

**Valley Collaborative
Board of Directors Meeting
25 Linnell Circle, Billerica, Massachusetts
Thursday, October 26, 2017 ■ 10:00 a.m.**

Action Required

- I. Approval of Minutes
 - a. Board of Directors, General Session: September 14, 2017
 - b. Board of Directors, Executive Session: September 14, 2017
- II. 2017-2018 Board Calendar – Change March Board Meeting Date to March 1, 2018
- III. Financial Update
 - c. FY' 18 Interim Statement of Net Assets for the period ended September 30, 2017 and Interim Statement of Revenues, Expenses and Changes in Net Assets for the period ending September 30, 2017
 - d. Treasurer's Report
 - e. PARS OPEB Trust Program Summary

No Action Required

- IV. Curriculum Update
 - f. STEM and Valley Elementary School Physical Education Newsletter
- V. Professional Development
 - g. Professional Development Update
- VI. Valley Assisting Others
 - h. Pelham Public Schools
 - i. Andrew Churchill, Executive Director, Lower Pioneer Valley Educational Collaborative
- VII. Communications
 - j. Weekly School Updates
 - k. Valley Middle School Hurricane Harvey Bake Sale

Executive Session

- VIII. To consider the purchase and value of real property



Central Administration Office

25 Linnell Circle, Billerica MA 01821 * Tel: (978)528-7800 * <http://www.valleycollaborative.org>

MEMORANDUM

To: Valley Collaborative Board of Directors
From: Dr. Chris Scott, Executive Director
Date: October 26, 2017
Re: Approval of Minutes

Attached, please find the following minutes:

- a. Board of Directors, General Session: September 14, 2017
- b. Board of Directors, Executive Session- September 14, 2017 No Executive Session

Required Action:

Vote to approve the minutes:

- a. Board of Directors, General Session: September 14, 2017
- b. Board of Directors, Executive Session, September 14, 2017 No Executive Session

Attachments:

- a. Board of Directors, General Session: September 14, 2017
- b. Board of Directors, Executive Session, September 14, 2017 No Executive Session

**Valley Collaborative Board of Directors
General Session Meeting Minutes
September 14, 2017
8:22 a.m. – 8:56 a.m.
25 Linnell Circle, Billerica, MA**

Board Members Present: Mr. Timothy Piwowar, Mr. Christopher Malone, Dr. Michael Flanagan, Ms. Denise Pigeon, Dr. Laura Chesson, Dr. Jay Lang, Mr. Everett Olsen

Board Members Absent: Mr. Steven Stone, Ms. Joan Landers

Collaborative Representatives Present: Dr. Chris Scott, Executive Director; Ms. Joia Mercurio, Assistant Executive Director; Mr. Sean Glavin, Director of Facilities and Operations; Ms. Heidi Kriger, Treasurer; Members of the Collaborative Senior Leadership Team

Also Present: Mr. Thomas Lent, Marathas Barrow Weatherhead Lent LLP

Call to Order: Mr. Timothy Piwowar, Chairman, convened the Collaborative Board Meeting at 8:22 a.m.

Mr. Timothy Piwowar and Dr. Chris A. Scott welcomed the Board Members, Collaborative personnel and guests in attendance.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Timothy Piwowar asked for a motion relating to the June 1, 2017 meeting minutes.

On a motion made by Ms. Denise Pigeon and seconded by Mr. Christopher Malone, a quorum of voters being present, it was voted:

VOTED: To approve the General Session Meeting Minutes for the Board of Directors meeting dated June 1, 2017.

The vote was 4-0-1. Mr. Timothy Piwowar, Mr. Christopher Malone, Dr. Michael Flanagan and Ms. Denise Pigeon voted yes. Dr. Laura Chesson abstained. Dr. Jay Lang and Mr. Everett Olsen were absent for the vote.

On a motion made by Mr. Christopher Malone and seconded by Dr. Michael Flanagan, a quorum of voters being present, it was voted:

VOTED: To approve the Executive Session Meeting Minutes for the Board of Directors meeting dated June 1, 2017.

The vote was 4-0-1. Mr. Timothy Piwovar, Mr. Christopher Malone, Dr. Michael Flanagan and Ms. Denise Pigeon voted yes. Dr. Laura Chesson abstained. Dr. Jay Lang and Mr. Everett Olsen were absent for the vote.

Mr. Timothy Piwovar stated for the record that the executive session meeting minutes were only approved for content, but not yet for release.

[Mr. Everett Olsen arrived at the meeting at 8:27 a.m.]

Revisions to Fiscal Year 2018 Board Meeting Calendar

Mr. Timothy Piwovar directed the Board to the board materials which contained proposed revisions to the meeting dates for the 2017-2018 School Year due to recently announced scheduling conflicts. A discussion ensued and the Board agreed to a revised schedule whereby the meeting initially scheduled for March 15, 2018 would be rescheduled for March 1, 2018.

On a motion made by Dr. Michael Flanagan and seconded by Ms. Denise Pigeon, a quorum of voters being present, it was voted:

VOTED: That the Board of Directors calendar the revised Board meeting dates for the 2017-2018 School Year, and authorizes the Executive Director to post such dates on the Collaborative website.

The vote was 6-0. Mr. Timothy Piwovar, Mr. Christopher Malone, Dr. Michael Flanagan, Ms. Denise Pigeon, Dr. Laura Chesson and Mr. Everett Olsen voted yes. Dr. Jay Lang was absent for the vote.

[Dr. Jay Lang arrived at the meeting at 8:30 a.m.]

Financial Update

Treasurer Report

Ms. Heidi Kriger, the Collaborative Treasurer, provided the Board with her report. Ms. Kriger provided a verbal summary of her report, including available balances, transfers, withdrawals, interest income and ending balances. A written summary report was contained within the Board Binders. There was no further discussion.

Fiscal Year 2017 Update

Dr. Chris Scott provided the Board with an update for Fiscal Year 2017. Dr. Scott directed the Board to the unaudited financial statements within the Board Binder. Dr. Scott provided the Board with an update regarding the Fiscal Year 2017 financial audit. She directed

the Board to financial and enrollment figures provided within the Board Binder. The Board discussed.

PARS/OPEB Trust Program Update

Ms. Heidi Kriger and Dr. Scott provided the Board with an update for the PARS/OPEB Trust Program, including the monthly account reports for the period ending June 30, 2017. They directed the Board to the financial information contained within the Board Binder. There was no further discussion.

Distribution of Surplus Funds

The Collaborative agreement and collaborative regulations provide that the Board shall determine whether cumulative surplus funds will be retained by the Collaborative or whether all or some percentage of such funds will be distributed to the member districts or credited to support programs and services offered to member districts. In the event that an amount of cumulative surplus funds is to be distributed or credited to the member districts, each member district's share will be apportioned in accordance to its tuition payments to the Collaborative for the previous fiscal year. Dr. Scott explained that the projected results for Fiscal Year 2017 are highly favorable, and explained that she and the business office are recommending another distribution of additional cumulative funds to the member districts at this time based on the further review of Fiscal Year 2017 by the accountants. Dr. Scott explained that Mr. Sean Glavin's and Mr. Curt Malonson's projections are conservative, and further funds may be distributed at the next meeting. Mr. Sean Glavin provided the Board with a revised handout entitled "Projected Distribution of Surplus Funds for FY2017 From Enrollment Data". The Board discussed. Mr. Timothy Piwowar stated that the Board and the Collaborative remain in the sound financial position to distribute funds to member districts as a result of Dr. Scott's and the Collaborative Leadership Team's efforts. The Board agreed.

