



We are: Creative

■ Page 3: From pumpkin decorating to inspired leaf art, students at Valley Elementary are getting creative.



We are: Sharing

■ Page 3: Valley Transitional Middle/High School students recently donated 35 pounds of Halloween candy to Treats for Troops.



We are: In Community

■ Page 5: Individuals in Valley's Today & Tomorrow program take full advantage of the programming offered by the Tewksbury Public Library.

A Year of Challenges, Success at Valley

Dear Valley Community:

While this year has been filled with more than its fair share of challenges, there is much to be thankful for at Valley. I would be remiss if I did not highlight the extraordinary amount of care each and every staff at Valley pour into their work as they develop and implement innovative curriculum and programming that engages our students and DDS & MRC supported individuals. I, along with Valley's Board of Directors, am in awe of the dedication shown by staff to elicit the best possible outcome for those that they serve during the height of this pandemic.

In spite of the worldwide pandemic, Valley Collaborative's FY'21 school year was very successful program-matically and financially.

• The financial position of the Collaborative remains very strong. The total assets at June 30, 2021 were \$25,371,023. This includes \$5,271,479 held in the OPEB Trust at June 30, 2021. Valley was in a position to add an additional 1.1 million to its OPEB trust in FY' 21.

• Capital fund was fully funded \$1.5 million in FY'21.

• Change in net assets from operations in FY'21 was approximately \$2,260,274.

• The Collaborative's cash position remains solid with over \$14.7 million

(\$7.9 million unrestricted, 1.5 million Capital Fund, and \$5.3 million OPEB restricted) in cash and cash equivalents. This is the result of strong Board oversight, solid financial management, proper billing and collections of receivables.

• In the spirit of continuous improvement, the Collaborative made capital purchases of \$140,631 in FY'21 for Vehicles, Furniture, Technology and Improvements.

• The member districts in FY'21 will have received a total of \$2,000,000 due to the collaborative cumulative surplus formula.

• Revenue for our adult program remained approximately at FY' 21 levels given its robust remote programming options - totaling almost \$2.7 million.

Due to the unique relationships between students/DDS and MRC supported individuals and staff, as well as staff and administration, Valley has been able to cultivate a culture of care as highlighted in the most recent survey results. The Student Survey was completed by 241 students/individuals completed this year, while 151 staff completed the 2021 Sense of Belonging survey. The Family Survey was completed by 106 families this year. Some of the highlights from this survey can be found on the next page.

A Year of Challenges, Success at Valley

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Sense of Belonging Staff Survey

Questions were designed to obtain feedback about culture, technology, impressions of policies and protocols implemented, and communication and support. 151 staff completed the 2020/2021 staff survey this year (62.3% completion rate).

- 93.4% of staff agree or strongly agree that their principal/administrator promotes a culture that affirms and values individuals' cultural, linguistic, racial, gender and other identity differences.

- 97.3% of staff agree or strongly agree that their principal/administrator implements effective school-based programs that support students' social and emotional well-being.

- 94.7% of staff agree or strongly agree that teachers have access to digital and technology tools (e.g. learning management systems, teaching and learning apps) that cultivate a safe and supportive online learning environment for students.

- 96% of staff agree or strongly agree that our building has systems (e.g. entry and dismissal routines, meals, class, transitions) in place to ensure that the school runs in a safe and efficient manner.

- 93.4% of staff agree or strongly agree that our building administration provided clear and direct communication to them during this pandemic regarding closure, reopening, and protocols.

Sense of Belonging Family Survey

Questions were designed to target the following indicators: programming, Valley's remote learning plans, communication, procedures, safety, progress.

- 76.4 % of families strongly and/or moderately agree that they had adequate access to Valley's programming.

- 82.4% of families strongly and/or moderately agree that during the pandemic and if their student/individual returned to the in-person model, they felt comfortable with the procedures that were implemented to keep them safe.

- 74.5% of families strongly and/or moderately agree that they were satisfied with the alternative programming that was provided during the pandemic.

- 86.4% of families strongly and/or moderately agree that they felt properly informed about the policies related to the pandemic that were implemented.

- 76.4% of families strongly and/or moderately agree that their student/individual continued to progress during the pandemic.

Sense of Belonging Student Survey

Questions were designed to target the following indicators: Staff/Program

Impressions, Impressions of policies and protocols implemented, Areas to improve, Independence, Peer Relationships, School culture, Self-Actualization, Technology.

- 81.6 % of students always feel that staff treat all individuals respectfully, regardless of an individual's race, culture, family income, religion, sex, or sexual orientation.

- 74 % of students always feel safe in school.

- Across all programs, 72.2% of students/individuals feel as though staff implemented the appropriate policies and procedures to keep them safe during the pandemic.

- 76% of students/individuals across the Collaborative feel that Valley Collaborative is focused on the needs of students/individuals.

At Valley, we have a strong focus on literacy as many of the students who access our programming enter

Reading Inventory SY20-21 Data Review

Measurement	Result
Reading Benchmark Tests Administered	293
Average Number of Students Tested Per Session:	98
Average Participation Rate Per Session***:	80.95%
Number of Students Displaying Growth:	44
Average Growth:	151L
Number of Students Tested	150

our schools reading below grade level. Additionally, research shows that students who are able to read at grade level are less likely to exhibit dysregulated behaviors. Above is the FY'21 Student Reading Comprehension data highlighting the success.

