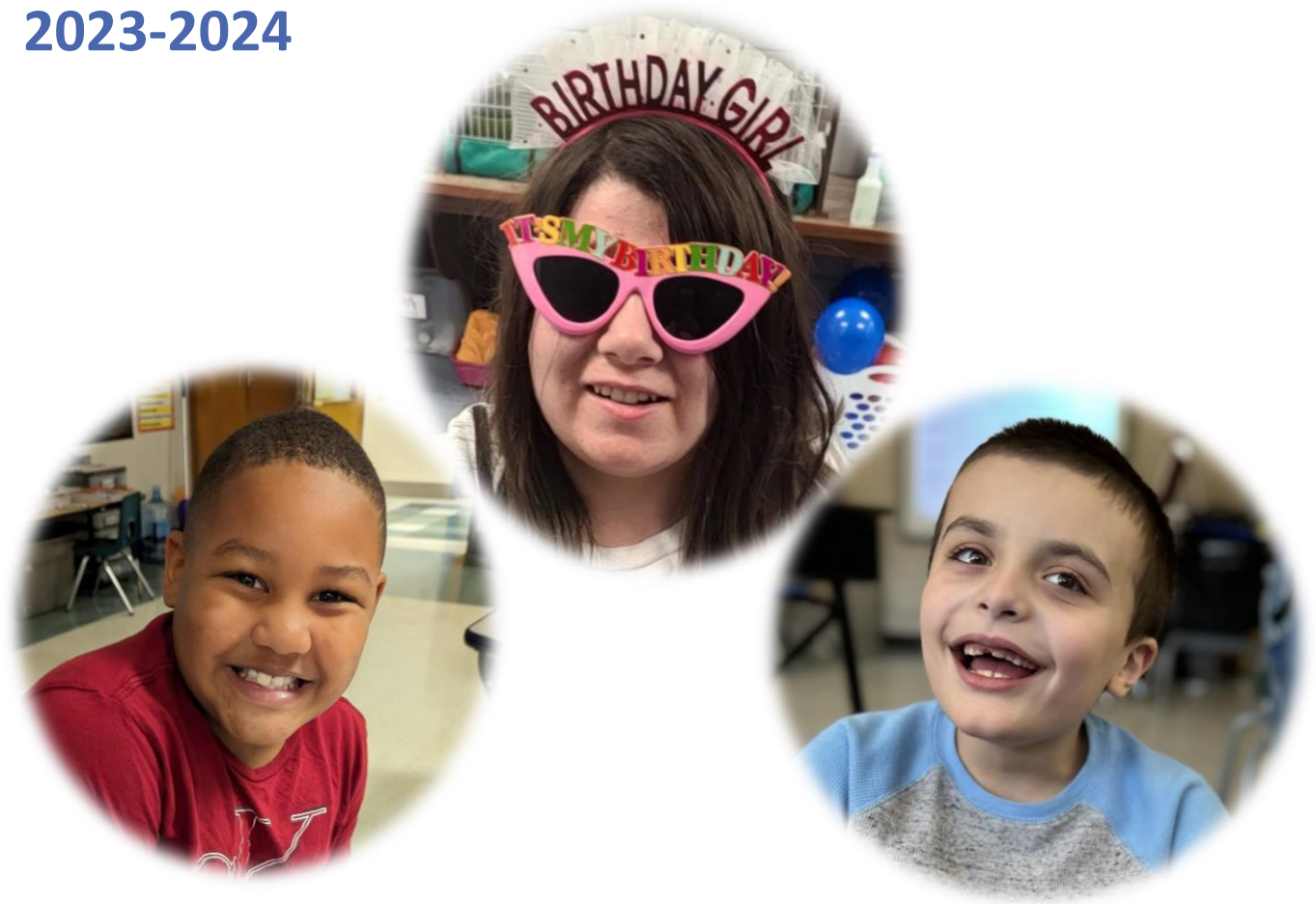




South Coast Educational Collaborative

**ANNUAL REPORT
2023-2024**



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This report was produced by leadership team members Linda Cullen, Bethany DeNardo and Lisa Martiesian

Message from the Executive Director

The FY2024 Annual Report for South Coast Educational Collaborative (SCEC) covers the period of time beginning on July 1, 2023, and ending on June 30, 2024 (FY24). Although it is submitted to fulfill all the legal requirements that apply to educational collaboratives in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, it is also intended to recognize the accomplishments of the SCEC Board of Directors, students, families, and staff.

During 2024, the entire SCEC educational community continued implementing its 2023-2028 Strategic Plan. With input from the entire SCEC educational community, the SCEC Board of Directors fashioned, approved, published, and began implementing the plan in 2023. A major throughline in the Strategic Plan is that the sustainability of SCEC as being driven by student enrollment and an ongoing organizational commitment to Deeper Learning that enables students and staff to become changemakers in their communities and in our world.

The SCEC Board of Directors welcomed the SCEC partnership with the Regional Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) of Southcoast Massachusetts to provide training and support for families. As a result, SCEC families are now part of a network of trainers and families from throughout the catchment area.

SCEC has benefited from DESE's expansion of programs to include more grant opportunities for educational collaboratives. SCEC was awarded three grants to support student achievement and success during FY24. Grant funds were used to purchase a new Civics curriculum, purchase chromebooks for student use, train educators on the new Massachusetts Individual Educational Plan (IEP), and secure a partnership with Collaborative Problem Solving's Think:Kids program. The goal of Think:Kids is reducing and/or eliminating the use of time-out rooms. Additionally, all SCEC students in Grades K-5 benefited from a new math curriculum that was purchased and implemented with grant funds during FY24.

During FY24, SCEC students continued to achieve at high levels due to the ongoing implementation of deeper learning pedagogy and an organizational commitment to Health and Wellness. Deeper learning accomplishments included dedicating monthly deeper learning planning time for all SCEC staff and introduction of the Deeper Learning Hub, a website that is accessible to all SCEC employees and provides programs with sample deeper learning lesson plans, videos, and training materials. SCEC continued its commitment to families with ongoing expansion of the Family Partnership Network to all SCEC programs, thus developing a network of caregiver support that ultimately functions independently and beyond the scope of the school day.

I trust that the readers of this document will obtain a thorough overview of the mosaic of services that make SCEC the vibrant educational community that its members appreciate and respect. If readers are interested in learning more about our collaborative and/or visiting our programs, please contact me. It would be a pleasure to assist you.

Sincerely,



David R Heimbecker, EdD
Executive Director
drh@scecoll.org

Highlights from the 2023-2024 School Year

- ❖ SCEC implemented a new math curriculum for all students in Grades K-5.
- ❖ SCEC partnered with the Regional SEPAC of Southcoast Massachusetts to provide training and support for SCEC families.
- ❖ SCEC was awarded three grants to support student achievement and success. Grant funds were used to purchase a new Civics curriculum, purchase Chromebooks for student use, train educators on the new Massachusetts IEP, and secure a partnership with Collaborative Problem Solving/Think:Kids with the goal of reducing and/or eliminating the use of time-out rooms.
- ❖ The SCEC IEP Implementation Team provided in-depth training on the new Massachusetts IEP. SCEC hosted 3 half-day professional development sessions during winter and spring 2024 to train all SCEC staff.



South Coast Educational Collaborative

Our History

The South Coast Educational Collaborative (SCEC) was established in 1974 (known then as Cooperative Production Collaborative) with its original member school districts of Berkley, Dighton, Dighton-Rehoboth Regional, Seekonk and Swansea. SCEC began with one program, providing educational services to a group of students with low incidence special needs who previously did not receive any educational services. Somerset School District was welcomed as a new member in 1984, followed by the Freetown Lakeville Regional School District (2007), Somerset-Berkley Regional School District and Taunton Public Schools (2014), Dartmouth Public Schools (2019), New Bedford Public Schools and Westport Community Schools (2020), and Fall River Public Schools (2022).

Through the years, legislative actions and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) policies acted to strengthen and incentivize Massachusetts collaboratives to move from single purpose entities to full-service organizations. South Coast Educational Collaborative followed this trend by increasing and expanding its level of services in special education, general education support to public school districts, professional learning, clinical and therapeutic consultant resources, technology, family support, and partnerships with institutions of higher learning.

South Coast Educational Collaborative Agreement

The South Coast Educational Collaborative Agreement, updated as required by amendments to M.G.L. c. 40, § 4E and regulations 603 C.M.R. 50.00, was approved by the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education effective July 1, 2022. As per the SCEC Agreement, the Board of Directors is comprised of one superintendent from each member school district as well as an appointee by the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education. The executive director, or designee, acts as executive secretary to the Board, which meets at least six times annually. The Board members elect a chairperson and a vice-chairperson at the first Board meeting of each fiscal year. In 2013-2014, the Board appointed a DESE licensed Business Manager, as well as a Treasurer, both of whom have continued in their positions. All Board meetings are posted and conducted in accordance with the Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. c. 30A, Secs. 18-25 and the open meeting regulations, 940 CMR Sec. 29.00.

Mission Statement

To cooperatively develop and deliver high quality, cost effective, value-added, and sustainable education, professional development, technical assistance, and resources for students, families, educators, school districts, partner organizations, and communities that increase educational opportunities for children ages 3 through 22, improve educational outcomes for students, and are grounded in our core values and appropriate research-based content and best practice.

Purpose

To provide intensive education programs and services for students with disabilities; to provide professional development to educators; to provide related services to students with disabilities in member and participating districts, and to provide other high quality cost effective services to meet the changing needs of member districts.

Objectives

1. To improve the academic achievement of students with low incidence disabilities in the least restrictive environment.
2. To offer a variety of quality professional development opportunities to general and special education teachers, administrators and related service providers.
3. To provide all programs and services in a cost effective, value-added and sustainable manner.

