Our mission is to develop and foster educational excellence and opportunity for all learners through collaboration and leadership.

We are a community of innovative and effective professionals dedicated to improving education.

We know that everyone is a learner from the day they are born, and we know how to create classrooms and other environments in which every learner can flourish.

We know how to reach, inspire, support, and educate children, youth and adults, and we help others to do the same.

*Everyone is a learner*

A group of CES alternative learning program students regularly tackled a climbing wall for learning and physical education during the 2011-12 school year.

Teachers Mike Topor, Dan Phoenix, Patricia Taylor, and Bob Simons (rear, standing and seated); with one of their students.
Our FY12 annual report is about change. For over 35 years, the Collaborative for Educational Services has worked in partnership with schools and communities to change and improve the lives of our most vulnerable and at-risk children and youth. To do that, the organization itself has had to change and grow—dramatically.

We began in 1974 by providing vocational education programs for our member school districts. We quickly expanded our focus when the state ordered school districts to educate children with special needs who had previously been institutionalized. The districts turned to us to develop programs for these young people, and we immediately started changing lives.

When districts needed programs for youngsters with behavioral and emotional issues, the Collaborative started some of the first alternative programs in the Commonwealth. Again, we changed lives.

With passage of the state’s 1993 education reform law, we broadened our professional development offerings and teachers began teaching to higher standards, changing student outcomes and hopes for the future.

Shortages of special education, math and science teachers led to the start of our own educator licensure preparation programs, which have changed the lives of many mid-career adults.

By bringing quality interventions, professional development and mental health consultation to early childhood providers, CES has changed the futures of many young children for the better.

Ten years ago, we were given the opportunity to turn around the state’s DYS educational program; five years later, we were presented with a similar opportunity for all youth in institutional settings across the Commonwealth. As a result we changed the teaching and learning in these systems and the lives of hundreds of students.

In the summer of 2011, we undertook our most challenging change effort: the turnaround of the William J. Dean Technical High School in Holyoke, a Level 4 school and one of the lowest performing high schools in the Commonwealth. With the efforts of many talented CES staff, we hope to change the lives and futures of hundreds of students in Holyoke.

Everyone at the Collaborative should be proud of the work we have done and continue to do to change the lives and educational outcomes of the many children, youth, teachers and administrators we reach through our work. I applaud your efforts.

Sincerely,

Joan E. Schuman, Ed.D.
Executive Director

Last December, our Executive Director, Joan Schuman, accepted the prestigious Justus A. Prentice Award given to educational leaders who make outstanding accomplishments advancing the mission of educational service agencies. I had the pleasure of introducing her at the awards ceremony, during the national Association of Educational Service Agencies (AESA) annual conference.

For the past nineteen years, Dr. Schuman has embodied the characteristics that form the criteria for the Prentice Award. She has served in leadership positions for both state and national organizations and ESAs. She has been a role model for her colleagues, tirelessly sharing her knowledge and experience. Under her leadership, our agency has grown to become one of the most respected, exemplary ESAs in Massachusetts.

Joan will be the first to admit her success as a leader is tied inextricably to the incredible skill and commitment of the Collaborative’s staff. I am continually impressed by their breadth of knowledge and creativity—by the way they interpret and fulfill the existing vision for CES, and the way they define and enable plans for our future. I believe that Dr. Schuman’s award is also an accolade for the entire agency, reflecting our reputation in the region, state and nation for leading-edge, anticipatory programs and services for students and districts.

Joan’s success in building a trusted, financially stable organization has inspired smaller collaboratives to broaden their service portfolios, and has motivated the state to rethink the roles ESAs can play in building capacity in smaller districts and helping schools close the achievement gap.

The Board is extremely proud of CES’s success, and of the honor bestowed on our Executive Director. We look forward to more opportunities to shape the future of educational collaboratives and have a positive impact on the lives of those we teach and serve.

