop- 5 students

Elementary ASD Lura White- 4 students

Middle School ASD1 Clinton- 6 students

Middle School ASD2 Clinton- 4 students

High School ASD Ayer Shirley-	8 students
High School DD Ayer Shirley-	9 students
Elementary DD Page Hilltop-	4 students
Middle School DD Clinton-	7 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 family support coordinator, and 1 administrator

Highly qualified support staff: 19 paraprofessionals, 1 program secretary

Program Initiatives:

The ASD and DD programs are committed to remaining 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 Student and Family Services Coordinator, 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.

2015-2016 Initiatives:

Develop more community based work sites for students aged 18 – 22.

Provide more professional development activities for teachers and paraprofessionals.

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.

Increase parent participation in Parent Support Group.



The FLLAC 45 Day Program

The FLLAC 45-Day Program served students from grades K through 12 and worked with a number of member districts as well as students from nonmember districts. Over the course of the 2014-2015 year the 45-day program has supported a total of 19 students (11 at Caldwell Elementary and 8 at Caldwell Alternative) 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 continue to present with complex challenges. 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 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, mental health and behavioral needs remained noteworthy. Based on ongoing feedback from districts the trend toward the program serving increasingly complicated students will continue to grow.

The 45 Day Program continues to work with 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 enabled 45-day coordinators to make certain that information from all providers was considered while completing evaluations. The program has an ongoing relationship with Dr. Caroline Cole who completes the majority of psychological evaluations and risk assessments. Dr. Kerry Wilkins, a child and adolescent psychiatrist, began consulting to the program during the 2014-2015 school year. She visits once every three weeks. Dr. Wilkins continues to provide professional development, meets with teams and performs observations of the programs.

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 provided 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 continues to provide quality evaluations that meet the 45 Day placement needs of sending districts.

Services and Supports

In order to fulfill our mission of meeting the ongoing needs of our member districts FLLAC provided a number of other services to districts that complement and strengthen district programs and services. We assist districts with obtaining cost efficient transportation to FLLAC programs, provide long term and short term related services, work to help districts realize cost savings on utility costs, offer extended year services, coordinate a virtual learning effort, provide home and ABA support and provide professional development.

Transportation Coordination

FLLAC coordinated 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 2014-2015 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. 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 continued to manage them on behalf of FLLAC and the participating districts for the 2014-2017 school years. FLLAC has continued to meet with the Leominster Public Schools Business Manager, Tradition Energy and representatives from the other participating districts to monitor the prices for utilities and revise contracts to obtain the best pricing.

Staff Training and Consultation

FLLAC staff continue to be recognized for their expertise by area school districts. During the 2014-2015 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. FLLAC staff in the ASD/DD program also participate in district sponsored trainings as members of the building staff. This fostered greater communication between FLLAC and district staff and presented opportunities for ongoing job-alike activities and consultation.

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 2014-2015 year our ABA, and home tutor served 4 students either in their homes or directly in the schools.

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 for a five week summer program. Students in our Caldwell Alternative Middle and High School and our Caldwell Elementary Programs attended summer programs in our Fitchburg and Lunenburg buildings respectively. The programs run from Monday through Thursday and provide ongoing academic instruction, related services and fun, yet functional, activities. Over the 2015 summer period FLLAC served approximately 46 students in the ASD/DD extended year program, 9 students in the Caldwell Alternative program and 19 students 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.