On a motion made by Mr. Everett Olsen and seconded by Dr. Jay Lang, a quorum of voters being present, it was voted:

VOTED: That the Board of Directors hereby authorizes the distribution of \$150,000 in surplus funds to its member districts based on the percentages and methodology discussed at this meeting, specifically an allocation based on the FY2017 tuitions payments to the Collaborative, with such distribution being in the form of either a tuition credit to the member district school committee or cash payment to the member district town, as to be determined by the respective member district.

The vote was 7-0. Mr. Timothy Piwowar, Mr. Christopher Malone, Dr. Michael Flanagan, Ms. Denise Pigeon, Dr. Laura Chesson, Dr. Jay Lang and Mr. Everett Olsen voted yes.

Curriculum Update

Dr. Scott provided the Board with a curriculum update, including work that was completed during the summer. In particular, Dr. Scott highlighted the creation by Valley Collaborative of a scope and sequence for grades 1-6 that are aligned to the Massachusetts Common Core while giving flexibility for differentiating based on student needs. Dr. Scott also reviewed the additional curriculum update items from her memo, a copy of which was contained within the Board Binder. There was no further discussion.

Sensory Integration Improvements

Dr. Scott provided the Board with an update relating to Valley Collaborative's sensory integration improvements and efforts. Dr. Scott referred the Board to her memo contained within the Board Binders. There was no further discussion.

Communications

Dr. Scott directed the Board to the communications contained within the Board Binder. The Board specifically discussed and noted the Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence Conference to which Valley Collaborative had been invited.

Executive Session: To discuss the purchase and value of real property

Mr. Timothy Piwowar stated for the record that there would not be an executive session to discuss the purchase and value of real property.

Further Revisions to Fiscal Year 2018 Board Meeting Calendar

Mr. Everett Olsen requested that the Board consider further revisions to its meeting calendar for the 2017-2018 School Year whereby the meeting start times would be revised from 8:15 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. The Board discussed school start times, Merrimack Valley construction and traffic issues and other reasons which supported the change in meeting start times.

On a motion made by Dr. Michael Flanagan and seconded by Mr. Everett Olsen, a quorum of voters being present, it was voted:

VOTED: That the Board of Directors calendar the revised Board meeting dates for the 2017-2018 School Year, and the revised start time for 10:00 a.m., and authorizes the Executive Director to post such dates and times on the Collaborative website.

The vote was 7-0. Mr. Timothy Piwowar, Mr. Christopher Malone, Dr. Michael Flanagan, Ms. Denise Pigeon, Dr. Laura Chesson, Mr. Everett Olsen and Dr. Jay Lang voted yes.

Mr. Piwowar requested a motion to adjourn the meeting.

On a motion made by Mr. Christopher Malone and seconded by Ms. Denise Pigeon, a quorum of voters being present, it was voted:

VOTED: To adjourn the Board meeting.

The vote was 7-0. Mr. Timothy Piwowar, Mr. Christopher Malone, Dr. Michael Flanagan, Ms. Denise Pigeon, Dr. Laura Chesson, Mr. Everett Olsen and Dr. Jay Lang voted yes.

Mr. Timothy Piwowar adjourned the Collaborative Board Meeting at 8:56 a.m.

LIST OF DOCUMENTS USED, DISTRIBUTED AND REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING:

- Board Binder for September 14, 2017 Meeting (Year 5, Book 8)
- Projected Distribution of Surplus Funds for FY 2017 from Enrollment Data

Respectfully Submitted,

Mr. Timothy Piwowar, Chairman

Dated: _____



Valley Collaborative

*25 Linnell Circle, Billerica MA 01821 * Tel: (978)528-7800 * <http://www.valleycollaborative.org>*

MEMORANDUM

To: Valley Collaborative Board of Directors
From: Dr. Chris Scott
Date: October 26, 2017
Re: Executive Session Minutes

September 14, 2017 Executive Session Minutes – No Executive Session

Required Action:

Vote to Approve – September 14, 2017 Executive Session Minutes – No Executive Session

Attachments:

None



Central Administration Office

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MEMORANDUM

To: Valley Collaborative Board of Directors
From: Dr. Chris Scott, Executive Director
Date: October 26, 2017
Re: 2017-2018 Board Calendar – Change March Board Meeting Date

It was discussed at the September 14, 2017 Board Meeting that we will change the March Board Meeting Date to March 1, 2018.

Required Action:

Vote

Attachments:

None



Valley Collaborative 2017-2018 Board Meetings

July 4 Independence Day
July 10 Summer Session Begins

JULY 2017						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

AUGUST 2017						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

August 18 Summer Session Ends
Early Release Day

Sept. 4 No School - Labor Day
Sept. 5 First Day of School
Sept. 14 Board Meeting

SEPTEMBER 2017						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

OCTOBER 2017						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Oct. 9 No School - Columbus Day
Oct. 26 Board Meeting

Nov. 9 Board Meeting to Present FY'19 Budget And FY' 17 Audit
Nov. 10 No School - Veterans' Day (observed)
Nov. 22 Early Release Day for Thanksgiving
Nov. 23-24 Thanksgiving Break

NOVEMBER 2017						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

DECEMBER 2017						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Dec. 1 Board Meeting Approval of FY'19 Budget and Annual Report
Dec. 22-Jan. 1 No School - Winter Break

Dec. 22-Jan. 1 No School - Winter Break
Jan. 15 No School - MLK Jr. Day
Jan. 18 Board/Stakeholder Meeting

JANUARY 2018						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

FEBRUARY 2018						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28			

Feb. 19-23 No School - February Break

March 1 Board Meeting (to be Voted on in October)
March 30 No School - Good Friday

MARCH 2018						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

APRIL 2018						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

April 16-20 No School - April Break

May 28 No School - Memorial Day

MAY 2018						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

JUNE 2018						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

June 7 Board Meeting
June 25 Last day of school (if 5 snow days used)/ Early Release Day



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MEMORANDUM

To: Valley Collaborative Board of Directors
From: Dr. Chris Scott, Executive Director
Date: October 26, 2017
Re: Financial Update for FY'18

Valley's first quarter (49 of 210 days – 23.3%) for FY'18 was very successful. Expenses are usually a little higher at the beginning of the school year because all of our classrooms are getting set up. However, at the end of the first quarter of FY'18 expenses are trending lower than expected – 21.98%. On the other hand, in September revenues are usually a little lower than the percent of the school year completed (23.3% as of September 30, 2017) and trend higher as enrollment increases throughout the year. However, at the end of the first quarter of FY'18 revenues are higher than projected – 23.85%.

Valley's schools continue to enjoy strong enrollment trends and as such we are currently expecting to have to return a significant amount of revenue to our member school districts at the end of FY'18. This would make it the 4th consecutive year that Valley has been in a strong financial position resulting in a change to its net assets exceeding the 25% rule; resulting in a refund to its member districts.

Valley Collaborative's PARS OPEB Trust continues to enjoy strong investment returns. The ending balance as of 8/31/2017 was \$3,610,993.37. The trust saw a 9.25% investment return in year one. Please find enclosed the full PARS report.

Valley Collaborative is currently working with its financial auditors to complete its FY'17 audit. The audit will be presented, along with the FY'19 budget, at the November 9th Board Meeting.

