CES AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS CELEBRATE TWENTY YEARS

The first CES After School Program opened at Palmer Middle School twenty years ago. Today, Palmer is one of only a handful of sites in Massachusetts designated as a Demonstration level site, excelling in multiple areas of programming. CES currently runs thirteen After School Programs in Franklin and Hampshire counties, including 11 programs funded by 21st Century Learning Grants, as well as two fee-for-service programs. The After School Program serves approximately 750 students.

Chris Taggert, Director of the CES After School program, notes that the CES After School Programs have grown and changed over the years. “Our site coordinators meet every 4-5 weeks as a group to discuss practices and share ideas.” In addition, Taggert said that it is common practice for the CES After School programs to “cross-pollinate” - coordinators visit other sites at least twice a year, and senior coordinators mentor those who are more junior.

This year, CES After School was notified by DESE that it had been awarded a new 21st CCLC site at the Ware Middle School. Four CES After School Programs received the 21st CCLC Exemplary award in FY19 - Easthampton High School; Greenfield High School's Green Room; Philip G. Coburn Elementary School and Memorial Elementary School. Exemplary status ensures that these After School programs will run for at least another three years.

“I love the fact the children have somewhere to go where they learn and grow with positive reinforcement. They have a place to go after school where they get help with their homework and experience great activities. I have three of my teenagers in this program and one of them had a very difficult time being social and doing activities outside of his comfort zone. Ever since he joined VELA [Amherst Regional Middle School 21st CCLC Program], he has come a long way socially and has grown in many positive ways.

— Elaine Caraballo, parent
The Empowered Eaters program partners with residents of affordable housing complexes in building community gardens. With residents taking the lead, the program built a community garden at Hampshire Heights in Northampton this year, followed by a series of gatherings where families shared meals and recipes. The program seeks to improve access to healthy food, increase community connections, and build a sense of resiliency among adults and children. The program was funded by the United Way of Hampshire County, the Community Foundation of Western Mass, and the Mass in Motion program.

The garden effort benefited from a strong partnership with Families with Power, a resident group mostly composed of Hampshire Heights families that meets regularly for “reading parties” in conjunction with teachers from Jackson Street School which encourage children involvement. They suggested that the garden have “pollinator flowers,” which were planted. Reinforcing connections between the school and home, via the community garden, was an important part of the success of the program.

“This garden not only provided us with produce, but what really stood out to me was how I was able to meet my neighbors, whether running into them while tending the gardens or at meet-ups to talk about cooking projects and sharing recipes...It’s been wonderful for me particularly as I noticed an improvement in the quality of my life.” — Kia Aoki, 4C Hampshire Heights resident
"This experience was the most helpful PD that I have ever experienced. It was explicitly dedicated to exactly what I am doing every single day. It should be a requirement of all Special Education Team Leaders in their first two years on the job."

— SETLI participant
THE COLLABORATIVE FOR EDUCATIONAL SERVICES is a non-profit educational service agency, committed to reaching and educating learners of all ages, experienced in working with educators to help students learn and succeed. Our mission is to develop and foster educational excellence and opportunity for all learners through collaboration and leadership.

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DR. PACHECO JOINS CES SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EQUITY TEAM

CES welcomed Dr. Romina Pacheco as our new Social Justice and Equity Specialist this year. Pacheco, born and raised in Maracay, Venezuela, was an exchange student at a Maine high school and returned to Maine after completing undergraduate work, as a teaching assistant in the Spanish Department at Bates College. During her undergraduate years in Venezuela, Pacheco became a teacher of English as a Foreign Language and developed a passion for teaching during this experience.

In 2004, Pacheco moved to Western Mass to join the Social Justice Education Program at UMass Amherst where she and Safire DeJong first started co-facilitating race and ethnicity intergroup dialogues. After completing her M.Ed., Romina ventured to New Mexico to complete a Ph.D. from New Mexico State University where she studied Curriculum & Instruction and Gender & Sexuality Studies. Her hard work resulted in a dissertation titled: Teaching with Mindfulness: A Research as Praxis Study about Radical Democratic Participation in a Multicultural Education Classroom.

The 3rd Transforming Education for Social Justice conference will be held on March 14.

LEARN MORE: collaborative.org/transforminged

“CES stepped up with grit and grace to help organize a forum where the same people who are rewriting the Chapter 70 formula could hear directly from our region’s teachers, school administrators, and guardians and parents.”

— Senator Comerford  
Re: State Legislator/Administration meeting  
February 2019

84 YOUTH PARTICIPATED IN DYS POSTSECONDARY CLASSES
1,800+ YOUTH SERVED THROUGH DYS EDUCATION PROGRAMS
109 YOUTH IN DYS PROGRAMS OBTAINED THEIR HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA OR EQUIVALENT

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