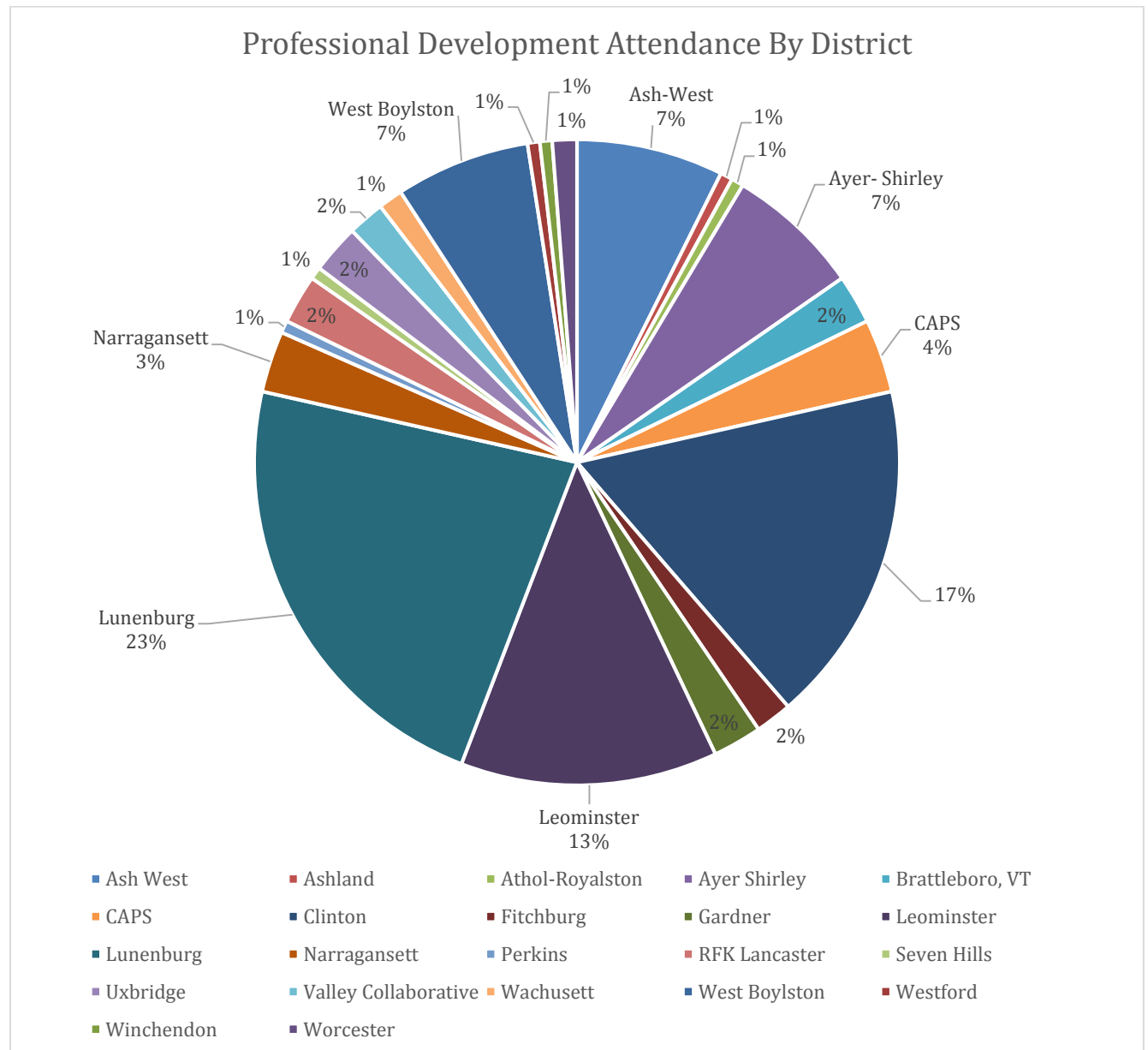
Virtual Education

FLLAC continues to coordinate the Edgenuity Virtual Learning platform for districts participating in the regional virtual learning effort. FLLAC takes care of the billing with Edgenuity based on district usage and facilitates meetings with the designated district administrators. During the 2014-2015 year nearly 300 students took advantage of Edgenuity courses. Below is a table showing the number of students participating, the districts they were from and the type of course or courses they took.