Required Action:

None

Attachments:

c. FY' 18 Interim Statement of Net Assets for the period ended September 30, 2017 and Interim Statement of Revenues, Expenses and Changes in Net Assets for the period ending September 30, 2017

d. Treasurer's Report

e. PARS OPEB Trust Program Summary

Valley Collaborative
Interim Statement of Net Assets
For the Period Ended September 30, 2017

UNAUDITED	
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 5,055,744
Restricted Investments - OPEB	3,610,993
Accounts Receivable, Net	2,369,227
Prepaid Expenses and Other Assets	22,756
Cash Held for Member Districts	1,820,659
Other Assets	-
Total Current Assets	<u>12,879,379</u>
Non-Current Assets	
Land & Building	6,485,416
Furniture, Equipment, and Leasehold Improvements,	
Net of Depreciation	990,427
Construction in Progress	9,950
Total Non-Current Assets	<u>7,485,793</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u><u>\$ 20,365,172</u></u>
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities	\$ 843,955
Other Liabilities	26,933
Deferred Revenue	-
Member District Accounts (Settlement)	1,820,659
Total Current Liabilities	<u>2,691,547</u>
Total Liabilities	<u>2,691,547</u>
Net Assets	
Operating - Unrestricted	5,002,078
Restricted - Student Activities	30,157
Reserved - OPEB Trust	3,610,993
Reserved - Capital	1,500,000
Invested in Capital Assets, Net of Related Debt	7,530,397
Total Net Assets	<u>17,673,625</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	<u><u>\$ 20,365,172</u></u>

Valley Collaborative
Interim Statement of Revenues, Expenses and Changes in Net Assets
For the Period Ending September 30, 2017
49 of 210 (23.3%) School Days

UNAUDITED			
	<u>BUDGET</u>	<u>ACTUAL</u>	
REVENUES			
Services	\$ 15,260,680	\$ 3,622,840	
State Contracts	2,290,000	559,868	
Other	447,000	101,420	
Interest	4,500	8,738	
Total Revenues	18,002,180	4,292,866	23.85%
EXPENSES			
Salaries	11,735,646	2,455,208	
Employee Benefits	2,210,000	436,106	
Operating Expenses	2,052,700	591,649	
Leases & Rentals	444,030	117,131	
Depreciation	738,200	176,767	
Total Expenses	17,180,576	3,776,861	21.98%
Change in Net Assets - Operating	\$ 821,604	\$ 516,005	
Non Operating Activities			
Non-Operating Revenues	-	-	
Non-Operating Expenses (1)	(425,000)	(44,604)	
Change in Net Assets	\$ 396,604	\$ 471,401	
<i>(1) Capital Plan</i>			

d. Treasurer's Report

VALLEY COLLABORATIVE TREASURER'S REPORT SEPTEMBER 30, 2017

ENTERPRISE BANK ACCOUNTS

	Valley Operating Enterprise a/c 493426	Valley Payroll Enterprise a/c 795823	Community Catering Enterprise a/c 531401	ICS MMDA a/c 856490	Independence Project a/c 821315	Total Enterprise Bank
Beginning Balance	\$ 2,167,775.09	\$ 233,431.88	\$ 19,119.45	\$ 2,001,710.20	\$ 5,529.59	\$ 4,427,566.21
Receipts	885,988.64		7,907.16			\$ 893,895.80
Transfers In		1,000,000.00				\$ 1,000,000.00
Withdrawals:						
Payroll		(755,430.66)				\$ (755,430.66)
Accounts Payable	(332,451.84)		(1,095.71)			\$ (333,547.55)
Other						-
Total Withdrawals	(332,451.84)	(755,430.66)	(1,095.71)	-	-	(1,088,978.21)
Transfers Out	(1,000,000.00)					\$ (1,000,000.00)
Int./Investment Earnings				329.02		329.02
Ending Balance	\$ 1,721,311.89	\$ 478,001.22	\$ 25,930.90	\$ 2,002,039.22	\$ 5,529.59	\$ 4,232,812.82

OTHER CASH ACCOUNTS

	Eastern a/c 601076227	MMDT 00044263747	Total Cash
Beginning Balance	\$ 250,000.00	\$ 2,379,952.21	\$ 7,057,518.42
Receipts			\$ 893,895.80
Transfers In			\$ 1,000,000.00
Withdrawals:			
Payroll			\$ (755,430.66)
Accounts Payable			\$ (333,547.55)
Other			-
Total Withdrawals	-	-	(1,088,978.21)
Transfers Out			\$ (1,000,000.00)
Int./Investment Earnings		2,559.59	2,888.61
Ending Balance	\$ 250,000.00	\$ 2,382,511.80	\$ 6,865,324.62

RESTRICTED

PARS OPEB TRUST
\$ 3,610,993.37
-
\$ 3,610,993.37

as of August 31, 2017



VALLEY COLLABORATIVE
PARS OPEB Trust Program

Account Report for the Period
8/1/2017 to 8/31/2017

Heidi Kriger
 Treasurer
 Valley Collaborative
 40 Linnell Circle
 Billerica, MA 01821

Account Summary

Source	Beginning Balance as of 8/1/2017	Contributions	Earnings	Expenses	Distributions	Transfers	Ending Balance as of 8/31/2017
OPEB	\$3,595,733.74	\$0.00	\$16,008.74	\$749.11	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,610,993.37
Totals	\$3,595,733.74	\$0.00	\$16,008.74	\$749.11	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,610,993.37

Investment Selection

Vanguard Balanced Strategy

Investment Objective

The Balanced Portfolio invests in Vanguard mutual funds using an asset allocation strategy designed for investors seeking both a reasonable level of income and long-term growth of capital and income.

Investment Return

1-Month	3-Months	1-Year	Annualized Return			Plan's Inception Date
			3-Years	5-Years	10-Years	
0.45%	2.44%	9.25%	-	-	-	6/24/2015

Information as provided by US Bank, Trustee for PARS; Not FDIC Insured; No Bank Guarantee; May Lose Value

Past performance does not guarantee future results. Performance returns may not reflect the deduction of applicable fees, which could reduce returns. Information is deemed reliable but may be subject to change.

Investment Return: Annualized rate of return is the return on an investment over a period other than one year multiplied or divided to give a comparable one-year return.

Account balances are inclusive of Trust Administration, Trustee and Investment Management fees



Central Administration Office

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MEMORANDUM

To: Valley Collaborative Board of Directors
 From: Dr. Chris A. Scott, Executive Director
 Glen Costello, STEM Lead
 Lucas Bolduc, Elementary School Phys. Ed. Teacher
 Date: October 26, 2017
 Re: Curriculum Update

Students and staff across the collaborative have been taking steps towards increasing their STEM fluency. Throughout the collaborative, teachers have made a strong effort towards incorporating simple STEM Activities inside of their curriculum to increase student engagement. Overall teacher attitude to Mathematics (the highest factor in student engagement) has never been higher here at the collaborative!

To date 126 students collaborative wide have used ST Math, on average students are receiving a somewhere between 45-90 minutes per week of individualized, rigorous math instruction thanks to ST Math!

Our STEM Lab is up and running! We now proudly have a state of the art lab which is equipped with 3 zSpace units and a 3d printer. We are one of a handful of school districts in the Commonwealth who has this technology.

zSpace combines AR and VR to create the ultimate learning experience. The zSpace Learning Lab includes a suite of educational software, hundreds of learning activities ready for integration into your curriculum, and zSpace all-in-one PCs.

16 teachers across the collaborative completed an intensive 6 hour training. We can now add virtual/augmented reality to our teaching toolbox. For any teacher who was not trained, early November is the tentative date for the next training.

#makemathfun



Also, please see the attached Valley Collaborative Elementary School P.E. and Wellness Newsletter.

Required Action:

Attachments:

- f. Valley Collaborative Elementary School Physical Education and Wellness Newsletter

Valley Collaborative Elementary School

P.E. and Wellness Newsletter

September 2017
Volume 1, Issue 1

Lucas Bolduc
Physical Education & Wellness Teacher



Dear Students and Families,

Welcome to the 2017-2018 school year at Valley Collaborative! I am very excited to announce a few things, the first being this newsletter! At the beginning of each month, I will send out a letter just like this explain what your students have been doing in both Physical Education and Wellness/Health classes, as well as what lies ahead of us. I am very excited to also announce that I will now be seeing your child(ren) twice a week; once for physical education classes, and once in the classroom.