Best wishes for 2013,

Lisa L. Minnick
Chair, Board of Governors

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The Collaborative for Educational Services is formed by its member districts and governed by a Board of Governors comprised of an elected school committee representative from each member school district. In addition to the Board of Governors, two Steering Committees composed of the Superintendents of Schools of the Franklin and Hampshire County member districts, respectively, serve in an advisory capacity to the Executive Director. Both groups meet regularly throughout the year.
ACHIEVEMENTS AND TRANSITIONS

Rich Cairn, Project Director, Emerging America
Lead article in Library of Congress TPS Journal
www.loc.gov/teachers/tps/journal/common_core
And... played the policeman in Amherst Community Theater’s Annie, January 2012

Mary Lou Chapman, Administrator of Special Education
Board member, Massachusetts Administrators of Special Education (ASE)

Casey Daigle-Matos, Kristin Kicza, Mary Wiseman, CES Technology Department

Damon Douglas, Curriculum and Instruction Consultant
Facilitated DESE Model Curriculum Unit Expert Review Panels in math, ELA, science, and history, May-June 2012

Linda Enerson, Writer, CES Communications
“Not Adding Up,” article on school funding issues in Commonwealth Magazine, Summer 2012; www.commonwealthmagazine.org

Suzanne Judson-Whitehouse, Assistant Director, Emerging America
December 2011, appeared as a contestant on Jeopardy!

Cynthia Miller, Assistant Director of Human Resources
Earned her Professional in Human Resource Certification

Antonio Pagán, Chief Technology Officer
Appointed 2011, MassCUE Board of Directors
Completed Association of Educational Service Agencies (AESA) Executive in Residence Program, December 2012

Matt Rigney, Coordinator of Youth and Adult Services
In Pursuit of Giants: One Man’s Global Search for the Last of the Great Fish
Penguin Group, June 2012; www.inpursuitofgiants.com

Ken Pransky, Curriculum and Instruction Consultant
My Fantastic Words Book (Graphic Thesaurus), February 2012, CES Publications; collaborative.org/resources/publications

Debbie Zacarian, Director, Center for English Language Education (CELE)
Keynotes: Missouri Migrant Education and English Language Learning Conference, November 2011; Georgia Department of Education ESOL Conference at Kennesaw State University, February 2012; New Jersey TESOL Conference, May 2012

JOAN SCHUMAN HONORED BY AESA

Executive Director Joan Schuman accepted the AESA’s prestigious Justus A. Prentice award in Colorado Springs on December 2, 2011. The Association of Educational Service Agencies bestows the award on an educational leader who exemplifies innovative leadership and advocacy on behalf of educational service agencies (ESAs) at the state and national level. Schuman was nominated by CES Board of Governors chair Lisa Minnick, and colleagues across the Commonwealth, for her pioneering spirit in developing innovative programming. Minnick noted that Schuman’s efforts “have motivated the state to consider ESAs in a new light, and inspired smaller collaboratives to broaden their service portfolios.”

Above: Joan Schuman and Lisa Minnick
“I spent a lot of time butting heads with teachers,” Mischa Epstein said, recalling her proclivity for questioning the rules as a high school student. After blowing through four different high schools in a little over a year, Epstein finally got the call she was waiting for – that she was accepted in HEC Academy, the Collaborative’s special education program in Northampton. “I never looked back,” she says. “I did well by that decision.”

Epstein says HEC Academy teachers helped her view her tendency to question and “find better and different ways to do things” as a strength rather than a liability.

At the Academy, she was able to explore her interests through independent coursework. She also explored community activism through a series of community service learning projects. One of those projects, designing a pattern for the AIDS quilt, inspired her creative talents. Further development of those talents ultimately led Epstein to an exciting and rewarding career as an artist.

After a few years of classes at Holyoke Community College, Epstein left school to start her own business as a visual artist. Now she is in her sixth year of selling her own handmade paper collages. Her secret to success in the often tricky business of fine art is to make “something so innovative, no one has ever seen anything like it before.”

Epstein painted one of the famous life-sized fiberglass bears that can be seen throughout Easthampton. She also painted the life-sized plane in Chicopee and a gigantic pair of sneakers in Springfield. Over the past few years, she has moved from painting to coordinating the installation of these colorful statues in cities and towns throughout western Massachusetts.