Core Values

We believe that:

- Our ultimate goal is to enable students to become changemakers who engage the world and change the world by participating and contributing as fully as possible in the communities and the world in which they live and to begin planning upon admission for transitioning to their home, school, community or adulthood.
- Deeper learning is at the heart of everything we do.
- Wellness is essential for deeper learning. It is an active, on-going process for staff and students of becoming aware of and making choices toward a healthy and fulfilling life.
- Mutual respect, reflection, and collaboration are expected and infused into all partnerships.
- The family unit and the family-school partnership are essential factors in supporting and sustaining a student's wellness, learning and development.
- Cultural diversity enriches and enhances all members of South Coast Educational Collaborative.
- South Coast Educational Collaborative is a reflective learning community for students and their families, educators, stakeholders, and the Board of Directors.
- Leveraging digital enhances our pedagogy, learning partnerships, and our work and learning environments.
- Our productivity, especially team productivity, means exceeding expectations, increasing team efficiency, and enhancing individual team members' wellness and professional growth.
- Teams are best supported when they have compelling direction, the materials and resources they need, a work environment that supports wellness, collaboration, inquiry, and innovation, incentives for excellent team performance, and targeted professional learning and coaching.
- To sustain our work, we need to be forward thinking, proactively seeking and implementing new ways and opportunities to help staff and students be well and grow.
- Respect for the natural environment and effective environmental stewardship practices are reflected in our daily operations and in the design and delivery of our products and services. Staff are crucial partners in achieving and sustaining our environmental goals.



Governance and Leadership

Board of Directors

- ❖ Jeffrey Schoonover, Board Chairperson and Superintendent, Somerset Public Schools and Somerset Berkley Regional School District
- ❖ John Cabral, Board Vice Chair and Superintendent, Taunton Public Schools
- ❖ Melissa Ryan, Superintendent, Berkley Public Schools
- ❖ June Saba-Maguire, Superintendent, Dartmouth Public Schools
- ❖ Bill Runey, Superintendent, Dighton-Rehoboth Regional School District
- ❖ Maria Pontes, Superintendent, Fall River Public Schools
- ❖ Alan Strauss, Superintendent, Freetown Lakeville Regional School District
- ❖ Andrew O’Leary, Superintendent, New Bedford Public Schools
- ❖ Rebecca Kidwell, Superintendent, Seekonk Public Schools
- ❖ John Robidoux, Superintendent, Swansea Public Schools
- ❖ Thomas Aubin, Superintendent, Westport Community Schools

Board Employees

- ❖ David R Heimbecker, EdD, Executive Director
- ❖ Joseph Delude, Treasurer
- ❖ Jennifer Prendergast, MEd, Director of Finance

Associate Executive Directors

- ❖ Jennifer Faria, EdD
- ❖ Lisa Martiesian, EdM, MEd
- ❖ Carolyn McKearney, EdD

Member Districts

- ❖ Berkley Public Schools
- ❖ Dartmouth Public Schools
- ❖ Dighton-Rehoboth Regional School District
- ❖ Fall River Public Schools
- ❖ Freetown Lakeville Regional School District
- ❖ New Bedford Public Schools
- ❖ Seekonk Public Schools
- ❖ Somerset Public Schools
- ❖ Somerset Berkley Regional School District
- ❖ Swansea Public Schools
- ❖ Taunton Public Schools
- ❖ Westport Community Schools

Day School Programs

All South Coast Educational Collaborative (SCEC) programs focus on high quality instruction with the goal of maximizing student outcomes. Classrooms employ evidence-based, culturally responsive practices that incorporate the deeper learning pedagogy. In addition to academics, students receive instruction in functional life skills, language, socialization, independent living, recreation and leisure activities. Social-emotional well-being and student self-regulation are a major focus in every program, as is the role of parents/guardians as contributing members of each student’s educational team.

Students throughout SCEC participate in inclusionary instruction and activities, whether within district classrooms or community settings. This instruction is vital to support the students’ transitional skill development as well as their generalization and internalization of learned skills. SCEC’s inclusionary classrooms are located in eight public school settings across Massachusetts’ south coast region. These inclusionary programs are a less restrictive alternative to a private school or public day school setting. Students enrolled in inclusionary programs may attend core academics, music, arts and/or physical education classes with their general education peers, as well as join their peers during lunch, assemblies or after-school sports and activities.

Experiences in the community are an essential component of the curriculum at every SCEC site. Students in every SCEC program participate in community-based opportunities that support the learning objectives in each student’s educational program. These experiences help students become contributing members in their own school, home, neighborhood, or other community setting.

South Coast Educational Collaborative Day School Programs
Inclusionary Programs
Berkley Elementary School Berkley Middle School Bishop Connolly High School Freetown Elementary School George R Austin Intermediate School Palmer River Elementary School Gallishaw High School at Seekonk High School South Coast Middle Alternative School
Public Day School Programs
Seekonk North K-5 205 days Seekonk North K-5 220 days Seekonk North 6-8 205 days Seekonk North 6-8 220 days Gallishaw High School
Community-Based Program (ages 18-22)
LIFE Academy

Transition planning, whether it is back to the student’s district school or to post-secondary life, is a key component of the education for every student throughout their academic career at SCEC. It is the goal of every SCEC program to prepare students to transition back into their own public school district with support from the SCEC team as needed to ensure the student’s success. As students approach age 14, transition planning becomes more formalized and intensive. Focus is placed on preparing students for life after public education as necessary for success in today’s society. Instruction expands to include positive work habits and independent living skills. Each student’s independence is maximized as needed to produce their best outcome, whether it is paid employment, higher education and/or being an active and contributing member of the community in which they live.