Contents

New-Year Address 1 - 2

Curriculum Permission Slips 3

The new health curriculum (The Great Body Shop) is going to greatly benefit our students and ultimately improve health literacy levels school-wide. It is my goal to equip the students and their families with the knowledge and skills needed to make healthy choices throughout their lives. To supplement this process, students will be receiving 'Student Issues' each month aligned to different topics. To start off the school year, each grade-level will be going through an Injury Prevention and Personal Safety unit. Topics can range from 'who-to-trust' to, First-aid skills, but all lessons will be developmentally, age-appropriate. At the end of each unit, your child will take home their Student Issue where I hope to see you get involved with them! Interactions between this newly acquired knowledge and their home-environment play a crucial role in increasing the overall quality of life and well-being of any child as well as the healthy choices they make. The Family Bulletin at the back of each Student Issue can help stimulate conversations between you and your child, engage with their learning, and review at-home safety procedures such as what to do should there ever be a fire. Overall, the new curriculum is going to help us all improve the well-being of every child!





More information
can be found at
www.skatepass.com
Testimonials of
other schools and
other information
can be found here.

*“August 2017: The
Valley
Collaborative
Elementary School
in Tyngsboro,
Massachusetts will
make history this
fall becoming the
first school in
Massachusetts to
Skateboard and
Snowboard in PE!”*

Lastly, some exciting purchases were made over the summer to improve the Physical Education curriculum content and delivery. Some gymnastics and plyometric equipment was purchased to further develop movement-concepts and locomotor units. Also, as some of your children may have come home very excited about, we are the first school district in the state to have the Skatepass Skateboarding and Snowboarding curriculums. In the curriculums, pads and helmets will be worn by **everyone**, no exceptions. We have everything; impact-tested helmets, knee and elbow pads, and even reinforced-wrist-guard. Additionally, before any child touches a skateboard, proper use of all equipment will be reviewed, correct stance will be identified, and falling properly will all be covered. Some of you may be concerned by the superficial nature of skateboarding but I want to stress, learning “tricks” is not the focus. Balance, coordination, and enjoyment are the goals. In a final statement on this new curriculum I want to share, recent research shows that only 10% of students are natural athletes that enjoy a physically competitive environment. This activity provides an individualized, non-competitive environment that still works essential skills as outlined by national and state standards.

Ultimately, the decision is yours to let your child participate in this aspect of the curriculum. I can assure you, your student will receive the best instruction and methods of delivery that best suits their learning style. As a final point, these curriculums are excellent examples of why Physical Education should be the last thing cut from any child’s educational experience; this is an activity where truly, holistic growth and development is occurring. Physically, they will have to acquire skills that must be utilized throughout life (i.e. balance, coordination), cognitively, a higher level of thinking must be engaged while performing the tasks, and affectively, must demonstrate socially acceptable behaviors/interactions with their peers in the learning environment.

Located on the last page of this newsletter is the permission slip for your child. I highly recommend it as we are the only school in the stat to offer a program of this kind! The dates listed on the permission slip are for the 2017-2018 School Year, however, I’m looking to start up the introductory unit this month, and come back to it later in the school year as the weather gets colder and we are inside more; more to come in future newsletters! Overall, I am very excited to start this new school year with the students as much learning and fun lies ahead of us!



Central Administration Office

25 Linnell Circle, Billerica MA 01821 * Tel: (978)528-7800 * <http://www.valleycollaborative.org>

MEMORANDUM

To: Valley Collaborative Board of Directors
From: Dr. Chris Scott, Executive Director
Joia Mercurio, Assistant Executive Director
Kari Morrin, Director of Student Services
Date: October 26, 2017
Re: Professional Development

In order to ensure our staff is highly trained and “qualified”, Professional Development is ongoing for licensed and non-licensed staff. We had a successful half day of Professional Development on Friday, October 6, 2017; please see attached memo which outlined the offerings. Our next Professional Development Day is NPEN on Tuesday, November 7, 2017. On this day Valley will be offering numerous Professional Development workshops for Therapists (Speech, OT, PT) in the Northeast Region.

Required Action:

None

Attachments:

g. Professional Development for Licensed Employees



Office of Professional Development

25 Linnell Circle, Billerica, MA 01821 * Tel: (978) 528-7800 * <http://www.valleycollaborative.org>

MEMORANDUM

To: Valley Collaborative Licensed Employees
From: Joia Mercurio, Assistant Executive Director
Kari Morrin, Director of Student Services
Date: September 28, 2017
Re: October 6, 2017 – Early Release Professional Development Day for Licensed Staff

Valley Collaborative is eager to provide its licensed educators with quality professional development on its scheduled professional development early release day: October 6, 2017. We are pleased to have six offerings this year.

BRAIN GYM®

An Action Oriented Educational Program for Whole Brain Learning

by Eliza Bergeson, M.Ed. and Bonnie Hershey, M.Ed.

Location: Site 1 Milieu – 40 Linnell Circle, Billerica

Time: 11:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Audience: Site 3 Licensed Educators

Brain Gym® is an educational program which uses simple movements to enhance learning abilities in children and adults. This program is developed by Paul E. Dennison, Ph.D., an expert in child motor development. It is based upon 80 years of research by educational therapists, developmental optometrists, and other developmental specialists.

Brain Gym consists of simple movements similar to the movements that children naturally do during their first years of life to accomplish important developmental steps for coordination of eyes, ears, hands, and the whole body. The Brain Gym activities have been shown to support children in gaining the physical skills they need in order to learn to read, write, and otherwise function effectively in the classroom.

Understanding Computer Based Testing and How it will Impact Valley Elementary School?

Facilitate by Annie Willis, Valley Elementary School Principal, Pam Walker, Valley Elementary School Program Lead, and Joia Mercurio, Assistant Executive Director

Location: Cafetorium – 135 Coburn Road, Tyngsborough

Time: 11:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Audience: Valley Elementary School Licensed Educators (with a few exceptions, please see your Principal)

Computer Based Testing (CBT) refers to the mode of testing for the Next Generation MCAS. As you may know, during the 2016-2017 school year, the state CBT requirement was for grades 4 and 8. However, Valley Collaborative was granted a waiver and did not implement CBT last school year. The Technology Department along with the Technology Committee dedicated last school year to ensuring Valley has the infrastructure and resources necessary for implementing CBT this coming school year and will continue to be in touch accordingly.

The CBT requirement for the 2017-2018 school year is for grades 4, 5, 7, and 8 and optional for grades 3 and 6. All grades (3-8 and 10) will be required to take MCAS via CBT for the 2018-2019 school year.

This session will focus specifically on understanding the vocabulary relative to CBT, reviewing the new accommodations available in the CBT system, participating in the training Modules designed by the DESE and the vendor used in CBT (Pearson), and most importantly, how we can increase our students' digital literacy throughout the year to prepare them for CBT in the Spring.

Understanding Computer Based Testing and How it will Impact Valley Middle School?

Facilitate by Nicole Noska, Valley Middle School Principal, Brian Mihalek, Valley Middle School Program Lead, and Kari Morrin, Director of Student Service

Location: Middle School Cafe - 40 Linnell Circle, Billerica

Time: 11:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Audience: Valley Middle School Licensed Educators (with a few exceptions, please see your Principal)

Computer Based Testing (CBT) refers to the mode of testing for the Next Generation MCAS. As you may know, during the 2016-2017 school year, the state CBT requirement was for grades 4 and 8. However, Valley Collaborative was granted a waiver and did not implement CBT last school year. The Technology Department along with the Technology Committee dedicated last school year to ensuring Valley has the infrastructure and resources necessary for implementing CBT this coming school year and will continue to be in touch accordingly.