And in keeping with her earlier experience in community service at HEC Academy, Epstein works with inner city youth at the Mason Square Boys and Girls Club in Springfield. Epstein enjoys teaching young people how to make money from creating and selling their own art projects.

“They find it so empowering,” she said of her Business of Art class. “They make something creative and then promote it and then sell it. They learn that there is another way besides the streets.” The class, which Epstein developed, recently won a national award for the Best Program in Arts and Humanities through the Boys and Girls Club of America.

This past spring, she organized a judged contest for painting the tiger, the Club’s mascot. All contestants completed a design for the tiger and submitted it, as in the adult projects that she coordinates.

Epstein also works with Gardening for Community, a non-profit that helps residents establish and maintain gardens in abandoned lots in low-income Springfield neighborhoods. Youth participants learn to grow and cook fresh vegetables.

Not surprisingly, Epstein has found a way to introduce art into the garden program. She organized young gardeners to make colorful new signs for all of the gardens throughout the city.

Mischa says she works easily with teenagers struggling with poverty, as she faced her own set of challenges as a youth. The teachers at HEC Academy “never gave up on me,” she recalls. That model of working with young people, emphasizing and developing their talents and strengths, is one she now uses in her own teaching practice.
Overseeing the education of 350 people in one building, all under the age of seven, has changed the way Jill Flanders sees the world.

“I wasn’t that knowledgeable about the varied needs of young children, including my own daughters when they were that age,” Flanders admits. However, over the past thirteen years that she has served as the principal of South Hadley’s Plains School, she has become a champion for the supports children need to learn and grow.

According to Flanders, Plains School, which serves children PreK-1st grade, “is very much an early childhood program.” As such, educators there “are more cognizant of what very young children need socially and emotionally” in order to build the foundations required to succeed in school and life.

Flanders says that she would like to see a range rather than a checklist used when assessing children as to whether or not they have reached developmental milestones. “Kids develop skills at different rates—not everyone is ready to learn a certain math skill at a certain age.”

She holds that our current pressure on educators to collect student achievement data through standardized testing puts too much emphasis on academics in the early grades. Success in secondary school and beyond can be tied to effective preparation for kindergarten. According to Flanders, the best way to do that is by supporting families even before children enter school.

South Hadley, Flanders says, has developed an incredibly unique model of cooperation among early childhood professionals to support families with very young children.

The South Hadley Family Center, with funding and support from CES Early Childhood staff, is a critical part of this network. Families meet other families with young children at playgroups, and talk to Center staff about community resources, such as child care centers, financial assistance programs, and mental health professionals. Workshops help parents understand the developmental needs of their children. Family Center and Collaborative staff also work with Flanders to organize the South Hadley Network for Children and Families. The Network has regular meetings for early childhood providers, encouraging a collegial atmosphere among early education and care centers, the Family Center, early intervention programs, and the school.

As a result of these collaborations, “I know all the kids pretty much from the time they are born,” she says, which is critical in identifying children with special needs. The sooner supportive services can be provided to these children, the more they are able to learn alongside their peers when they reach kindergarten.

Flanders advocates at the state level for principals to connect with early education and care centers and support Family Centers in their area. She brings the same message to the National Association for Elementary School Principals as the New England representative.

“It’s hard to engage elementary principals to focus on early childhood.” Flanders says “there’s an odd gap” in most communities between public school and early education and care professionals.

As a principal of a PreK-6 school in Hadley before coming to Plains School, she understands the disconnect. Educators are under tremendous pressure for students to perform on tests. According to Flanders, “just teaching reading and math hasn’t been working for a long time.” The future of education and closing the achievement gap, as she sees it, is in understanding and supporting the needs of very young children to ensure that they arrive at kindergarten ready to learn.

Through her collaboration with the Network and the Family Center, Flanders hopes to close that gap.
Two years ago, Christine Thompson walked into Dean Technical High School as a freshman and was struck by the lack of color on the walls. This year, she decided something needed to be done to give her school more character. So, she went to Principal Jonathan Carter and asked him if she could paint murals on the walls during the summer.