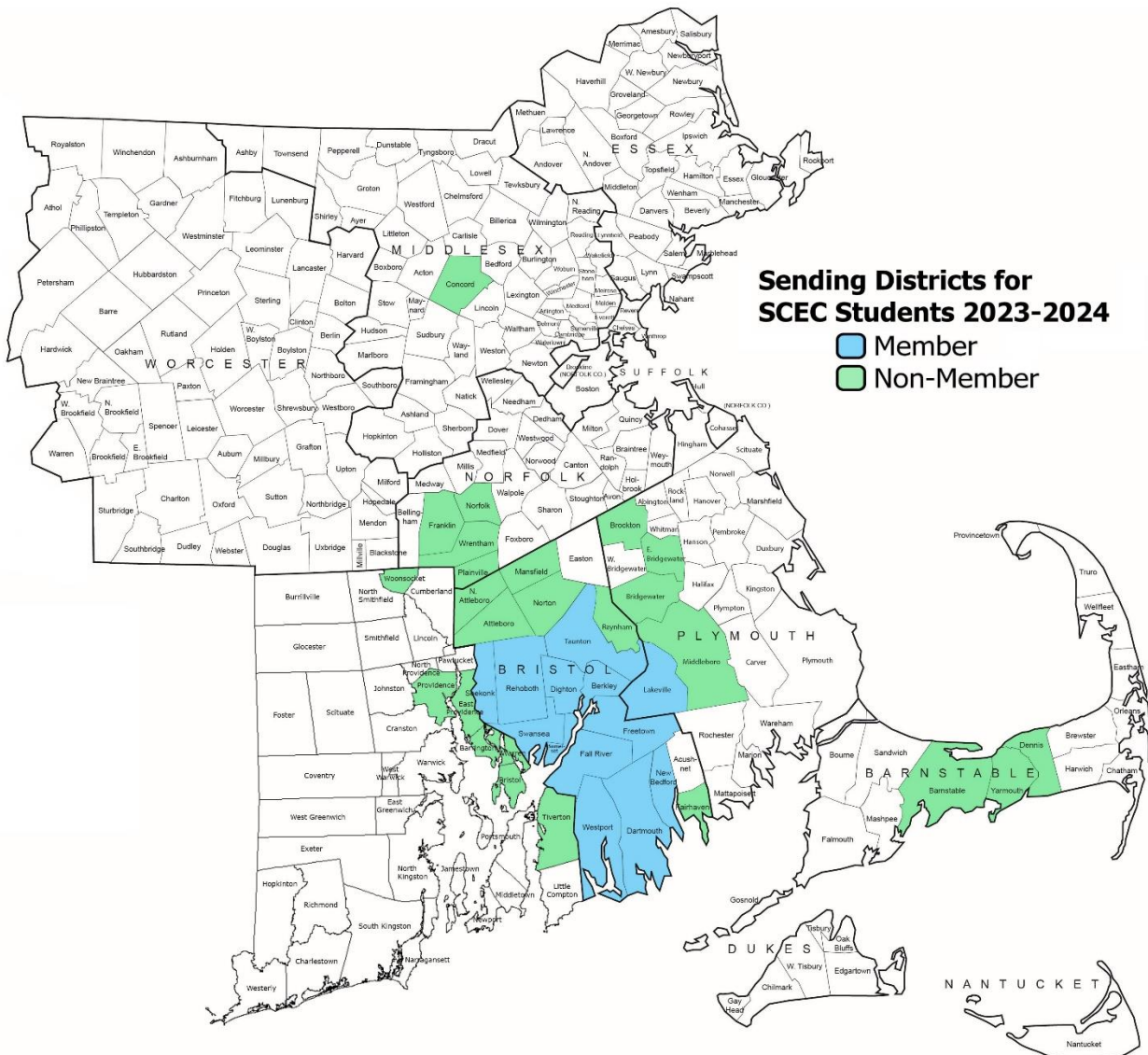
Deeper Learning

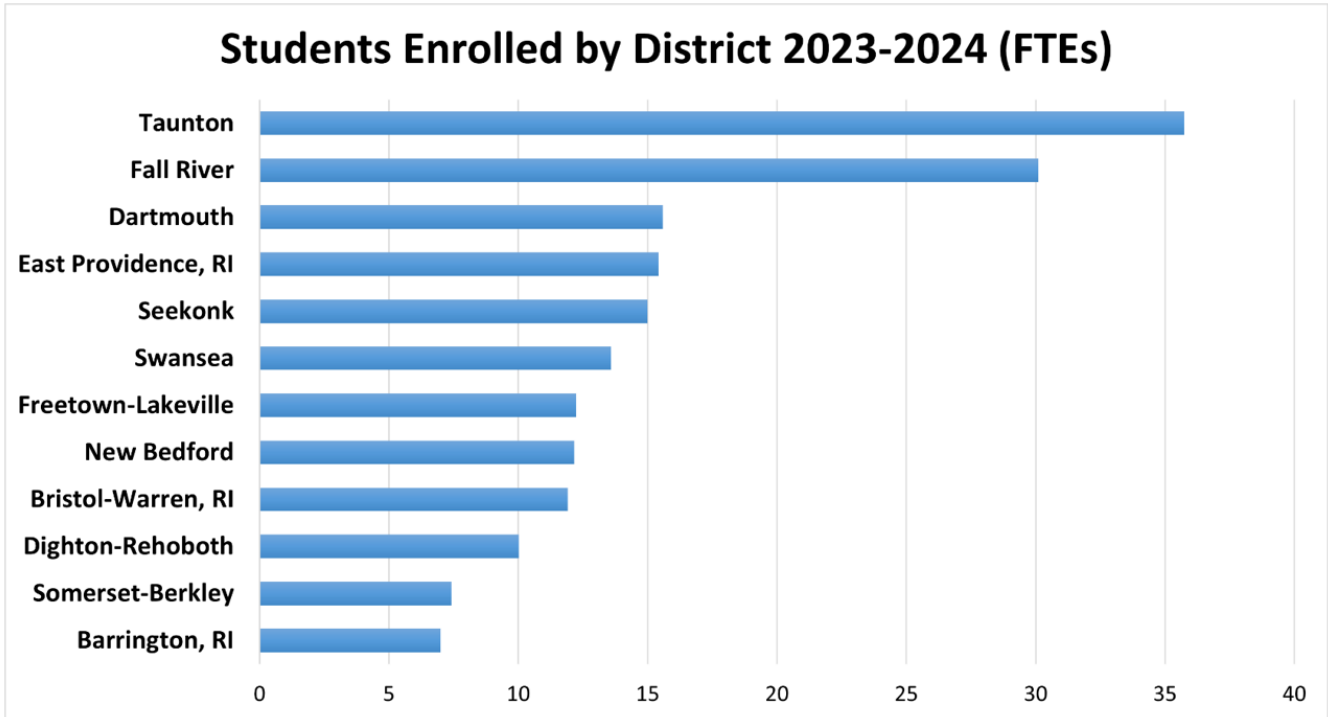
Deeper learning is at the heart of everything we do at SCEC and is one of the drivers for success in the 2023-2028 SCEC Strategic Plan. The deeper learning framework focuses on four elements: Pedagogical Practices, Learning Environments, Learning Partnerships, and Leveraging Digital. This framework encourages mastery in six global competencies: Character, Citizenship, Collaboration, Communication, Creativity, and Critical Thinking. As an organization, SCEC believes that deeper learning allows

students with special needs to contribute to the common good, address global challenges, and flourish in a complex world. SCEC believes that it is essential to engage student voices as co-designers of their education, and to make connections with students, families, and members of the community.

Cultural Responsiveness

SCEC is committed to implementing culturally responsive educational programming that focuses on access, equity, inclusion and belonging for all students. Cultural responsiveness is an organizational priority and is a driver for success in the 2023-2028 SCEC Strategic Plan. This work ensures that our diverse student population, which includes students with disabilities who are racially diverse, socio-economically diverse, and linguistically diverse, is provided access to opportunities that develop the knowledge and skills needed to fully engage with the academic and social-emotional content of instruction while using this knowledge to develop the competencies required to be well-rounded, healthy, and productive members of society.





Districts with fewer than five students each: Attleboro; Barnstable; Berkley; Bridgewater-Raynham; Brockton; Concord; Dennis-Yarmouth; East Bridgewater; Fairhaven; Franklin; King Philip; Mansfield; Middleboro; North Attleboro; Norton; Plainville; Providence, RI; Somerset; Tiverton, RI; Westport; Woonsocket, RI

Curriculum

SCEC classrooms have high standards for academics that are aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. The curriculum is modified and adapted on an individual student basis to ensure that each student is participating in standards-based learning. This includes programming that focuses on access, equity, and inclusion for all students. SCEC English Language Arts (ELA) curricula are HMH Into Reading for grades K-5 (implemented SY2023), Amplify for grades 6-8 (implemented SY2023), and McGraw-Hill’s StudySync for grades 9-12 (implemented SY2024). SCEC purchased a new elementary math curriculum, HMH Into Math, in SY2024, and received a grant to purchase a new civics curriculum with the goal of enhancing student outcomes with the introduction of the Grade 8 Civics MCAS.

Our Educators

All SCEC programs are staffed by highly qualified interdisciplinary teams that are comprised of educators, related service providers, clinicians, nurses and paraprofessionals who work together to ensure optimal educational experiences for each student. All members of the team participate in program planning, including team meetings, curriculum implementation and transition planning. Best practices are further supported through routine consultation and technical assistance from a network of consultants with different areas of expertise. These consultants include a developmental pediatrician, behaviorists, and clinical psychologists who further augment the services provided to each student at no additional cost to districts.

School Health

All SCEC programs have a School Nurse who interacts with three major systems affecting all of our students: education, health, and public health. SCEC recognizes that a student-centered approach is necessary, and the nurses at SCEC pride themselves on being part of a multidisciplinary team that shares in the responsibility of increasing and improving educational opportunities for all students. Our School Health Services are grounded in SCEC’s core values as well as appropriate research-based content and best practice.

Family Partnerships

SCEC believes that family-school collaboration is essential in supporting student learning and development. The Family Partnership Network provides continuity of services between the classroom, home, and community settings to develop a network of caregiver support that ultimately functions independently and beyond the scope of the school day. The Family Partnership Network offers services to students and their families at all SCEC program locations. Caregivers meet periodically with members of the student’s classroom-based team and other identified support personnel, which may include the SCEC clinical psychologist consultant, the SCEC developmental pediatrician, and any outpatient professionals and/or family support service agencies working with the student. These meetings address the global needs of the student and their family by establishing specific goals and individualized action plans. Ongoing meetings offer opportunities for reflection, feedback, and revision of action plans as needed. By supporting family stability, regulation, and social connectedness, the Family Partnership Network strives to provide the student with a solid foundation for achievement and success.

SCEC established a partnership with the regional Southcoast Massachusetts Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) during the 2023-2024 school year. The regional SEPAC offered services and support to all SCEC students, regardless of the student’s home district. The regional SEPAC met monthly during the school year and offered rich programming to support families, including parents’ rights training, a dyslexia workshop, IEP binder workshops, and training on the new IEP. All SEPAC meetings were hybrid, so SCEC families were able to attend either in person or via Zoom, which helped to overcome geographic barriers that could have impeded participation.

Day Program Enrollment Totals 2023-2024	
Total Students Enrolled (FTEs)	223
Enrollment – Member Districts (FTEs)	161
Enrollment – Participating Districts (FTEs)	62
Total Students Enrolled during 2023-2024	282

Enrollment by Levels (FTEs) 2023-2024	
Elementary Level	68
Middle School Level	60
High School Level	71
Ages 18-22	24
TOTAL	223

Cost Effectiveness of Day School Programs

South Coast Educational Collaborative (SCEC) day school programs offer uniquely intensive educational environments for students who are currently unable to have their educational needs met within their district community schools. Educational collaboratives are designed to provide high quality services to students in a more cost effective way than if the district had to create the programs and services on their own. Through the concept of economies of scale, collaboratives combine the resources of school districts to create programs that are needed by multiple districts. All of the programs and services at SCEC have been structured to meet the needs of our students and districts in the most cost effective way possible. During the 2023-2024 school year, students enrolled in SCEC classrooms came from 33 different school districts throughout Massachusetts and Rhode Island. By bringing together students from multiple communities, particularly those with low incidence disabilities and highly-specialized needs, SCEC provided a comparatively low cost option for school districts.

District Savings on Tuition

When a student requires an out-of-district placement, school districts typically consider both SCEC day school programs and private special education day school placements. SCEC student tuition is offered to local school districts at a substantially reduced rate as compared to private special education day schools. Member school districts receive further reductions in tuition, resulting in enhanced cost savings. In order to quantify the cost effectiveness of SCEC day school programs, tuition was compared between SCEC day school programs and private special education day schools in our geographic region that offer comparable educational services for students with similar needs. Private special education school tuitions were taken from the Massachusetts’ Operational Services Division Authorized Prices for Special Education Programs for FY2024. The average daily rate for each SCEC program and/or private day school program was multiplied by 180 days to establish an equivalent tuition across programs and sites regardless of the number of days of operation. The total cost savings to all districts combined using this model is over \$8 million dollars per year, as illustrated in the following table:

School District Savings on Tuition FY2024					
<i>District Type</i>	<i>Number of Students Enrolled</i>	<i>Average SCEC Student Tuition¹</i>	<i>Comparison Private School Tuition^{1,2}</i>	<i>Annual District Savings per Student</i>	<i>Total District Savings FY2024</i>
Member Districts	161	\$64,067	\$105,212	\$41,145	\$6,624,345
Participant Districts	62	\$71,125	\$105,212	\$34,087	\$2,113,394
Total district savings FY2024					\$8,737,739

¹ Tuition for all programs and comparison schools was annualized to a 180-day school year

² A list of the private schools used for comparison will be provided upon request

The tuition at each SCEC day school program, for both member and participant school districts, was substantially less than private day school tuition in all cases, as outlined in the following table:

Annualized Tuition Comparison FY2024			
SCEC Programs vs Comparable Private Schools			
<i>SCEC Day School Program</i>	<i>Member District Tuition¹ (180 days)</i>	<i>Participant District Tuition¹ (180 days)</i>	<i>Average Tuition of Comparison Schools^{1,2} (180 days)</i>
Berkley Elementary <i>Inclusionary Site</i>	\$70,020	\$79,020	\$109,860
Freetown Elementary <i>Inclusionary Site</i>	\$64,800	\$73,620	\$93,600
Palmer River Elementary <i>Inclusionary Site</i>	\$65,340	\$74,160	\$109,860
Seekonk North K-5 205 days <i>Public Day Site</i>	\$61,020	\$71,820	\$93,600
Seekonk North K-5 220 days <i>Public Day Site</i>	\$63,180	\$68,760	\$98,685
George R Austin Intermediate School <i>Inclusionary Site</i>	\$64,800	\$73,620	\$114,960
Berkley Middle School <i>Inclusionary Site</i>	\$67,320	\$72,720	\$101,580
South Coast Middle Alternative School <i>Inclusionary Site</i>	\$62,640	\$68,220	\$99,840
Seekonk North 6-8 205 days <i>Public Day Site</i>	\$62,460	\$67,860	\$89,760
Seekonk North 6-8 220 days <i>Public Day Site</i>	\$64,080	\$69,480	\$109,380
Bishop Connolly High School <i>Inclusionary Site</i>	\$61,380	\$66,960	\$138,420
Gallishaw High School <i>Public Day Site</i>	\$61,740	\$68,580	\$100,590
Seekonk High School <i>Inclusionary Site</i>	\$60,300	\$66,780	\$82,260
LIFE Academy <i>Community Site</i>	\$67,860	\$74,160	\$130,572

1. Tuition for all programs and comparison schools was annualized to a 180-day school year
2. A list of the private schools that were used for comparison will be provided upon request

Special Education Programs: Authorized Prices Fiscal Year 2024, data accessed from Commonwealth of Massachusetts Operational Services Division website on 10/09/2024.