The CBT requirement for the 2017-2018 school year is for grades 4, 5, 7, and 8 and optional for grades 3 and 6. All grades (3-8 and 10) will be required to take MCAS via CBT for the 2018-2019 school year.

This session will focus specifically on understanding the vocabulary relative to CBT, reviewing the new accommodations available in the CBT system, participating in the training Modules designed by the DESE and the vendor used in CBT (Pearson), and most importantly, how we can increase our students' digital literacy throughout the year to prepare them for CBT in the Spring.

Understanding zSpace and how it will help us incorporate Virtual Reality into our Curriculum?

Facilitate by zSpace representatives and Glen Costello, STEM Lead, Valley Collaborative

Location: STEM Lab - 25 Linnell Circle, Billerica

Date & Time: 10/5 & 10/6 (attend one session) 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Audience: Specific educators have been identified by Glen Costello, STEM Lead in collaboration with Principals to attend this training. If you are unsure if you should be in attendance, please see your Principal.

Valley Collaborative is excited to introduce its newly renovated STEM Lab located at 25 Linnell Circle, Billerica. The STEM Lab will be comprised of three zSpace computers and one 3D printer. This six-hour professional development training provides an introduction to the use of zSpace STEM applications for teachers. zSpace combines elements of virtual reality and augmented reality to create lifelike experiences on the computer that are immersive and interactive.

“Incorporating the Practices of SBIRT Screening and Understanding the Updates Regarding the Screening Protocol with DPH I”

Facilitate by Jess Scalzi, Lead Nurse

Location: Nursing Office - 40 Linnell Circle, Billerica

Time: 11:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Audience: All Valley Collaborative Nursing Staff

Jess Scalzi, Lead Nurse will host a session with Valley’s Nursing Team to discuss health screenings and the implementation of the SBIRT screening as there have been a few updates with the screening protocol with DPH I.

“How to Support Those at Risk of Suicide”

Presented by Middlesex Partnerships for Youth

Location: Site 2 Milieu - 40 Linnell Circle, Billerica

Time: 11:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Audience: Site 1 & Site 2 Licensed Educators

This workshop trains professionals who care for and support those considered at a high risk for suicide. Participants will learn about Samaritans’ services, facts and myths of suicide, risk factors, and warning signs. Participants will also learn how to talk to an individual who may be suicidal and basic steps in getting a suicidal person help. This workshop is presented by Samaritans, Inc.

“Anxiety and School Performance”

Presented by Middlesex Partnerships for Youth

Location: Site 2 Milieu - 40 Linnell Circle, Billerica

Time: 1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Audience: Site 1 & Site 2 Licensed Educators

This workshop will review how anxiety affects student behavior and performance, and strategies that can be employed to help students effectively manage the demands of school and home. This workshop is presented by Middlesex Partnerships for Youth.



Central Administration Office

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MEMORANDUM

To: Valley Collaborative Board of Directors
From: Dr. Chris Scott, Executive Director
Date: October 26, 2017
Re: Valley Assisting Others

Valley frequently gets requests to share its best practices with others. In September the Executive Director of Lower Pioneer Valley Educational Collaborative spent some time at Valley reviewing our most effective financial and operational systems as they are working to streamline and improve upon their operations. As well, a teacher from Pelham Elementary School toured our Emotional Behavioral Program at the Elementary School in order to learn how it could improve the quality of their programming.

Required Action:

None

Attachments:

- j. Pelham Public Schools
- k. Andrew Churchill, Executive Director, Lower Pioneer Valley Educational Collaborative

From: Churchill, Andrew
To: [Chris Scott](#); [Sean Glavin](#)
Subject: thank you
Date: Friday, September 29, 2017 3:38:30 PM

Hi Chris and Sean,

Thanks so much for taking the time to walk me through your operations - it was really really helpful, and fun hanging out with you guys! Thanks also to Joia for the use of her office. :-)

Any time you want to come check out our half-day voc program or anything else we do, let me know.

Thanks again, and see you soon,
Andy

--

Andrew Churchill
Executive Director
Lower Pioneer Valley Educational Collaborative
174 Brush Hill Avenue
West Springfield, MA 01089
413.735.2200

When writing or responding, please remember that the Secretary of State's Office has determined that email is public record.



Central Administration Office

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MEMORANDUM

To: Valley Collaborative Board of Directors
 From: Dr. Chris Scott, Executive Director
 Date: October 26, 2017
 Re: Communications

As always, a great deal has happened at Valley Collaborative since our last Board meeting. Valley had very successful Open Houses for its Middle School, High School and Adult Programs. We had over 100 people tour and meet with our staff. It was an inspirational night with a great deal of positive feedback from parents and caregivers. Valley staff needs to be commended for all of their hard work and care. On October 26th the Elementary School is holding its Open House and we are sure it will be well attended too.

On a sunny Sunday in October, the Valley Elementary School staff raised funds and awareness for research and lifelong programs for people with Autism. Staff came together as a community to celebrate, connect, and inspire at "The Greater Boston Walk for Autism." Our dedicated, passionate staff raised \$3,925 towards the cause.

Each week the principals provide the team with an update on their schools. The information is most interesting and I thought the Board would enjoy reading these weekly e-mailed updates. I have included the weekly newsletters along with other various communications and artifacts for your review.

Required Action:

None

Attachments:

- j. Weekly Updates
- k. Valley Middle School Hurricane Harvey Bake Sale



Central Administration Office

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MEMORANDUM

To: Valley Collaborative Board of Directors
From: Dr. Chris Scott, Executive Director
Date: October 26, 2017
Re: Weekly Program Updates from
Annie Willis, Valley Elementary School Principal

Each week the principals provide the team with an update on their schools. The information is most interesting and I thought the Board would enjoy reading these weekly e-mailed updates. I have included the weekly newsletters below:

Week of September 5-8

Beginning of the school year went well! I'm still adjusting and getting caught up but it sounds like this summer was very productive and excellent for my kids.

Upcoming next week:

Tours

IEPS and eval results

First Parent Advisory Group meeting

As I discussed at leadership we are participating in a really cool wellness and PE opportunity. Lucas our PE teacher set up for us. See the link! <http://www.skatepass.com/programs/>

The literacy expert Tammy is also making her first visit to work with our coach here

Looking forward to a good year

Week of September 11-15

This week I feel a bit more into the swing of things again!

Our greenhouse is amazing. The kids have taken what they have grown and started incorporating it into Vivi's kitchen. The cabbage and tomatos are being used this and next week in the cooking groups and tasting tables are being prepared for the students products. This week is pickles!

Life skills has started with our "out to eat" at local restaurants to teach meal and community skills.

Additional classrooms have gone on short easy hikes to enjoy the fall weather before it becomes too cold.

Our Math Lead is beginning to incorporate the work into the classes starting next week with some teacher training and our literacy coach is hosting a new teacher workshop as well for the literacy program.

The kids started their skateboarding groups in the gym and they LOVE it.

Tours, evaluations and IEP meetings are starting up again as well.

Week of September 29-October 5

I love hearing about everything around the other sites. Elementary school has had several new students start this year which always adds a little spice to the day! Our newest kindergartener from Westford starts Monday. We have solidified all of our curriculum maps for the year and the curriculum leads have been working on pushing into the classrooms to model and help organize the teachers. We are trying some new models of instruction this year, with more sharing of teachers amongst classes based upon strengths. I will let you know how it all works. The staff were inspired by orientation day. The students have all been working on a positive social message raps per classroom with Bryan the music therapist. When we are done I'll sell you the CD :) One of the best highlights this week has been Glen bringing some of his high school students over for volunteer work in a classroom. It honestly is great to see, my kids love it. The wellness and PE skateboarding unit has started and the kids are so excited. Next week the staff are looking forward to the Z space training and professional development day Friday.