Carter encouraged her.

“You have more artistic ability than I ever will have,” he told Thompson, giving her permission to design and implement the project this past summer, with the help of the art teacher and other students. Thompson, who is taking classes in graphics through the school’s Networking and Web Design department, aspires to be a 3-D animation artist or video game designer; and is one of this year’s John and Abigail Adams Scholarship winners.

Principal Carter was hired in January of 2012 by the Collaborative for Educational Services, which has been managing the school in partnership with Holyoke Public Schools, and has initiated ambitious efforts in 2011-12 to turn around this chronically underperforming school. Within the first year, initiatives to re-energize the student community, expand teaching time, provide professional development for teachers, and tie classroom learning to real world experiences have begun to pay off. Attendance at the school has gone up and the dropout rate has declined by 28 percent. CES’s work in 2012-13 is continuing to build upon those promising early results.

Carter approached the mural project as he often does when teachers, students and parents come to him with new ideas to improve the school program and building. “I feel it’s important to not just do things the way they have always been done, but to experiment, and not be afraid to make mistakes.” Carter’s willingness to try out new ideas and learn from mistakes is critical in supporting students and staff through the changes that they will continue to encounter over the next few years.

Carter, two vice principals, the Career Technical Education Director and the CTE Supervisor were hired over the past year. A new instructional leadership team was put in place as well.

Since CES assumed management of the school, additional teaching time has also been added to each day’s schedule. This change is allowing for more time to be spent on learning in both academic and vocational subjects. The vocational and academic balance is important to the work at Dean, and is part of the work of the new Dean Tech Futures Advisory Committee, organized by CES and made up of key community and business partners. The committee is working on a number of potential new career-technical programs for the school. Programs being considered include engineering, financial services and clean energy technologies.

The school has also secured new co-op and mentoring commitments from several employer partners for 2012-13. Dean Tech is also taking the first steps toward becoming a STEM school. As one first step in the plan, the school’s computer labs are moving into new
space within the school, and six new state-of-the-art science labs are being built. The project is a cornerstone of efforts to develop the school as a cutting edge vocational school focused on science and technology.

According to Christine Thompson, Carter has won the confidence of students in leading the school on its new direction. She said that while he is thoughtful about how new projects are implemented in the school, he is also committed to getting things done. “He has the unspoken respect of students.” In the second semester of last year, Carter “stepped up to the plate to improve the school the way no one else has.”

That student response has been integral to successful efforts to increase student participation in the classroom as well as in after school activities, clubs and student government. In a recent student survey, a majority of students surveyed said that in the past year, the school has felt more welcoming to students, parents and families; and classes have become more challenging as well.

The new ownership and pride felt by the parents and students at Dean will provide the momentum needed to move forward with this year’s ambitious goals for the school. Dean Tech has a teaching and administrative staff that is highly talented, motivated, and prepared to move the school forward with exciting new school and business partnerships that will not only support academic achievement, but lead to job skills and the potential for promising careers.

**PATTY WALSH-CASSIDY ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY LENDING LIBRARY**

Patty Walsh-Cassidy saw children struggle every day to communicate, but she passionately believed that with the right education, tools and support, every child’s hopes, dreams and desires could be heard. Two years after the cofounder of the Collaborative Center for Assistive Technology and Training (CCATT) lost her battle with breast cancer, colleagues, family, friends, and students gathered at CES for the dedication of a new assistive technology lending library at the CCATT Center named in her honor. In-kind donations from manufacturers, proceeds from fundraisers organized by Patty’s family, and contributions from supporters helped to launch the project. The Library’s collection includes a variety of high and low tech devices, as well as iPads and ‘apps’ for a number of functions. Through the free PWC Library loan program, educators, families, and users can explore devices and solutions that assist individuals with a wide range of learning challenges and disabilities to perform functions that might otherwise be difficult or impossible for them.