Value-Added Settings

SCEC inclusionary sites are a value-added service for districts. Our inclusionary sites are able to provide the educational expertise, staffing, equipment, related services and inclusion opportunities for students while they remain within the less restrictive public school setting. The alternative private school placement for these students would typically be located in a special education facility that does not allow for inclusion opportunities on a daily basis. SCEC public day school classrooms are often a viable alternative to a private special education school setting for students with significant disabilities, as well as an alternative to a residential placement for those students in the custody of the Department of Children and Families (DCF) who also have a significant disability.

Value-Added Services

SCEC tuition includes a wide array of specialized student services, resulting in a significant overall reduction in cost to the sending district. Tuition rates are simplified and all-inclusive; they eliminate “a-la-carte” pricing for services that can add up for sending school districts. Services included in tuition at SCEC during FY2024 are outlined in the following table:

Services Included in SCEC Tuition		
Adapted physical education	Family Partnership Network	Reading specialist
Applied behavioral analysis	Job coaching	School health services
Career exploration	Job development	Sensory programs
Clinical psychology services	Nursing services	Social work services
Developmental pediatrician	Occupational therapy	Speech language therapy
District consultation services	Parent and family education	Therapeutic counseling services
English Language Learner	Physical therapy	Transition assessment and services

SCEC provides an interim alternative education setting for students through the 45-Day Placement Program. This is an important and cost effective strategy for school districts. All SCEC programs offer 45-day placement as a support and resource for local school districts. This program allows for a short-term evaluation period for students who have experienced significant difficulties within their public school setting despite multiple interventions. The student’s education continues seamlessly throughout this placement, which provides the student with academic instruction, behavior stabilization strategies and therapeutic support. During the 45-day period, evaluations are conducted, data is collected, and information is compiled from the sending school district, the student’s family, and any other providers involved with the student’s care. At the end of the 45-day placement, a written assessment outlines the recommendations, which may include, but are not limited to, therapeutic intervention techniques, behavioral supports, and an educational placement recommendation for the student to be successful in the least restrictive environment. The daily rate of the 45-Day Placement Program at SCEC includes all specialist evaluations and/or related services requested by the sending school district during the placement, including neuropsychological testing. By providing these services in one location and at one low fixed rate, SCEC allows districts to receive the information they need at a cost that is much less than if they were provided in district or at specialty care centers.

Special Education Day School Programs for Students with Disabilities ELEMENTARY LEVEL

BERKLEY ELEMENTARY ~ Berkley Community School ~ Berkley, MA
PALMER RIVER ELEMENTARY ~ Palmer River Elementary School ~ Rehoboth, MA

Lisa Martiesian, EdM, MEd
SCEC Associate Executive Director
lmartiesian@scecoll.org

South Coast Educational Collaborative (SCEC) offers three structured classroom learning environments for students in preschool through grade 5 located in two public elementary schools. These 220-day programs offer comprehensive services to students with low incidence disabilities whose challenges currently preclude them from being fully included in an elementary school. Diagnoses include, but are not limited to, cognitive, communication, emotional and behavioral concerns, developmental delays and/or medical needs. Our goal is to prepare students to transition back into their district schools, as well as be integral members of their community.

Comprehensive academic, behavioral and therapeutic services focus on developing academic, communication and social-emotional skills for each student. Each student's program is individualized and based on his/her Individualized Education Program (IEP), with curriculum aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Instruction is provided either individually or in small groups with a low staff to student ratio of 1:2. Families are invited to be part of the Family Partnership Network which extends support beyond the school day and fosters productive student and family engagement.

This Year's Accomplishments

- ✓ The SCEC program at Palmer River Elementary provided services to 12 students during the 2023-2024 school year.
- ✓ The SCEC program at the Berkley Community School provided services to 6 students during the 2023-2024 school year.
- ✓ An SCEC student participated fully in a Kindergarten special with general education peers at Palmer River Elementary School.
- ✓ Two students from SCEC participated fully in a 2nd grade special with their general education peers at Berkley Community School.
- ✓ The SCEC Berkley Elementary and GRAIS programs collaborated over a multi-week period via Zoom. The students from GRAIS taught the students from Berkley about hedgehogs.



FREETOWN ELEMENTARY ~ Freetown Elementary School ~ Freetown, MA
GEORGE R AUSTIN INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL ~ George R Austin Intermediate ~ Lakeville, MA

Lisa Martiesian, EdM, MEd
SCEC Associate Executive Director
lmartiesian@scecoll.org

South Coast Educational Collaborative (SCEC) has two highly structured inclusionary classrooms for students who present with social-emotional challenges. Students in Kindergarten through grade 3 attend the Freetown Elementary School (FES) and students in grades 4 and 5 attend the George R Austin Intermediate School (GRAIS). Both programs are in session 205-days per year and students are supported by a 1:2 staff to student ratio. Our mission is to offer supported transition opportunities that develop student success across educational environments.

These programs provide the opportunity for students with moderate emotional disabilities to attend a highly specialized program within a district setting. Students with more significant emotional disabilities coming from a public or private day school setting have the opportunity to be in a less restrictive environment based on their readiness. Comprehensive academic, social-emotional and therapeutic services focus on developing academic and social-emotional skills for each student. Each student's program is individualized and based on his/her IEP, with curriculum aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Instruction is provided either individually or in small groups. Every student has the opportunity for inclusion in the general elementary setting with the proper support. Families are invited to be part of the Family Partnership Network which extends support beyond the school day and fosters productive student and family engagement.



This Year's Accomplishments

- ✓ The SCEC program at FES provided services to 9 students during the 2023-2024 school year.
- ✓ The SCEC program at GRAIS provided services to 6 students during the 2023-2024 school year.
- ✓ At FES, the students participated fully in both 3rd grade music and art and participated in the end of the year school-wide concert and art show with their general education peers.
- ✓ At FES, the students participated in the school-wide Poem in a Pocket Day with their general education peers.
- ✓ At GRAIS, the students participated fully in both 4th and 5th grade specials and participated in the end of the year school-wide concerts with their general education peers
- ✓ The SCEC GRAIS and Berkley Elementary programs collaborated over a multi-week period via Zoom. GRAIS students created a unit on hedgehogs and presented the unit to the Berkley students.

SEEKONK NORTH K-5 (205 days) ~ North School ~ Seekonk, MA
SEEKONK NORTH K-5 (220 days) ~ North School ~ Seekonk, MA

Kate Murphy, MA, CAGS
Special Education Administrator
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South Coast Educational Collaborative's (SCEC) Seekonk North Elementary School is an approved public special education day school that provides comprehensive educational and therapeutic services to students in grades Kindergarten through 5 who have had difficulties participating in a general education setting. Seekonk North Elementary School offers two curricular strands, a 205-day program and a 220-day program, each serving a unique population of students. All students are engaged in meaningful and therapeutic instruction aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and supported by deeper learning pedagogy.

205-Day Program

The 205-day program is for students whose social-emotional and behavioral challenges currently preclude successful participation in a public school setting. Our goal is to develop academic and social-emotional growth through specialized academic instruction, counseling, positive behavioral supports, and brain-based therapeutic techniques so that students can successfully transition to a less restrictive educational setting. These classrooms have an average enrollment of 8 to 10 students, with a 1:3 staff to student ratio.

220-Day Program

The 220-day program serves students with diagnoses of Autism Spectrum Disorder, moderate to severe cognitive impairments, sensory processing and communication impairments, neuromotor deficits and/or medical and psychiatric needs. The desired outcome of instruction is increased capability in self-regulation, social skills, functional academic, life skills, communication and cognitive development, with the goal of placement in a less restrictive school setting. These classrooms have an average enrollment of 8 to 10 students, and students are provided with a 1:2 staff to student ratio.

This Year's Accomplishments

- ✓ The Seekonk North K-5 programs provided services to 44 students during the 2023-2024 school year.
- ✓ Students collaborated to write and publish a book on kindness, entitled *The ABC's of Us*. The students commemorated their achievement with a book publishing celebration.
- ✓ One deeper learning initiative implemented during the school year included a unit on community helpers. By focusing on community helpers and specifically diving into the operations of the US Postal Service, students gained a real world understanding of how essential services work. The opportunity to explore mail processing and delivery provided them with real insights into logistics, communication, and the role of postal workers in our community. The unit concluded with a tour of a US Postal facility.
- ✓ Students participated in community building events such as spirit weeks and building-wide summer activities.

MIDDLE SCHOOL LEVEL

BERKLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL ~ Berkley Middle School ~ Berkley, MA

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South Coast Educational Collaborative (SCEC) offers a structured learning environment for students in grades 6 through 8 within the inclusionary setting of the Berkley Middle School (BMS). This program serves students with moderate to severe disabilities that interfere with their success in a general education classroom. The students' needs frequently arise from diagnoses of Autism Spectrum Disorder, neuromotor deficits, communication impairments, medical needs, and/or social-emotional challenges. Each small, highly structured classroom has a 220-day school year and students participate in inclusion opportunities throughout BMS.

Our mission is to provide a middle school experience that focuses on the functional academic and transition skills necessary for success in today's society. This program offers a comprehensive, functional academic curriculum aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, as well as a pre-vocational skills component and all related therapeutic services. Developing work habits and skills is emphasized to increase student independence and prepare students for a successful transition to a high school setting. Related service providers and expert consultants work with educators in the classroom to ensure continuity of therapeutic support. Families are invited to be part of the Family Partnership Network which extends support beyond the school day and fosters productive student and family engagement.