Week of October 16-20

This week we had a ton of IEP meetings, interviews and tours from Chelmsford, Andover, Dracut and Methuen. Some really feel good meetings though with kids making a ton of progress (which was nice). And always that one really difficult case that keeps you up at night.

We have been accessing the community more often this year with groups of kids out in the community every day. Pumpkin picking, lunch group, mall walking and the zspace!

We started some internal committees here to mirror the collaborative wide committees to work on our technology needs and safety issues in the building. Paul and Mark have been hearing from me often and have been very responsive.

This week we started implementing our classroom communication on classroom dojo for sharing student work and samples to parents. I'll keep you updated on how that goes!

Next week we look forward to our open house, Halloween Festivities and spooky themed staff Breakfast.

See some of you tomorrow,



Central Administration Office

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MEMORANDUM

To: Valley Collaborative Board of Directors
 From: Dr. Chris Scott, Executive Director
 Date: October 26, 2017
 Re: Weekly Program Updates from
 Nicole Noska, Valley Middle School Principal

Each week the principals provide the team with an update on their schools. The information is most interesting and I thought the Board would enjoy reading these weekly e-mailed updates. I have included the weekly newsletters below:

Week of September 4-8

The week has been a relatively quiet one so far. We are excited to open the school store tomorrow afternoon! Next week I have several district meetings (reconvene to review independent evaluations and a progress meeting), as well as a Billerica student referral tour and a Merrimack, NH student referral tour. The students are going on several outings, including canoeing with Josh and Trevor, incentive trip to Concord/Lexington battle ground, and trips to Market Basket for cooking groups. I will be scheduling a time to meet with you to review the item request for the Blue Room (sensory space) that we are developing with our OT, Joanna Bond. I am looking forward to showing you all of the cool ideas we have for that space.

Week of September 11-15

Thank you for inviting the students from the middle school to perform at today's board meeting. They were still beaming when I came back and saw them in class, and were extremely proud of themselves. I let them know how impressed everyone was with their talent!

Highlights for the upcoming week include several community outings, including an outdoor ed. trip with Josh and Trevor through Lynn Woods Reservation on Tuesday. The hiking is relatively mellow and offers a potential visit to the caves at Dungeon Rock, or climbing to beautiful views of Boston atop the Stone Tower. Students will also be going to Altitude Trampoline Park and the grocery store for cooking groups. There are several community service projects happening: students making and selling dog treats and toys (of which the proceeds will be donated to a local animal shelter) and a bake sale (proceeds from this will go to the Harvey and Irma hurricane victims. The bake sale will happen next week, day TBD. It's great to see students giving back and feeling like they are making a difference.

A number of annual reviews are on the horizon and with that our classroom clinical meetings at the middle school resume next week. I have a new student from Billerica starting next Wednesday for an extended evaluation, and several tours in the works for referrals from non-member districts (Arlington, Lawrence, Acton Boxborough, and Merrimack, NH).

Week of September 18-22

Things are amping up in the middle school. We are finalizing our plan for our 'Blue Room'. It will be a soothing sensory space designed for students who present with dysregulation and benefit from the use of therapeutic tools and equipment to help diffuse excess energy, disruptive behaviors, and anxiety. Through the use of multi-sensory stimuli such as fiber optic lights, comfortable seating, a speaker system playing soothing music, slow-moving projections, a bubble tube, and more, students will be able to relax in order to achieve a sense of calm, as well as improved and sustained attention, auditory awareness, focus, and visual tracking. Stay tuned for updates on the grand opening of the room! We are looking forward to its opening, as the honeymoon period is finally over and student behavior is on the rise.

We have multiple trips scheduled for next week. Several classes are going apple picking on Wednesday at Smolak Farms. The ASD-ISON classroom is going out to breakfast for the first time for life skills class on Thursday and tomorrow I have a class going to a farm and apple picking.

Next Thursday between 10am and 12pm there will be a fundraiser outside of Joe's Bistro. OT, Joanna Bond, has spearheaded this event and all proceeds will go to the hurricane victims. The class will be selling treats for people, as well as for dogs! That is also picture day. I have volunteered my cafeteria space for picture taking starting at 8AM.

I have two students starting on Monday- one Tewksbury in the ISON room and one from Lawrence starting in my EB transition classes. We've had a few promising first round interviews this week so fingers crossed that I will have some of my open positions filled in the upcoming weeks.

Week of October 9-13

What a fast, busy week! I would like to start by thanking everyone who made a purchase or donated to the Middle School bake sale. The students sold homemade baked goods, as well as homemade dog toys / treats. They raised over \$250 that will go to the Houston Humane Society.

Teachers are looking forward to incorporating the Chrome Books into their daily lessons after participating in last Friday's CBT PD and having the opportunity to trial them. Tomorrow the Middle School students will get over to Z space for the first time and I am excited to start implementing this more regularly into the middle school STEM curriculum.

We have a new Tewksbury student starting on a 45 day this Monday and several referrals arrived in the mail this week from non-member districts (two Andover, two Ayer-Shirley, Lexington). Added in are several IEP meetings and interviews.

Week of October 16-20

What a quick week this has been. Tomorrow I have three classes out on field trips. One class venturing out to Salem, MA, another on a fishing trip, and one participating in weekly swimming class. Next week's trips include Altitude Trampoline Park, volunteering at Gaining Ground (a non-profit farm which delivers it's harvest to local food pantries), and community lunch at Belly Buster's in Billerica. Friday afternoon will be full of fun with a half day of Halloween activities planned.

One new student from Tewksbury started this past Monday for a 45 day assessment. I have two other 45 day referrals on the table (Ayer/Shirley and Wilmington). Three new referrals came in this week: Arlington, Billerica, Wilmington. Two student visits to finalize the referral process on Monday and several parent tours are in the books for next week. This past week was full of IEP and update/progress meetings; next week will slow down a bit on that front. It has been exceptional this past week talking with parents and districts and having conversations about how much progress their child has made.

I look forward to spending time with my colleagues tomorrow at the Special Education Summit. I hope you have a great weekend.



Central Administration Office

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MEMORANDUM

To: Valley Collaborative Board of Directors
 From: Dr. Chris Scott, Executive Director
 Date: October 26, 2017
 Re: Weekly Program Updates from
 Chris Cowan, Valley Transitional High School Principal

Each week the principals provide the team with an update on their schools. The information is most interesting and I thought the Board would enjoy reading these weekly e-mailed updates. I have included the weekly newsletters below:

Site 1 Week 1 Update

As we start the 3rd day of school, I can safely say that we are off to an excellent start.

Attendance numbers are up compared to last year-we are averaging about 6 absences per day so far.

Students are adapting nicely to our new schedule changes and other implementations this year.

On the whole, behaviors are down so far (knock on wood).

Advisors have met our goal of contacting every parent and guardian at this point.

This year, we have 10 freshmen. Last year, we started the year with zero. Needless to say, there is an influx of new blood when you combine these freshmen with all of our other new students. The student buy-in that we are seeing, even from day one, is seemingly stronger than I've ever seen. I'm excited about this group.

Today, Tomorrow, and Next Week's Plans:

Today is Patriot's Opening Night, so today we are doing a Patriots Spirit Day which we have incorporated into a PBIS incentive. Students receive rap it up tickets for every article of Patriots attire.

Tomorrow is a hike for our students who have an academic week. Generally, we will go on more field trips at the tail end of an academic week if teachers agree that they had a productive first three or four days with students.