MORE: pwclibrary.org

**TEACHING WITH PRIMARY SOURCES**

As the recipient of a Library of Congress: Teaching with Primary Sources (TPS) grant, CES is one of fewer than 30 TPS Consortium members nationwide. The Collaborative’s Emerging America TPS program provides free professional development to teachers across Massachusetts to introduce them to the world’s largest library and its vast online collection of digitized primary sources. A variety of workshops teach educators to engage diverse learners in critical thinking and meet the challenging literacy goals of the Common Core State Standards. Emerging America offers workshops within local school districts as well to all educators through open enrollment.

MORE: emergingamerica.org/tps

Everyone is a learner
SPECIAL EDUCATION IN INSTITUTIONAL SETTINGS (SEIS)

There are over 600 special education students in nearly 90 institutional settings across Massachusetts, all of whom have the right to a quality education. Aside from the fact that they all have an individualized education program (IEP), there couldn’t be a more diverse student population. These students range from those with serious medical conditions, who may reside at the Massachusetts Hospital School from young adolescence until they reach 22 years, to young adults ordered into the County House of Correction for a shorter duration. Other host agencies include the Department of Youth Services and the Department of Mental Health.

The Special Education in Institutional Settings (SEIS) program at the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) was established to provide special education services to eligible students with disabilities. Given vast differences in geography, institutional setting, age, and learning needs of SEIS students, that mission is not a small one.

Four years ago SEIS contracted with the Collaborative for Educational Services to assist in working toward three main program goals.

The first goal is to provide high-quality special education to all SEIS students. Instruction in all facilities is now better aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks incorporating Common Core standards, and is in compliance with federal and state special education laws and regulations. In this effort, CES has provided professional development across the state for approximately 150 SEIS educators, and has implemented the use of onsite coaching by a team of instructional coaches.

Program-based Learning Teams have been instituted across the state in the past two years so that teachers can better collaborate to meet the needs of individual students. The Collaborative has also enhanced technology integration into curriculum and instruction to support students with disabilities.

The second goal is to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of educational services. CES has worked with DESE to develop a new student information system. Staff can now access student records in real time, streamlining the development of student progress reports. Several new classroom technologies have been added to SEIS classrooms.

Finally, with the establishment of advisory groups to guide the work within each host agency, CES has supported significant progress in the third goal of increasing collaboration among host agencies and SEIS to better meet the needs of students in institutional settings.

THE PUZZLE OF PARENTING

In the Fall of 2011 CES Early Childhood launched a new parent education program called The Puzzle of Parenting. Free workshops offered at sites throughout the Pioneer Valley helped parents of children from birth to age five learn more about the developing minds and bodies of their little ones. Programs were designed to address some of the questions frequently asked by parents and covered topics ranging from sleep issues and positive ways of managing challenging behavior to development of sexuality in young children. The workshops attracted a group of parents diverse in age, marital status, socioeconomic, cultural and educational backgrounds. After a successful first year, The Puzzle of Parenting has returned for 2012-2013 school year, with free child care offered at every workshop.

FACEBOOK, TWITTER, AND BLOGS. OH MY!

Social media is taking hold at the Collaborative! In the spring of 2011, Rich Cairn and Suzanne Judson-Whitehouse piloted an Emerging America Facebook page and Twitter feed, and began publishing regular blog posts at emergingamerica.org/home/blog on topics ranging from strategies for using primary sources in the classroom to the implications of the Common Core on teaching history.

Following the successful pilot, Judson-Whitehouse joined Emily Spiegelman and Casey Daigle-Matos of the Communications and Technology Departments, to write a Social Media policy for the agency. The document, developed in collaboration with Human Resources and the support of agency leadership, was approved by the Board of Governors in July 2012. Policy authors also developed a multi-unit online social media training course for their CES colleagues covering topics such as major social media platforms, the intersection of communication goals and social media, and audience engagement. The course culminates in development of comprehensive social media plans for individual programs or departments.