This Year's Accomplishments

- ✓ The SCEC program at BMS provided services to 11 students during the 2023-2024 school year.
- ✓ SCEC students participated in unified sports and extracurricular activities with their general education peers, including basketball, bowling, and bocce.
- ✓ SCEC students participated in inclusion opportunities during health, art, music, and library classes with Berkley Middle School general education peers.
- ✓ Students participated in a Book Club with their classroom peers, where they embraced the deeper learning principles of student voice and choice. Students selected books and themes that interested them, and then used those books to learn new vocabulary and concepts. Students also shared their favorite books from home.



SEEKONK NORTH 6-8 (205 days) ~ North School ~ Seekonk, MA
SEEKONK NORTH 6-8 (220 days) ~ North School ~ Seekonk, MA

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South Coast Educational Collaborative's (SCEC) Seekonk North Middle School is an approved public special education day school that provides comprehensive educational and therapeutic services to students in grades 6 through 8 who have had difficulties participating in a general education setting. Seekonk North Middle School offers two curricular strands, a 205-day program and a 220-day program, each serving a unique population of students. All students are engaged in meaningful and therapeutic instruction aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and supported by deeper learning pedagogy.

205-Day Programs

The 205-day program is for students whose social-emotional and behavioral challenges currently preclude successful participation in a public school setting. Our goal is to develop academic and social-emotional growth through specialized academic instruction, counseling, positive behavioral supports, and brain-based therapeutic techniques so that students can successfully transition to a less restrictive educational setting. These classrooms have an average enrollment of 8 to 10 students, with a 1:3 staff to student ratio.

220-Day Programs

The 220-day program serves students with diagnoses of Autism Spectrum Disorder, moderate to severe cognitive impairments, sensory processing and communication impairments, neuromotor deficits and/or medical and psychiatric needs. The desired outcome of instruction is increased capability in self-regulation, social skills, functional academic, life skills, communication and cognitive development, with the goal of placement in a less restrictive school setting. These classrooms have an average enrollment of 8 to 10 students, and students are provided with a 1:2 staff to student ratio.

This Year's Accomplishments

- ✓ The Seekonk North 6-8 programs provided services to 44 students during the 2023-2024 school year.
- ✓ A deeper learning initiative evolved from student interest in learning about public transportation. Students learned about various types of public transportation by mapping out routes and planning day trips. They utilized public transportation to reach their destinations.
- ✓ Students focused on the deeper learning competency of Citizenship by exploring different cultures and sharing meals. Students not only gained knowledge about global diversity but also built understanding and respect for others. Cooking and sharing meals helped foster a sense of community and helped the students appreciate the values, traditions, and stories of various cultures, which is critical to being a responsible and inclusive citizen.
- ✓ Students participated in community building events such as spirit weeks and building-wide summer activities.

SOUTH COAST MIDDLE ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL ~ Somerset Middle School ~ Somerset, MA

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South Coast Educational Collaborative's (SCEC) South Coast Middle Alternative School (SCMAS) is located at Somerset Middle School. This 205-day program provides high quality educational and therapeutic services for students within the inclusionary setting of a public middle school. The SCMAS program serves students in grades 6-8 diagnosed with emotional disorders and/or other health impairments, such as Oppositional Defiant Disorder, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Mood Disorders, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, and Attention Deficit Disorder. This program provides opportunities for inclusion and supports students when they are ready to transition back to their own district.

Each SCMAS classroom has an average enrollment of 5 students with a 1:2 staff to student ratio. SCMAS provides therapeutic and academic support within a substantially separate environment tailored to the needs of individual students. When appropriate, students attend general education classes with the support of the SCMAS staff, who attend each inclusion class to provide academic and social-emotional support while following the student's IEP. The administration at Somerset Middle School welcomes and accommodates our students in general education classes and school-wide activities, including bullying prevention programming, high school preparation assemblies, after school clubs and school dances. The primary goal of this program is to develop student self-regulation skills as needed to allow students to participate in general education opportunities as much as possible.

This Year's Accomplishments

- ✓ SCMAS served a total of 15 students during the 2023-2024 school year. Of those 15 students, 4 students returned to their district schools for the 2024-2025 school year.
- ✓ Ten students attended inclusion classes at Somerset Middle School. Six students attended multiple classes.
- ✓ Five students joined their general education peers on the Unified bocce and basketball teams.
- ✓ Two students joined their general education peers on the 8th grade trip to Washington, D.C.



HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL

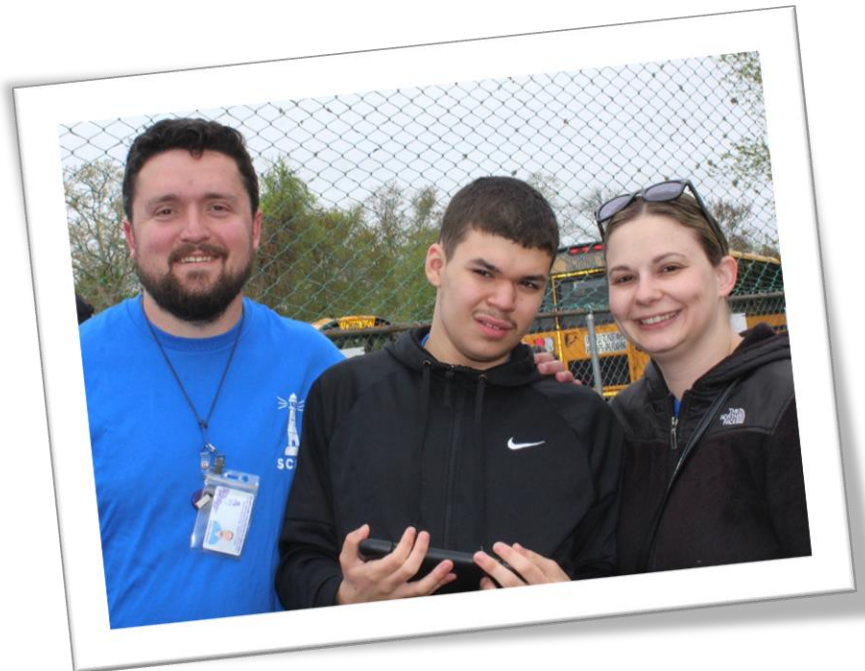
BISHOP CONNOLLY HIGH SCHOOL ~ Bishop Connolly High School ~ Fall River, MA

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South Coast Educational Collaborative's (SCEC) program at Bishop Connolly High School (BCHS) is an inclusionary program that aims to prepare students with moderate to severe disabilities to be productive citizens in their local communities. This 220-day program serves students in grades 9 through 12 with diagnoses such as Autism Spectrum Disorder, moderate to severe cognitive delays, sensory processing and communication challenges, neuromotor deficits and/or medical challenges. Transition programming is the cornerstone of the curriculum at this site. Students participate in community-based vocational, recreational, and independent living activities every day. Students participate in a variety of community trips, including shopping and dining. Students also receive classroom-based instruction that addresses the goals in their Individualized Educational Program (IEP) and reinforces the learning that takes place in community-based settings. The BCHS program has two classrooms and students are supported with a 1:3 staff to student ratio.

This Year's Accomplishments

- ✓ The SCEC program at BCHS provided services to 12 students during the 2023-2024 school year.
- ✓ Weather was the focus of a year-long deeper learning project at BCHS. Students studied weather and learned how weather affects every aspect of life. Students learned about weather systems, weather events, weather patterns, weather tools, and how to dress for the weather.
- ✓ Students worked with local news outlets to learn how professionals present the weather to the community.
- ✓ BCHS students participated in the SCEC-wide news broadcast by delivering the weather segment. Students created a poster board to resemble the local news weather forecast. Students watched the weather every Monday morning and then set up a 5-day forecast using the poster board. Students took turns being the weather forecaster for the week.



GALLISHAW HIGH SCHOOL ~ Gallishaw Building ~ Seekonk, MA

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South Coast Educational Collaborative's (SCEC) Gallishaw High School (GHS) is an approved public special education day school that provides comprehensive educational services to students in grades 9 through 12 who have had difficulties participating in a general education public school setting. GHS offers two 220-day curricular strands, each serving a unique population of students. Our mission is to provide equitable opportunities that educate, challenge, and encourage students' talents and ability levels while developing skills required for adapting and succeeding in an ever-changing society.

The School-to-Career strand provides comprehensive educational and therapeutic services for students with social-emotional, behavioral and academic challenges that have inhibited success in school. All students participate in an initial transition assessment and additional screenings to develop an individualized learning schedule. Real world applications are emphasized, including credit recovery, job development, internships, certificate programs, and partnerships with technical training institutes and colleges. The curriculum is aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and infused with deeper learning and STEAM. The School-to-Career classrooms have an average enrollment of 7 to 10 students with a 1:2 staff to student ratio.

The Functional Curriculum strand provides educational services to students with diagnoses of Autism Spectrum Disorder, moderate to severe cognitive delays, sensory processing and communication challenges, neuromotor deficits and/or medical and psychiatric challenges. Our goal is to develop skills that will enable our students to become productive citizens of their communities and participate as fully as possible in all areas of life. We work to increase students' skills in communication and language, cognitive development, activities of daily living, vocational skills, social relationships, physical education/recreation, positive behavior, and community inclusion. Focus is placed on producing desirable outcomes for students such as paid employment and being active, contributing members of the communities in which they live. The functional curriculum classroom has an average enrollment of 6 to 8 students and students are supported with a 1:2 staff to student ratio.

This Year's Accomplishments

- ✓ Gallishaw High School provided services to 68 students during the 2023-2024 school year.
- ✓ Four students met the graduation requirements of their local school districts and graduated with a high school diploma.
- ✓ Seven students obtained their ServSafe® Certification and 5 students received their OSHA General Industry Certification.
- ✓ Students developed their deeper learning competencies by participating in a career fair with various local businesses, including Rob Roy Academy, Dartmouth Toyota, MassHire Youthworks, and the Audubon Society.
- ✓ Students participated in career development groups to discuss and learn about work skills that apply to a variety of settings.