Next week, the Cluck Truck will begin the year on Tuesday, and every other Tuesday thereafter.

Next Thursday is an EPE trip with Josh and Trevor. This trip is a canoeing adventure on the historic Concord River.

Trips next week potentially include Patriots Hall of Fame (academic and vocational students eligible), and another hike similar to this week's. The reason for a "similar hike" is that we will have completely different students on their academic week and we want them to have similar opportunities when it comes to trips.

If the first few days are any indication of what's to come, it's going to be an excellent year for students and staff alike.

Site 1 Week 2 Update

On Site Updates:

- For our freshmen and junior classes, this marks their first vocational week. For our sophomore and senior classes, this is their first academic week. So, this essentially felt like a “second” first week of school for students due to the new experiences.
- On the whole, our new model has continued to thrive. Our transitions and our student buy-in continues to go better than expected.
- Students who have been absent twice in one academic week have been participating in Academic Recovery at the beginning of their vocational week, which we house on site. This has went well and has lent itself to better academic production and work ethic for our students who are motivated to get back to their vocational programming.
- This past week, the Cluck Truck resumed its service. This went well and students love the incentive. Admittedly, we need to work out the kinks in terms of scheduling and structure when the Truck is here. This week felt like a “double lunch” period, thus taking away from class time. We will correct this on Cluck Truck days moving forward.
- Josh and Trevor took several students on a canoeing trip today, while many of our other on-site students when on a hike to Mines Falls in Nashua. This is a fairly flat and easy hike for students. The hope is that starting easy will engage students, build confidence, and make them feel successful so that they are excited to take part on more challenging trips in the future.
- Next week, there is a trip planned to the Patriots Hall of Fame and potentially a trip to the movies to see “Stronger”. This is the new critically acclaimed movie about the Boston Marathon Bombing. Students that attend this trip will be required to complete a review of the film as an assignment for either English credit, or Civics and Media Literacy in America credit.
- Advisors have been reaching out to several students regarding attendance concerns. Hoping this improves in the near future.

Behind the Scenes Updates:

- It should be noted that you may see requisitions for the same field trip twice. The reason for this is so all students will have the opportunity to go on a trip, while not taking away from the vocational time. The number of student slots available for these trips will almost always be fewer, therefore not increasing costs. Finally, our biggest trips (white water rafting, kayaking, overnight trip) will only occur once as these are bigger commitments.
- I am currently in receipt of three referrals (Pelham NH, Woburn, Tewksbury) with tours pending.
- Tomorrow and next week, I have tours, two placement meetings, a progress meeting, and an annual review. Therefore, we are truly back in the swing of things!

As we close out the second week, we can safely say that all students have had the opportunity to experience almost all facets of the program: vocational, academic, trips, programmatic features, etc. We feel great about the attitude and energy on site from both staff and students. The message to staff is to raise the bar and not become complacent despite early success.

Site 1 Week 3 Update

This week, we rolled into our second “A” week for academics. The beginning of the school year is already seeming like a distant memory. Kids are settling in and getting into solid routines. At the same time the “honeymoon period” is winding down. The good news with that is the behaviors, on the whole, remain controlled and minimal.

THIS WEEK:

Both of our field trips this week are today:

Josh and Trevor are taking a select group of students hiking to Lynn Woods.

Our “A” week students who signed up and are eligible, are going on an incentive trip to Patriot Place today in Foxborough.

The Patriots Trip will occur again next week for our “B” students.

Behind the Scenes:

On site, the Tree Shack (our school store) is being painted in Valley blue and white on Friday. Though RAP prizes are already being purchased, the physical store is not completed. We hope to have it up and running within two weeks.

We secured two great internships for our deserving students at Crosspoint. The kids are very excited and they are being paid BY the company!

Several meetings occurred this week with successful outcomes.

We toured one student (Pelham) who loved the school and will be doing a shadow day with us on Monday. We are hoping to take him on as he seemed like a great fit.

NEXT WEEK:

We are looking forward to beginning some fundraising projects. Staff are brainstorming and sharing some great ideas in terms of fundraising ideas, and causes. This year, we’d like to support hurricane relief. We are looking to do a fall event, and then a Christmas event as well. This was successful in the past and we are excited about the potential student involvement. Many districts require this type of community-based participation, and as we know, it is almost always on a student’s IEP Transition plan. So, many meaningful reasons to take on these projects.

Our only trip scheduled is the “B” week trip to Patriot place. However, the following week trips include Topsfield Fair and Franklin Park Zoo.

Behind the Scenes:

Monday: extended evaluation tour (tewksbury)

Tuesday: I will be attending the first CBJ meeting of the school year at Billerica High School to discuss any ongoing or potential police-involved students that may impact the local community, including Valley.

Wednesday: day placement tour (Reading)

Thursday: I look forward to meeting with Nashoba to discuss potential partnerships with some of their vocational offerings.

That’s all for now. Excited to be in the midst of the school year with projects and initiatives either in full-swing, or completed! Ready for Week 4.

Site 1 Week 4 Update

THIS WEEK:

We've had a solid week once again. This week's trips included the second leg of our Patriots Place field trip. Several students also went on an EPE trip with Josh and Trevor to Gloucester to partake in outdoor rock climbing.

On Site, we continue to stress the PBIS model by "incentivizing" wherever possible. Our latest initiative is "The Fridge". The Fridge is a bulletin board that looks like (you guessed it) a refrigerator. Teachers take exemplary student work assignments and staple them to the Fridge with a 10 dollar RAP ticket. Students are already seemingly working harder in their classes to get onto the Fridge!

Behind the Scenes:

We had 3 referral tours: Woburn, Waltham, and Reading. We've accepted the Woburn and the Reading. We've also accepted a Pelham tour from last week.

The first Billerica CBJ meeting was uneventful yet important to attend, since it was the first one. Today's meeting at Nashoba seemed very productive. We hope to partner with them on a small scale in the somewhat near future to ensure the success of the initiative. This could ultimately be a great feature for Valley in terms of vocational opportunities-potentially in the areas of culinary, early childhood, cosmetology, and more. Stay tuned.

NEXT WEEK:

Field trips include Franklin Park Zoo, Topsfield Fair, and an EPE trip with Josh and Trevor. Teachers are starting to remind students that Midterms are approaching...hard to believe.

Site 1 Week 6 Update

The sun is setting on another successful week at the vocational high school. Highlights include:

On Tuesday, our students went on an "academic" field trip to the Massachusetts State House and were educated on our state gov't and history. I put "academics" in quotes because most of our trips are incentive based. However sometimes, our trips are part of students' academic classes and are more of a requirement as opposed to an incentive.

Today, Josh and Trevor took seven of our students on an EPE field trip to a fairly challenging hike in New Hampshire.

Tomorrow is another academic trip to the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston.

Although Site 1's Open House was a bit of a dud ☐, we were proud to tour Nashoba Technical High School's superintendent, principal, and sped director today. We were able to show off the key points of our site in terms of the therapeutic/behavioral model, as well as our vocational components. They were seemingly very impressed with our mission, and Valley's as a whole. So, hats off to all of you.

Next Week:

IEP progress and annual meetings are occurring.

Field trips include Museum of Science and the "Sleepy Hollow Cemetery Scavenger Challenge"...details to follow.

Site 1 Week 7 Update

We've had a solid four days so far this week. There were two academic field trips this week:

Juniors went to Museum of Science on Tuesday

Tomorrow, Juniors will be attending Museum of Fine Arts.

We had two IEP meetings and one tour (Waltham) who we hope to accept after he completes a shadow day on Monday.

I also had two separate parent meetings this week to discuss some declining student behaviors, and the response has been positive so far.