With this new tool, the Collaborative is positioned to better serve our member districts and to present our work to a wider audience!
Like most college seniors, Jimmy Pereira is busy making future plans. He wants to use his education at Westfield State University to contribute to the community in Brockton, his hometown.

As he talks, it becomes clear Pereira is no ordinary college senior. His desire to help people runs deep, tapping a power and clarity of purpose that comes only through hard experience and learning from life’s challenges.

He knows what is lacking in many urban environments because he’s grown up on those streets and stumbled over the gaps in services. He knows how to help young people who face the stresses of poverty, who have gotten in trouble in school or with the law, because he’s hit rock bottom himself.

“All they need is a little guidance, all they need is a little bit of support, all they need is a little feedback for them to stand up for themselves and carry on after that,” he says.

Pereira was 15 when discord in his family led him to get involved with a new set of friends outside of his neighborhood. Trouble in school led to an alternative school placement. Teachers telling him he would go nowhere led to more risky behavior, resulting in school expulsion, foster care, and a commitment to the Department of Youth Services (DYS).

Pereira had no reason to expect he would return to the community before the age of 18, the terms of his commitment. But in DYS, he started to find the encouragement he needed.

One teacher told him to “have a goal and follow it.” Pereira started setting his sights on college. In DYS, he was challenged to succeed, rather than expected to fail. His teacher also told him “to have fun, but have fun the right way” without drugs and alcohol.

The Collaborative’s commitment to positive youth development lies at the heart of stories like Jimmy’s. Through this approach, DYS students are supported in forming a stable sense of identity, belief in their potential and abilities, positive relationships with caring adults, and a sense of control over their future. Coupled with highly qualified CES teachers and a rigorous curriculum at the 56 DYS schools across Massachusetts, CES is making a positive impact on this diverse youth population.

With a lot of hard work, reflection, and support from caring adults, Pereira came through his own challenging experiences on the other side of the detention wall with a new perspective on his future. He wants to share what he’s learned with other young people so that they can benefit from his experiences.

Last year, he did an internship at CommCorp with Darnell Thigpen Williams, who is now the Associate Director of Professional Development for DYS at CES. Through the internship, Pereira met kids “who were in the same position I was in” and told them, “you can be a doctor, a surgeon, a lawyer. You don’t have to be a drug dealer or a hustler.” Williams also encouraged Pereira, in whom he saw a “motivated, responsive and ambitious young man… able to seek out people to support him.”

Pereira believes that “with diligence and perseverance, you can make anything happen.” And he practices that advice by learning new things, reading and “leaving space for other options or actions to fill your life.”

“You have to teach yourself to be a better person. That’s the best thing you can do.”

The Collaborative for Educational Services is part of the DYS Comprehensive Education Partnership (CEP), which also includes Commonwealth Corporation. The mission, vision, and guiding principles of the CEP embrace a positive youth development approach, resulting in a variety of effective education and employment pathways for students. The approach is based on a Future Focus model—Exit upon Entry—and seeks to guide youth into a variety of education and employment pathways as they return to their communities.
When Jeanine Heil learned there was going to be a professional learning community (PLC) for principals at the Collaborative, she was excited. Having a group of peers that she can share ideas with, and seeing what other administrators are doing has been “very helpful.”

The PLC was initiated by Bill Erickson and Kevin Courtney, who have experience serving as principals and in supporting principals as superintendents. The group met five times last year with speakers and dialogue focused a topic chosen by participants. Last year, the focus was on the legal issues principals face.

Through the PLC, Heil says that “collegial relationships have been formed. Now, I can pick up the phone and feel comfortable firing questions” at a group of peers. Heil says that such a cohort isn’t always easy to find.

Heil finds “one of the hardest things about being a principal is that there are very few people who understand the issues principals face until they have been in that role.”

Heil is in her second year leading the Deerfield Elementary School. Because she has been working out of state for most of her five years as a principal, “I might have more questions than the person who’s been working in Massachusetts or been in the principal’s chair longer than I have.”

While Heil has access to a group of four other principals she can bounce ideas off of, the Collaborative Principals PLC attracts principals from all over Franklin and Hampshire Counties and offers “some fresh, new ideas.”