GALLISHAW at SEEKONK HIGH SCHOOL ~ Seekonk High School ~ Seekonk, MA

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South Coast Educational Collaborative (SCEC) offers a structured, specialized learning environment for students in grades 9 through 12 within the inclusionary setting of Seekonk High School (SHS). The goal of this 205-day program is to transition students with social-emotional and learning challenges from an alternative program back to their home school district. The curriculum is aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, and instruction is provided in small groups with a low student to teacher ratio or within the general education setting with support from SCEC staff.

The objectives of the Gallishaw program at SHS are to promote student self-regulation and to provide students with opportunities to participate in the general education setting as much as they are able. The academic program provides differentiated instruction as well as therapeutic support within a substantially separate classroom. Students attend general education classes with their peers with the support of SCEC staff who provide academic and social-emotional support in accordance with the student's IEP. This inclusive approach aligns closely with the SCEC objective of improving the academic achievement of students within the least restrictive environment. SCEC students also participate in school-wide activities together with their general education peers, such as assemblies, athletic teams, and school dances. All students have the opportunity to join the Unified Sports program at SHS, which includes basketball and track and field.



This Year's Accomplishments

- ✓ The Gallishaw High School program at Seekonk High School provided services to 10 students during the 2023-2024 school year.
- ✓ Three students received high school diplomas from their sending districts and 2 of these students were accepted into college.
- ✓ Three seniors joined their general education peers on the senior trip to Lake George, NY.
- ✓ Five students joined their general education peers in extracurricular sports and clubs, including: football, volleyball, Unified Basketball, Unified Track and Field, and Ski and Snowboard Club. The Unified Track Team earned first place at Sectionals, and fourth place at the State Championships. One SCEC student received an award for Most Improved Athlete.
- ✓ Seven students were enrolled in inclusion courses with general education peers.
- ✓ Four students received paid employment through a grant from MassHire YouthWorks during summer 2023.

COMMUNITY-BASED PROGRAMMING

LIFE ACADEMY ~ Swansea, MA

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South Coast Educational Collaborative's (SCEC) Learning in Functional Environments (LIFE) Academy provides individualized educational and community-based programming aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and national transition standards that include the following areas: vocational, post-secondary planning, independent living, self-determination, recreation and leisure, health and wellness and self-regulation. This 220-day program provides services to students ages 18 through 22 who have fulfilled their MCAS Alternate Assessment requirements and who require continued specialized services that will assist them in achieving maximum independence and success as adults. The LIFE program is largely community-based and aims to prepare students with moderate to severe disabilities to become independent, happy and productive citizens in their local communities.

The LIFE campus is located on the Stoico/First Fed YMCA property in Swansea, and it is uniquely designed to meet the needs of our students. Students participate in a variety of transition activities within our learning centers, technology room, therapy space and furnished apartment. LIFE Academy has five learning centers and an average staff to student ratio of 1:3. The foundation of programming at LIFE Academy is focused on self-determination, self-regulation and transition-related skills. Students participate in making choices as they learn to identify their needs, interests and skills in the areas of independent living, health and wellness, recreation and leisure, and vocational skills. Students have individual memberships to the YMCA and spend time there daily for health and wellness, recreation and leisure, and vocational skills training. LIFE Academy provides students and their families with guidance in navigating the complex world of adult services and provides them with support as they transition from entitlement services to services based on eligibility.

This Year's Accomplishments

- ✓ LIFE Academy provided services to 33 students during the 2023-2024 school year.
- ✓ Six students graduated and moved on to adult services. Some graduating students went on to adult day programs while other families selected a self-directed service model.
- ✓ SCEC purchased the building that houses the LIFE Academy Program.
- ✓ One of the LIFE Academy's deeper learning accomplishments was the expansion of learning environments and pedagogical practices to connect to topics and lessons taught throughout the week. Students explored countries, animals, National Days of the Week, and life skills. Students then participated in extension activities throughout the month connected to these topics. This included choosing craft activities, cooking activities, and community experiences to dive deeper into these topics.

Clinical Services

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Clinical Services address the mission and purpose of the South Coast Educational Collaborative (SCEC) by providing comprehensive social, emotional, and mental health services to students in SCEC programs and/or local school districts. SCEC clinicians are trained in a variety of disciplines and are licensed as School Adjustment Counselors, Social Workers or School Psychologists by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

Therapeutic Counseling

Therapeutic counseling services are provided to SCEC students across all grade levels and at all SCEC locations. Counselors provide individual and group counseling services as specified in the student's Individual Educational Program (IEP) and provide supplemental services and support as determined by the team at each SCEC site. Counselors serve as an important part of the educational team by providing consultation to staff in the areas of therapeutic rapport and programming, mental health diagnoses, positive behavioral interventions and supports, development of social skills and peer relationships, and family systems. Counselors are available to provide crisis intervention as necessary to assist students and staff and provide assessment in suicidal and homicidal risk. Counselors provide services as part of the educational classroom, joining the therapeutic milieu and modeling and generalizing positive behavioral interventions and supports in the classroom setting. Counselors are a main source of communication between home and school, and they provide case management services to families to assist them in accessing community services such as outpatient mental health, psychiatry, home supports, and recreational services. Therapeutic counseling services are cost effective to the districts SCEC serves because all services provided are included in the tuition at no additional cost.



Psychological Assessment

High quality, comprehensive psychological evaluations are a critical first step in identifying the individual needs of students. The Center for Psychological Assessment at SCEC is responsible for completing evaluations of children's behavioral, psychological, and cognitive functioning. The most common evaluation is a psycho-educational assessment, which includes both cognitive functioning and academic achievement components. The evaluating psychologist requests that all parents/guardians complete a developmental questionnaire to provide relevant background information on the child being evaluated but also for the purposes of parent/guardian input. Parents/guardians are offered the opportunity to meet face to face with evaluators or communicate over the phone. Evaluation results are delivered to the family and team both in writing and through participation in team meetings.

Neuropsychological evaluations are traditionally a high fee service for school districts, and SCEC offers a cost effective solution. Neuropsychological evaluations are included in the tuition for SCEC students enrolled in 45-day placements, resulting in a tremendous cost savings to the sending district. The SCEC fee for psychological assessment of students enrolled in other settings is approximately one fifth the cost of fees charged by private practice settings in our geographic area.

This Year's Accomplishments

- ✓ The Center for Psychological Assessment completed 126 comprehensive psychological evaluations, with 48% being SCEC students and 52% being students in general education or residential settings.
- ✓ SCEC hosted a doctoral student from the Clinical Psychology program at William James College and a graduate level intern studying School Counseling from Liberty University.
- ✓ The Family Partnership Network expanded to include the families of students ages 18-22 years, and provided enhanced support for the families of students transitioning between elementary and middle school.
- ✓ Members of the clinical team created art therapy groups that used elements of deeper learning pedagogy to allow students to use their strengths in art as a tool for social-emotional growth.
- ✓ Clinicians coached several students through the college application process.



Related Services

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Related Services address the mission and purpose of the South Coast Educational Collaborative (SCEC) by providing comprehensive therapeutic services to students in SCEC programs and/or local school districts. All related services are provided as outlined in the students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and are designed to support students within their least-restrictive educational setting. Our providers work closely with the student's educational team, including the student's family, to provide integrated services that support the student's individual development and academic growth. The Related Services division offers the following services: Adapted Physical Education, Applied Behavior Analysis, Assistive Technology, English Language Learner supports, Occupational Therapy, Orientation and Mobility, Physical Therapy, Reading, Speech Language Therapy, and Teacher of the Visually Impaired supports.

Related Service Providers (RSPs) are embedded within SCEC programs and are active members of every SCEC educational team. They provide individual and group therapy, consultative support, evaluation services and integration opportunities customized to meet the individual needs of each student. RSPs support the team in meeting student-specific needs by suggesting environmental modifications and providing specialized equipment and training. By working closely with educational teams, RSPs ensure that therapy goals and objectives are addressed by all members of the team and integrated throughout the school day. These sustainability efforts ensure that SCEC educational teams can address students' therapeutic needs throughout the school day to optimize student performance. SCEC Related Services are highly cost effective for sending districts because they are included within the tuition the local school district pays for student enrollment. Physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, adapted physical education, applied behavioral analysis, reading support and English language learner support are all included within tuition at no additional cost to the sending school district, resulting in a tremendous cost savings to local school districts.

Family-centered care and family services are high priority for all SCEC RSPs. Our educators and therapists work closely with families to provide information and training as needed to ensure that families have the supports and resources they need to provide optimal care for their child at home. RSPs also help families obtain needed adaptive equipment for home, working directly with third party payers to ensure that all medically necessary equipment is covered at no cost to the family whenever possible. RSPs work with state and federal agencies on the student's behalf to assist in disability determination as needed for the student to qualify for assistance programs such as Social Security, Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC), and/or accessible housing.



High quality, comprehensive evaluations are a critical first step in identifying the individual needs of students. RSPs at SCEC conduct comprehensive student evaluations utilizing evidence-based measures and testing protocols. Discipline-specific evaluation templates ensure that the content and presentation of evaluation results is consistent across evaluators and settings. SCEC RSPs meet monthly in discipline-specific groups to share knowledge and expertise within their area of practice as needed to ensure best practices are met within each discipline. All RSPs remain current in their field through participation in professional learning opportunities and they also conduct inservices and workshops to enhance the professional development of others.

District Support

SCEC RSPs support member and participating school districts by working as members of the general and special education teams to meet district needs. Sustainability efforts by RSPs ensure that district educational teams can address students' therapeutic needs throughout the school day to optimize student performance in the general education setting. The expertise of SCEC RSPs working in districts can be a key factor that allows a student to remain in the least restrictive environment. In addition to providing direct, consultative, evaluation and screening services, SCEC RSPs offer a range of services to enhance district student outcomes, including:

- Response to Intervention initiatives
- Supporting child find and transition from early intervention to school-based services
- Developing and implementing building-based service plans and 504 plans
- Offering suggestions for environmental modifications
- Arranging adaptive equipment trials and making purchase recommendations
- Supporting transition planning for students ages 14-22

SCEC district related services are highly cost effective for school districts. SCEC provides in-district related services at substantially reduced rates compared to the statewide average for private agencies. In addition, SCEC implements a comprehensive documentation and reporting system to provide Medicaid reports to school districts as needed for the district to obtain reimbursement of related services provided by SCEC therapists.