	<u>Semester Course</u>	<u>Concurrent</u>	<u>Full Time Student/Semester</u>
Ash/West	22		8
Gardner	9	20	6
Leominster	228		7
Narragansett	22		2
Winchendon	1	35	

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 2014-2015 school year FLLAC provided trainings on Legal Issues for School Administrators, Physical Restraint Regulations, Crisis Prevention and Restraint, School Safety training and Woodcock Johnson IV trainings. 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 2014-2015 school year to provide high quality, local, caring and responsive programs and services. Our collaborative remains a stable and ongoing concern. Over the 2014-2015 fiscal year FLLAC was able to realize a gain of over \$309,000 which will be added to the collaborative fund balance on approval of the Board. Details of our financials are included in our annual Audited Report for FY 2015.

FLLAC made a concerted effort to increase career education and exploration opportunities for our students in both the Caldwell Alternative and ASD/DD programs. Transportation to and from job sites and job site development were handled by our Career Education Teacher at Caldwell Alternative and by our Community Experience Coordinator in the ASD/DD Program. Students worked at local job sites, attended college information sessions and visited a range of community/vocational resources over the course of the year.

FLLAC managed two grants from the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), a full time Data Specialist for the Central MA District and School Assistance Center (DSAC) and an Early Childhood Literacy grant. We will continue to work with DESE to implement and manage appropriate grants. We expect that the Early Childhood Literacy Grant will be continued into the 2015-2016 school year.

FLLAC programs have remained relatively stable in terms of space during the 2014-2015 year with public school classrooms in Ayer-Shirley and in Clinton. Our two public day programs, Caldwell Alternative and Caldwell Elementary, have adequate space. FLLAC worked with the Fitchburg Public Schools to ensure that the leaking roof at our Caldwell Alternative School was replaced. We also installed new doors, improved the landscaping around the building and upgraded the phone system. FLLAC is working with the City of Fitchburg and community organizations to tear down and replace an aging play structure located next to our Caldwell School and plans to install a camera and buzzer system and additional security features in the building.

We were 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 has an agreement with the Lunenburg Public Schools to remain in the Passios Building through the end of June 2016. FLLAC will begin looking for a new location for this program if the Town of Lunenburg cannot extend this agreement during the 2015-2016 school year.

The FLLAC Collaborative and the CAPS Collaborative continue to work together to meet regional needs. FLLAC is currently subleasing from and sharing office and professional development space with CAPS in Westminster. The shared professional development space allowed CAPS and FLLAC to offer trainings and host meetings and trainings for affiliated groups including the regional DSAC Principals Group, the Regional Special Education Parent Advisory Group and the Educational Team Leaders working group. We anticipate that we will be able to increase the capacity of the individual organizations to continue our PD efforts by pooling resources, sharing jobs and fostering ongoing communication and

planning. FLLAC and CAPS continued to share an Information and Instructional Technology Specialist who assisted both organizations with data management and instructional and assistive technology.

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 was 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 over the course of the summer in 2015. FLLAC worked with the SHINE Initiative of Central MA to obtain a \$2000 grant to fund the Mental Health First Aid train the trainer program. FLLAC also hired a psychiatrist, Dr. Kerry Wilkins, to observe and consult to the FLLAC Caldwell and Caldwell Alternative programs and provide professional development to staff from FLLAC, CAPS and districts. Dr. Wilkins has a strong interest in working with schools and indicated that she could be available to individual FLLAC districts to consult directly with district staff.

The Wachusett Regional Schools withdrew from FLLAC at the end of the 2014-2015 school, citing a desire to create more in-house programs for their students. Wachusett continues to send students to FLLAC and plans to continue to utilize our related services and ABA tutor.

As an educational service agency we constantly face new challenges, however, with our caring, diligent and dedicated staff, our supportive boards and continued support from our families and school committees, I feel FLLAC will be able to expand 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 the collaboratives need for stable and adequate space and to develop new supports and services to meet the needs of an increasingly complex student population. We are, and strive to remain, able and available “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. Throughout the 2014-2015 school year we provided excellent services to students in the least restrictive environment while always seeking to return students to their home districts whenever possible. 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 our students and our member school districts.

Richard W. Murphy, Ph.D.
Executive Director