At her school, she says she is always trying to stimulate dialogue among teachers working with students at the same and at different grade levels. Now, she has a similar group which she can engage in peer-to-peer discussions.

Heil has never been one to shy away from change. She welcomes dialogue between administrators bringing different perspectives to the group. “I’m always looking for solutions and innovative ways to educate our kids and help our teachers.”

Heil appreciates the informal nature of the small group, with its membership of about twenty principals. But in the interest of sharing ideas with a wider spectrum of administrators, she would like to see more principals attend the PLC in the upcoming year, including some who work in other counties.

She admits it can be difficult for principals to even contemplate the notion of going off to a meeting. “It’s hard to step out of the building. You always want to be present in your school at all times.” But even “more valuable,” are opportunities “to sit down…with a group of peers…to ask questions about issues that come up in your building, and brainstorm solutions.”

Heil is also hoping to discuss ideas for implementing the state’s new educator evaluation system, a topic that everyone is talking about. According to Bill Erickson, it’s not likely that Heil will be disappointed. “We’ll discuss whatever the principals want to discuss. It’s their professional learning community.”
Helping young people make healthy lifestyle choices is the driving force behind the Easthampton Prevention Task Force, bringing “people from all different ages and all different sectors of the community” together, says Nancy Dunn.

Dunn, a health teacher at Easthampton High School co-chairs the group with Heather Warner of Strategic Planning Initiative for Families and Youth (SPIFFY). Administered by CES, SPIFFY started 10 years ago to prevent youth substance abuse in Hampshire County. The coalition has since expanded its focus to include issues that impact youth wellness such as school climate, nutrition, and physical activity.

Several years ago, SPIFFY initiated community-based task forces in Easthampton and Northampton to deepen the coalition’s work at the local level. Task Force members identify their community’s capacity for supporting the best efforts and healthy decisions of young people. The Easthampton Prevention Task Force is focusing on:

- recognizing the good work of young people
- creating awareness among parents about preventing substance abuse
- supporting policies that limit youth exposure to alcohol and other drugs
- promoting positive community norms among parents through a high profile media campaign

Task force members distribute mini-grants each year to schools and non-profit groups designing new ways to recognize students who are making positive contributions to the community or achieving their goals. Members also look at how they can make youth and their families feel more welcome when they move into town.

Task Force Member Bryan Delaney, a freshman in Dunn’s class last year, designed, shot and edited a video that welcomes new residents, and highlights landmarks, town offices and fun places. “I want people to feel more welcome when they come into town and know where to go.” The video is included in a packet of materials that task force members and student volunteers will deliver to new families in town.

Resident Lois Levin is actively engaged in Task Force activities, including a Meet and Greet event last fall that attracted over a hundred students, parents, town officials and community residents. Task Force members shared their strategies with the audience and asked for input on whether or not they were on track in strengthening community supports for youth.

While her own children have graduated from high school, Levin joined the Task Force because, “I love teenagers…. they are so easily engaged and enthusiastic.” As a dietician at Baystate Franklin Medical Center, Levin is equally passionate about promoting health.

Levin and Delaney agree it’s important for young people to know that they have support of their peers and adults so that they don’t have to try smoking, alcohol, drugs or other risky behaviors when they are stressed. Through the Easthampton Prevention Task Force, Delaney wants to convey to his peers that using drugs and alcohol is “not going to help you, it’s only going to hurt you.”
FOR LEARNERS / FAMILIES

After School Programs
Supplemental Education Services / Tutoring

Early Childhood
Coordinated Family and Community Engagement (CFCE)
Early Childhood Family Centers
Early Literacy Parent-Child Workshops
Easthampton Success by Six
Parent-Child Home Program
Parent Education and Support / ParentCoach
Welcome Baby Visits