This Year's Accomplishments

- ✓ Related services were provided to 1042 students across southern Massachusetts, including all students enrolled in SCEC programs.
- ✓ Related services were provided to 818 district students in 29 school districts across southern Massachusetts.
- ✓ SCEC RSPs conducted a total of 480 student evaluations.
- ✓ SCEC held a lifeguard training in October 2023 where 16 staff became certified as lifeguards through the American Red Cross. Certified lifeguards support the SCEC Aquatics program by participating in weekly swim opportunities for all SCEC Programs throughout the year.
- ✓ SCEC Reading Specialists developed and implemented an Early Literacy Screening program for all SCEC K-3 students using Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills, 8th edition (DIBELS).
- ✓ SCEC Adapted Physical Education instructors provided training for physical education teachers within the Swansea Public Schools.
- ✓ A team of SCEC RSPs provided a training workshop on Dyslexia for families. This training was offered in conjunction with the regional SEPAC of Southeastern Massachusetts.

Transition Services

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South Coast Educational Collaborative (SCEC) has always strived to prepare students with disabilities for a high quality adult life. Community-based vocational and employment experiences for students, with ongoing data collection, have been an integral component of secondary level programming for our students for four decades. SCEC continues to work diligently to align our transition services and programming with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), evidence-based best practices, and policy guidance by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

Transition services at SCEC include providing professional development to our staff members, as well as to local school districts. Having DESE endorsed Transition Specialists on staff to support educators, students, and families offers value-added and sustainable practice within the organization. Membership on the Greater Fall River Interagency Transition Team allows SCEC to partner with local organizations, including school districts, to develop common practices, highlight similar issues, and develop collective strategies to address the transition needs of students and their families, as well as schools and adult service providers. As transition-related policies, procedures, and practices continue to evolve within Massachusetts and across the country, SCEC remains committed to staying informed and fully involved in this area as we continue to build capacity and share our experiences with our partners.

Cost Effectiveness

Typically, students ages 14-22 represent roughly half of our total enrollment. The focus of programming for these students is transition-related based upon their individual vision and age-appropriate transition assessment. Private organizations can charge up to \$3,000 for a comprehensive transition assessment without a community component. Transition assessment is provided as part of a student's tuition at SCEC, incurring no

additional cost to either our member or participating districts.

Several of our staff are trained specifically in job coaching services, which may include, but are not limited to, the administration of assessments and providing students with training and support in community-based places of employment. Several SCEC staff members have earned *Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators (ACRE) Certification* in order to offer supported employment and job development services to our students. Contracting for highly qualified job coaching services



through private companies can cost as much as \$45 per hour, which does not include job development or transportation. Whereas local bus companies calculate the cost for transportation by both hours and mileage, transportation for transition services is included in the tuition of SCEC. This is possible because SCEC Job Coaches have 7-D licenses, and they have access to the Collaborative's fleet of vehicles for the purpose of community-based transition activities.

Transition Activities

Transition activities that occur on a consistent basis at SCEC sites include:

- Age-appropriate Transition Assessment and Summary of Performance
- Ongoing data collection
- Student-led IEP meetings
- Community-based vocational experiences
- Community-based employment, paid and non-paid, with job coaching supports
- Community-based recreation and leisure activities
- Community-based independent life skills activities
- Vocational classes
- School-based vocational experiences
- Independent life skills and pre-employment training
- Transition-based curricular materials
- Tours, activities and educational programming at institutions of higher learning (e.g., MTTI, Bristol Community College, Bridgewater State University)

SCEC provides internal, cost effective professional development and job-embedded training for all of our staff so that they are able to support students in all transition-related areas, including, but not limited to, age-appropriate transition assessments, self-determination and the development of post-secondary Individualized Education Programs.

This Year's Accomplishments

- ✓ SCEC partnered with the Southeast Center for Independent Living (SCIL) to bring the Pre-Employment Transition Services program to students at Gallishaw High School and LIFE Academy.
- ✓ Fifteen SCEC students were employed through a grant from MassHire YouthWorks during the summer of 2023. These paid internships provided structured work experiences for students and allowed them to develop job skills and gain real life work experience while being financially compensated for the work they performed. Students from Gallishaw High School and Gallishaw High School at Seekonk High School benefited from paid internships.
- ✓ A new business partnership was established with Seekonk Public Library.
- ✓ A total of 14 Transition Assessments were completed, with 28% being SCEC students and 71% being students in general education settings.
- ✓ An SCEC team conducted a Transition program evaluation for the Avon Public Schools.
- ✓ SCEC had a total of 4 teachers with their DESE Transition Endorsement during the 2023-2024 school year, which enhanced the support and guidance provided to students as they transitioned to post-secondary opportunities.

School Food and Nutrition Services

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South Coast Educational Collaborative's (SCEC) Food and Nutrition Services team works diligently each day to serve nutritious, healthy, and appealing meals that provide students with the energy needed for learning.

The SCEC Food and Nutrition Services team operates across three SCEC locations: Seekonk North School, Gallishaw High School, and LIFE Academy. Breakfast each day consists of two grains or one grain and one protein, fruits, juice, and 1% low fat plain milk. Students at both the elementary and middle school levels utilize the *Breakfast in the Classroom* model where they can choose breakfast items to be eaten in the classroom while daily instruction begins. Students at the high school and post-secondary levels have the option to go to the cafeteria and choose which breakfast items they want. For lunch, classroom teachers provide students with the

daily lunch menu, record student requests, and use a mobile application to electronically report student lunch orders to the Food and Nutrition Services team. This allows for accurate and efficient meal counts, preparation and delivery. SCEC serves lunches that meet federal nutrition requirements, including having fresh fruits and vegetables, whole-grain breads, and low-fat and fat-free milk available on a daily basis. SCEC also supports and provides accommodations for students who have special dietary needs.

The SCEC Food and Nutrition team supports educational experiences for students across SCEC programs. Students have the opportunity to earn ServSafe® Certification and OSHA General Industry Certification, which helps students to become marketable in the working world. Students are also employed through the MassHire Youth Works grant. Participating students work in SCEC kitchens, which allows them to use their ServSafe® Certification,



develop job skills, and obtain real life work experience while being compensated for the work they perform. SCEC participates in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) national school lunch program. This program provides free breakfast and lunch for all enrolled students without requiring students to submit individual applications. The Food and Nutrition Services team supports all students and families with access to the P-EBT Program by updating and submitting the list of students who meet the eligibility criteria to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) each month.

This Year's Accomplishments

- ✓ A total of 200 students at SCEC participated in the School Lunch Program during the 2023-2024 school year
- ✓ SCEC was approved to continue with the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) to serve free breakfast and lunch at Seekonk North School, Gallishaw High School, and LIFE Academy, which increased the participation in school meals and supported a whole child approach to learning.
- ✓ SCEC was awarded the Northeast Food for Schools grant, which provided funds specifically for the purchase of local food. Using local food in school meals boosted the nutritional quality of menus and helped support local farms.
- ✓ The Food and Nutrition team collaborated with the SCEC Wellness Committee to develop goals and initiatives to improve the health, nutrition, physical activity and well-being of SCEC students, families, and staff.
- ✓ The Harvest of the Month curriculum was implemented across SCEC programs. This curriculum introduced students to new food items through engaging activities and presentations to encourage healthy food choices.



Professional Development

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SCEC Staff Development

South Coast Educational Collaborative (SCEC) is committed to providing comprehensive, high quality and cost effective learning experiences to all SCEC staff. SCEC provides extensive in-house training for SCEC employees, including the annual completion of all Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) mandated training topics. Training for new employees and current staff is managed through a combination of online learning platforms, in person learning, and practical application at individual work sites.

Research-based best practices are ensured through rich, embedded professional development for all staff in the form of scheduled release days for professional learning, regularly held staff meetings, and routine consultation and technical assistance from a network of consultants with different areas of expertise. Paraprofessionals participate in all professional development opportunities side-by-side with other educators so that they are able to serve as highly trained therapeutic partners.

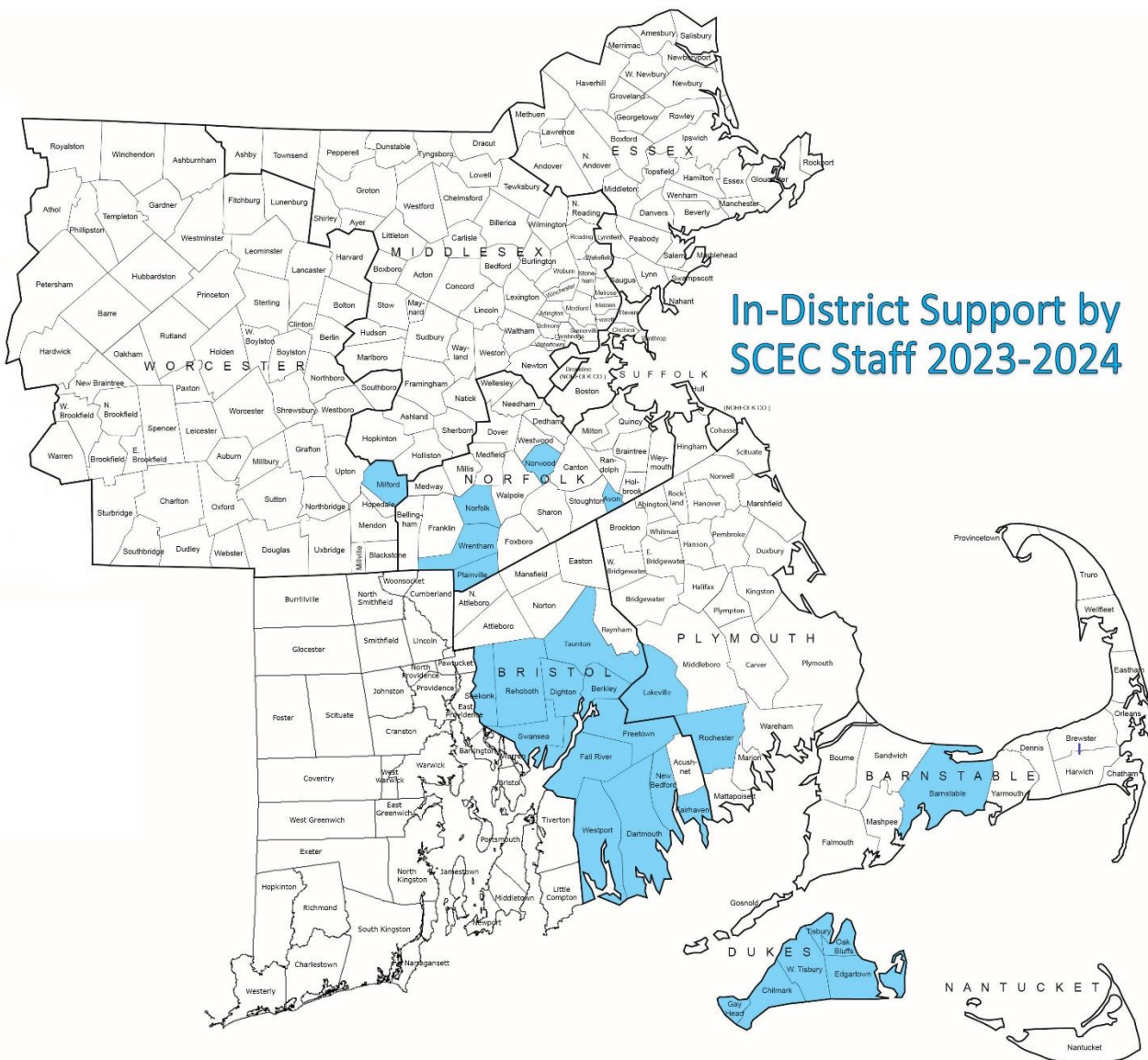
High quality professional development for SCEC employees is typically provided in-house by SCEC staff, which saves thousands of dollars each year by avoiding the expense of contracting with outside consultants. Two examples of this are Non-violent Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI) and CPR/First Aid. SCEC has certified CPI instructors who train all SCEC staff as well as staff from area districts. SCEC nurses provide the training to certify all SCEC employees in the American Heart Association's HeartSaver First Aid and CPR course.