NEXT WEEK

Trips include:

Tuesday: Boda Borg (indoor park that challenges students both mentally and physically) incentive trip

Thursday: Harvard Museum of Culture academic trip for sophomores

Friday: Museum of Science academic trip for juniors

We are making plans for a small, half-day Halloween celebration involving pumpkin carving and donut-eating contests. Academically, there is a short "scary story" contest that students will participate in.

My staff and I are also beginning the discussion about holiday activities and charitable endeavors. With November just around the corner, we want to be prepared for Thanksgiving food drive efforts, and how we will involve the students from a community service perspective.

Required Action:

None

Attachments:

None



Central Administration Office

25 Linnell Circle, Billerica MA 01821 * Tel: (978)528-7800 * <http://www.valleycollaborative.org>

MEMORANDUM

To: Valley Collaborative Board of Directors
From: Dr. Chris Scott, Executive Director
Date: October 26, 2017
Re: Weekly Program Updates from
Julie Fielding, Valley Transitional High School Principal

Each week the principals provide the team with an update on their schools. The information is most interesting and I thought the Board would enjoy reading these weekly e-mailed updates. I have included the weekly newsletters below:

Week of 9/4

We are very excited for the start of the new school year. Things are off to a great start!
We are starting with the highest number we've had in the past few years
We have our new PG program up and running

Upcoming Events:

Tomorrow: hiking Breakheart
Monday: East Side is Canoeing or going to the Firefighter Museum
Wednesday: North Side is going to Newburyport
Friday: Westside is hiking Lynn Woods
We also have some 3 year testing and IEP meetings scheduled.

Week of 9/11

Site 2 had a great week.
This week our new social worker started. She will be taking over our east program and helping site 3 out with a few hours.

Academics are going full speed ahead, so far so good!
Today we had community service. We went to the elementary school (Annie I hope it went well! Thank you for letting us come.), cleaned up the 40 LC parking and grass areas and a park in Lowell and lastly cooked breakfast for a local fire department and dropped it off to them.
Next week we have the following planned:
Monday a trip to the beach or hiking
Tuesday we have college tours planned
Wednesday a trip to castle island
Friday is a trip to MetroRock

- *We have 4 students that are already in the midst of 3 year testing with districts and us.
- *We have a few referrals pending and tours being set up.
- *We have a few IEP meetings upcoming.

Week of 9/25

This upcoming week we have:

Friday: Crows Hill for hiking and rock propelling
Monday: Benson's park for fun activities and a picnic
Wednesday: Apple picking
Thursday Purgatory for hiking and picture day

Things continue to be very busy on site. We have 5 pending referrals (Billerica, Groton, Bedford, Pelham, Georgetown) and a few IEP meetings scheduled.

Week of 10/9

All is well on site 2. We had a decent parent turn out in 1 out of the 3 programs for Open House. Next week we have 2 new students start (NMRSD and Groton) and several referrals still pending.
Monday: Apple Picking and a Josh and Trevor Trip. As well as a woman coming in to talk with students about different types of therapy pets
Tuesday: STEAM activities
Wednesday: Community Service
Thursday into Friday: Two overnights-one at Lonsome Lake in NH and another a sleep in at school with a trip to Witch's Woods thurs night.

Next week we have 6 IEP meetings scheduled and Friday I will also be at the Conference that Cat Lyons is putting on.

Week of 10/16

It's been a great, longgg week on Site 2. We had 3 new students start this week (Groton-D, Billerica and NMRSD) and a few pending referrals. We've had students using the STEM lab and are having a great time over there.

We have two overnights happening today-one at Lonesome Lake in NH, they took off this morning and will return at the end of the day tomorrow and another is a sleep in at school and an evening trip to Witch's Woods.

Next week:

Monday: Field Trip to the Cranberry Bogs
Tuesday: Community Service
Wednesday: Field Trip to Salem MA
Friday: Field Trip to MetroRock and a Job Tour

Tomorrow I will be at the Legal Conference. And next week we have many IEP meetings and 3 year testing continuing.

Required Action:

None

Attachments:

None



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MEMORANDUM

To: Valley Collaborative Board of Directors
 From: Dr. Chris Scott, Executive Director
 Date: October 26, 2017
 Re: Weekly Program Updates from
 Kristine Bonsack, Valley Transitional High School Principal

Each week the principals provide the team with an update on their schools. The information is most interesting and I thought the Board would enjoy reading these weekly e-mailed updates. I have included the weekly newsletters below:

Week of 9/4

We have had a very smooth and nice transition back. We had 4 new students start and they acclimated nicely to their new program. I had 1 tour that went well with another tour set up for tomorrow. I have 1 new student starting next week.

I have a few IEP meetings next week and I am out on Tuesday at my UDL class with Kristen Rodriguez. Regular programming for all classes next week with no additional field trips or activities.

Week of 9/11

Site 3 had another great week.

Our new BCBA started who will be taking over for Shannon who is on Maternity leave and then we will be sharing her with the middle school when Shannon returns.

IEP season has officially started with a few IEP's that went smoothly. I had 1 tour with a student from Rockport and we had staff go out to visit a potential new student in Bedford New Hampshire.

Thanks again Chris for coming to our teacher meeting yesterday. The feedback we had from staff was that it went well and they appreciated you coming and listening to their concerns.

Next week, I have some interviews for staff set up. We also have our Trip info meeting next Wednesday at 5pm for any new students who are interested in going.

Week of 9/18

We are also trucking along, the honeymoon is over and we had a few bumps in the road in the beginning of the week with student behaviors but we rebounded nicely. We had a 1 tour this week that went well. The parent was very impressed with our new yellow room additions. We also had a student doing a 2 day visit in STW which went well and it looks like he will be joining us soon as well.

Next week we are loaded with IEP meetings and some Trevor and Josh Field trips.

Week of 9/25

We have had a few bumps in road with regards to behavior again this week but everyone was able to push through and get back on track. Students continued to go on community lunch and went out with Josh and Trevor on a hike. Next week we have a 45 day student from North Middlesex starting in Rob's class. I also have a student from Lynnfield coming in for a few hours to visit in our SLS program. We have picture day on Thursday and IEP's throughout the week. I am out on Tuesday for my leadership class.

Week of 10/9

Site 3 has had a busy week even with only being a 4 day week. Our book fair has 1 more day and it went very well. The students were very excited about all the books that were available to purchase. We had 1 student from Marblehead who visited STW for a day and it went well. I had 2 other tours and a few IEP meetings.

Our open house went well with 30 parents showing up. We also had a student play the piano with Vlad as well and that was a huge hit!

Next week I have a few IEP's and the classes are continuing with regular programming with no additional field trips planned.

Required Action:

None

Attachments:

None

In the tragic aftermath of Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria, the Valley Middle School wanted to help the victims affected. The initiative was driven by Special Education Teacher, Shana Dunlevy and Occupational Therapist, Joanna Bond. As the students in Shana's class learned about the state of Texas during the month of September, all of the staff and students were saddened to hear about the destruction and devastation in many areas of Texas and wanted to help. As animal lovers, the students voted to help their furry friends in Texas at the Houston Humane Society. Middle School students baked their favorite treats, including chocolate chip cookies, pumpkin bread, apple muffins and a variety of gluten free options. The staff and students helped to plan and execute an amazing, successful bake sale on Thursday October 5, 2017, raising over \$250! A huge "Thank You" to all of the staff, students, and local customers who contributed to the success of this event.



Central Administration Office

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MEMORANDUM

To: Valley Collaborative Board of Directors
From: Dr. Chris Scott, Executive Director
Date: October 26, 2017
Re: Executive Session

To consider the purchase and value of real property.

Required Action:

None

Attachments:

None