Special Education
Collaborative Center for Assistive Technology & Training (CCATT)
Community-Based Work Experience Programs
HEC Academy Alternative Middle and High School
Occupational Therapy Center (OTC)
Patty Walsh-Cassidy Assistive Technology Lending Library
Specialist Services:
  Physical Therapy
  Psychological Service
  Speech-Language Pathology
  Vision/Mobility
Transitional Alternative Learning Programs

Student Services
Connecting Activities / Student Work-Based Learning
Mount Tom Academy
Perkins Career and Technical Education
Reunion Center (Adult Career Development-Easthampton)
The Third Place (Adult Career Development-Turners Falls)

FOR EDUCATORS

Early Childhood
Center for Social and Emotional Foundations of Early Literacy (CSEFEL) Training and Coaching
Professional Development Workshops and Site-Based Consulting
Mental Health Support Team / Working with Challenging Behaviors
Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) Coaching
Quality Enhancement, QRIS, CDA and Accreditation

Professional Development
Administrator/Teacher Licensure - TeachinMass.org
Center for Education and Data Use (CEDU)
Center for English Language Education (CELE) - cele.collaborative.org
Center for Literacy Learning
Educator Distance/Online Learning
Educator Evaluation Training/Support
Emerging America - EmergingAmerica.org
  Library of Congress—Teaching with Primary Sources (TPS)
  Teaching American History (TAH)
New Teachers Project
Professional Development Workshops and Site-Based Consulting
Professional Learning Communities
Reading Recovery® Teacher Training
The Math Path

Resources and Support
Administrator Search Consultation
Cooperative Purchasing
Moodle (online learning) Hosting and Management/Massachusetts Distance Learning Network
Program Evaluation
Technology Planning, Support, and Website Development/Hosting
Technology Vendor Partnerships and Group Discounts

CES is a state pre-qualified vendor for:
  Conditions for School Effectiveness/Education Improvement Services
  Early Childhood Training/Consulting
  Education Data Warehouse Training/Support
  Educator Evaluation Training/Support
  Professional Development Training/Consulting
  Special Education Training/Consulting

EDUCATION SYSTEM PARTNERSHIPS

Department of Youth Services (DYS) Education Initiative
Special Education in Institutional Settings (SEIS)
William J. Dean Technical High School

OTHER PARTNERSHIPS

Early Childhood CFCE Councils in Partner Communities
Fitchburg State University
Lesley University Center for Reading Recovery
Pioneer Valley District and School Assistance Center (DSAC)
Pioneer Valley Readiness Center
Strategic Planning Initiative for Families & Youth (SPIFFY) - spiffycoalition.org
Unlocking the Light: Integrating the Arts in Juvenile Justice Education
With one-on-one help from the Reunion Center, a ‘storefront’ center for adult learners in downtown Easthampton, Nick earned his GED and set his sights toward community college and a brighter future. School-to-Work connecting activities through the Reunion Center in Easthampton and The Third Place in Turners Falls have helped numerous adult learners improve their lives. The two centers are funded by Work and Learning Program grants through the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Everyone is a learner
Opportunities for Giving:

Lend support in personally meaningful ways through these tax-exempt funds:

Alternative Learning
Mount Tom Academy Alternative High School at Holyoke Community College

Early Childhood
Success by Six (Easthampton)

Collaborative Innovation Fund

Special Education
CES Special Education Programs
The Ben DeMarino Scholarship Fund, HEC Academy Alternative School
The Patty-Walsh Cassidy Assistive Technology Lending Library

Student and Adult Learning and Career Development
The Reunion Center (Easthampton)
The Third Place (Turners Falls)

collaborative.org/giving

Our front cover includes detail from artwork featured on an announcement postcard for a winter 2012 art exhibit at the Moakley U.S. Courthouse in Boston. The piece was created by a student artist in a DYS classroom.

The exhibition, which showcased artwork created by youth involved with the Massachusetts Department of Youth Services, was curated and organized by the DYS Arts InFusion Task Force, a statewide initiative to create access to and opportunities in the arts. This unique partnership of juvenile justice, arts, and educators is led by the Department of Youth Services, the Collaborative for Educational Services, Commonwealth Corporation, and the Massachusetts Cultural Council.