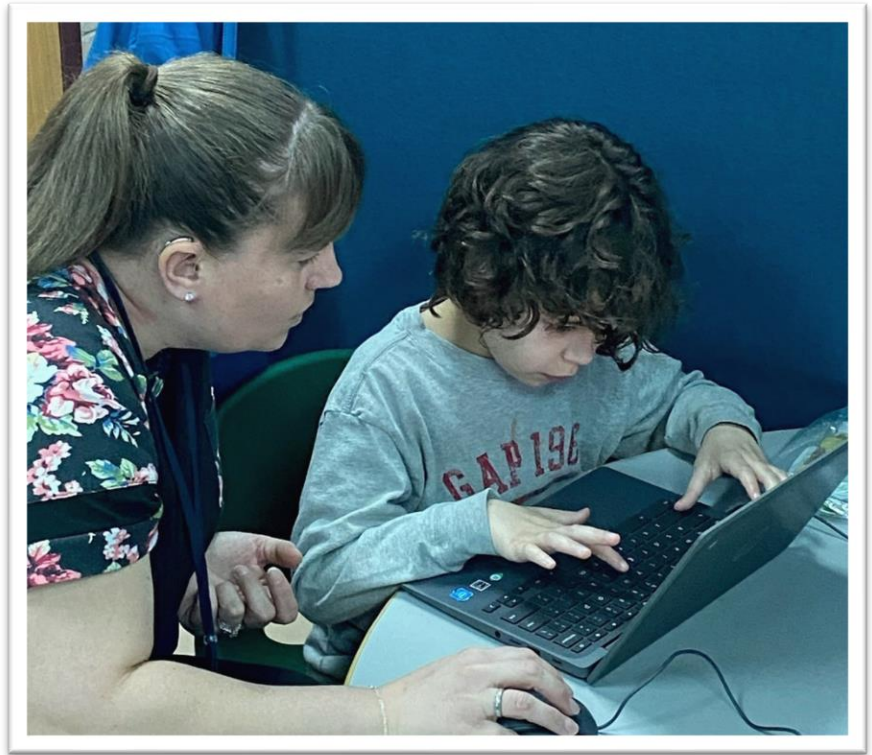
External Professional Development

SCEC provides general education supports to both member and participating school districts. SCEC offers professional development, program consultation, and student-specific consultation to school districts. Student-specific consultations typically focus on environmental and individual supports to maintain a student's placement within the least restrictive general education setting.

SCEC continues to provide a robust menu of professional development opportunities to district staff throughout southeastern Massachusetts. Professional development through SCEC is highly cost effective for member and participating districts. By utilizing SCEC consultants for embedded professional learning, districts do not have to access consultants from higher cost entities such as colleges, universities, or other professional development sources. By providing professional development at their school sites, districts avoid the cost of sending educators to off-site workshops.



SCEC seeks to establish partnerships with area universities and colleges to support higher education opportunities for staff from SCEC, member districts, and surrounding communities. These joint agreements provide a cost effective method for area educators to further their education and achieve professional goals. SCEC is also committed to providing quality training for young professionals. SCEC has formed partnerships with several universities and colleges, allowing SCEC faculty to supervise and support Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral level students during their internships. These individuals work under the supervision of an SCEC staff person, gain valuable experience relative to working with students with various disabilities, and add value to SCEC as an organization.



This Year's Accomplishments

- ✓ The SCEC IEP Implementation Team provided in-depth training on the new Massachusetts IEP. SCEC hosted 3 half-day professional development sessions during winter and spring 2024 to train all SCEC staff.
- ✓ SCEC supported its educators to learn, implement and adapt new curricula implemented in SY2024, including: HMH Into Math for grades K-5 and McGraw Hill StudySync for grades 9-12.
- ✓ SCEC partnered with the Massachusetts Organization of Educational Collaboratives to offer a 4-session training series, entitled "MOEC Leadership Academy for New and Aspiring Collaborative Leaders."
- ✓ SCEC staff provided training on the development of therapeutic programming and understanding Autism Spectrum Disorder in 5 public school districts.
- ✓ SCEC staff supported the Fall River Public Schools' Special Education Task Force.
- ✓ The SCEC Nonviolent Crisis Intervention training team provided both initial and refresher CPI training to staff in 5 member districts.
- ✓ Seven educators from SCEC and 2 from local districts continued in the joint SCEC/Bridgewater State University master's degree in Special Education cohort that began in September 2022. The expected graduation date is Fall 2024.
- ✓ SCEC recruited 23 candidates for a bachelor's degree program in special education to be offered in collaboration with Bridgewater State University.

Transportation

*Michael Novick, MS, MEd, EdS
Procurement Officer, MCPPO
mnovick@scecoll.org*

SCEC provides both home-to-school transportation for students and transportation to support a robust array of student community experiences throughout the school day. Home-to-school transportation is provided between students' homes in surrounding communities to SCEC programs. By utilizing staff from educational programs serving the students, SCEC is able to provide an "extension of the classroom" setting for our students who have been experiencing challenges on vendor supplied transportation. The enhanced level of training of the staff as well as the experience and continuity of behavioral supports have allowed students attending SCEC programs to experience more seamless transitions between the home and school environment. Participating school districts report a 30% savings as compared to similar services provided by traditional transportation vendors, as well as improved outcomes for students. Families report increased satisfaction related to their children's experience with transportation provided by SCEC. Every SCEC program site has access to transportation to support community experiences, transition, vocational, and employment opportunities for students. Ready access to transportation and licensed 7D drivers is a value-added service that supports SCEC initiatives and enhances programming for all SCEC students. SCEC trains its transportation staff in accordance with protocols established by the Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicle and supports staff in the acquisition of 7D licenses required for student transportation.



This Year's Accomplishments

- ✓ SCEC maintained a fleet of 18 vehicles for student transportation during the 2023-2024 school year.
- ✓ Thirty-eight employees maintained 7D licenses during the 2023-2024 school year.
- ✓ Three districts were served with SCEC round trip transportation: Fall River, Dartmouth and Freetown Lakeville. Students were transported to 3 SCEC sites over 4 different transportation routes.
- ✓ The cameras in all SCEC vehicles were upgraded during the 2023-2024 school year. The new cameras provide live feed capabilities, remote retrieval of video footage, and are AI-equipped to detect a variety of driver/passenger behaviors that might impact the safe operation of the vehicle.

Finance and Fiscal Sustainability

Jennifer Prendergast, MEd
Director of Finance
jprendergast@scecoll.org

South Coast Educational Collaborative (SCEC) continues to enhance and improve its business operations to ensure a transparent process along with continuous strategic forecasting. SCEC has established an Other Post-Employment Benefits Trust (OPEB) as part of that plan. The OPEB trust will give staff at SCEC financial stability upon retirement along with creating a tool to combat an unfunded liability.

Monthly financial management reports are created and examined to determine the financial picture of SCEC. Sustainability of all SCEC programs and services are reviewed monthly, along with program budget analysis. Organizational and staff to student ratios are examined monthly by the finance committee and leadership team in order to understand trends. The management reports are presented to the SCEC Board of Directors at each meeting. By reviewing financial data monthly, SCEC can quickly make program or staff modifications as needed to ensure financial sustainability.

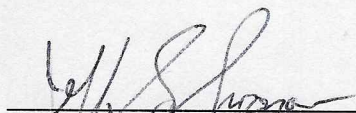
Please refer to the public report entitled *South Coast Educational Collaborative Basic Financial Statements and Management's Discussion and Analysis* together with the *Independent Auditor's Report for the Year Ended June 30, 2024* for additional details.



Certificate of Approval

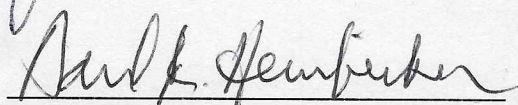
At their Executive Meeting held on December 12, 2024 the Board of Directors of South Coast Educational Collaborative voted unanimously to:

“Approve the 2023-2024 Annual Report of South Coast Educational Collaborative and instruct the Board Chair and the Executive Director to certify that this action was taken by signing a document that memorializes the action taken.”



Jeffrey Schoonover, SCEC Board Chair

12-12-2024
Date



David R. Heimbecker, Executive Director

12-12-2024
Date