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Transitional Middle/High School: Giving Back



ASHANTI WILSON-MOREAU AND JOEY BAUER DROP OFF CANDY FOR TREATS FOR TROOPS, THE FIRST PROJECT OF VALLEY'S NEW STUDENT COUNCIL.

that supports soldiers, veterans and their families. The students spent weeks collecting Halloween candy from their peers for the effort, and by delivery day, they'd accumulated 35 pounds of sweet stuff.

The candy donation effort was the first official project of the new Student Council. Advisor Karen Rowe says that while the school has had several student councils over the years, they can fizzle out if the interest isn't there. That's not an issue this time around. "Fifteen students showed up at the first meeting, ready to go with ideas," says Karen.

Instead of picking a single president, the students chose co-leaders, Riley LaDuke and Ashanti Wilson-Moreau, who can lead the council together. Other officers include

Elliot Urban and Gillian Joslyn, Secretaries; Cameron Cabral and Sean McCarthy, Treasurers; Joey Bauer, Isaac Machado and Nathan Dunham, Community Service Leads; Nate Berry, Cassidy DuFault, Corey Erickson, Wisdom Mganga, and Keely Redgate, Student Representatives; Alannah Cavallaro, Rose Chen and Izaiah Savchuk, Events/Media Coordinators.

The candy collection drive was just the first project. Council members have already started working on a can drive and a Toys for Tots collection effort for the holidays. Karen says that the group's focus on giving back is not a coincidence. "There is such a sense of community at Valley, and students take that mindset with them when they're not here. They're always thinking about 'how can I be of service to others?'" ■

On a recent rainy Friday, students from Valley's Transitional Middle/High School climbed aboard a van and headed north to Groveland. Their mission: deliver candy to a donation site for Treats for Troops, a project of the non-profit Soldiers' Angels

Valley Elementary: A Creative Season

The 'Spirit of the Season' arrived early to Valley Collaborative Elementary School this year. On 10/19, the entire Valley Collaborative Elementary School took a trip down the street and over the bridge to Parlee farms for a morning of fall fun! Students had the opportunity to pet and feed goats, rabbits, sheep, and chickens, then made their way to the pumpkin patch. Once everyone had picked a pumpkin, students and staff headed to the picnic area, where apple cider and donuts awaited.

The fun continued back at Valley when art teacher Nick Katsaros led a school-wide pumpkin painting activity. Using Zoom, Nick projected simple shapes

for faces onto the smartboard in each classroom so that students could recreate the designs with black paint on their own pumpkin "canvas." The all-Valley pumpkin painting project was just one part of a season of creativity. Students have been working on crafting pumpkins out of paper, using color to reflect emotions. Nick says that he's hoping that fall, and the arrival of Thanksgiving will provide even more opportunities for Valley Elementary students to get creative. "My plan is to use fall leaves and colors to create interesting patterns. I'm also hoping to create some 3D tissue paper turkeys!" ■



STAFF AND STUDENTS AT VALLEY ELEMENTARY KICK OFF A SEASON OF CELEBRATION IN STYLE.

Alternative Middle/High School: Working Together for a Good Cause

When staff members at Valley Alternative Middle/High School went looking for a way to bring together students across their various programs, a fundraiser seemed like a logical choice. “Our goal was to find a way for students to collaborate across the site,” says teacher Corey Shepherd. He notes that while he and other Valley staffers had big goals for the project, like teaching empathy, teamwork and selflessness, it also had to be fun. “Making it fun for the students is key,” says Corey.

The next step was to find an organization that students felt passionate about. Students decided that they’d raise money for St. Jude’s Hospital, the Tennessee medical center that provides cancer treatment free of charge to children. Teacher Mike Workman says that St. Jude’s mission spoke to many of the Valley students. “They see that these kids need help and some of our students can really relate to that because of their own backgrounds,” says Mike.

So how to raise funds for a good cause and keep it fun? The answer is Laps @ Linell 100K. Teams of participants will make their way around a half mile course, starting at Valley’s main entrance. Six times around is



FROM LEFT: COREY SHEPHERD (TEACHER), AARON STADNYCK, AIDEN BUTZE, KEVIN SURETTE, ADAM CONANT, DANTE DRAGONE, MIKE WORKMAN (TEACHER), JEANMARIE PELUSO (TEACHER).

the equivalent of a 5K. To make sure that the fundraiser has plenty of fun in it, students settled on themed laps, including a bubble lap, in which runners must make their way through clouds of soapy bubbles and Mario Kart lap (think scooters and bananas). Students will complete as many laps as they can as a team.

And just as Corey and the other staff members had hoped, planning an ambitious event for a good cause has given students plenty of opportunity to work together. One group of

students has focused on marketing the event, including putting together a website. Another came up with all of the themes for the race, and even coded cards so that runners can easily keep track of how much ground they’ve covered and how much money they’ve raised.

Mike says that he’s been thrilled by the response from Valley students. “Some of the older kids have gotten really into this, more so than anything else this year. It’s just been great to see.” ■

FROM LEFT: OWEN MCMAHON, JOE WASHINGTON, JOSH PLUNKETT (TEACHER), AIDEN BUTZE, COREY SHEPHERD (TEACHER), KEVIN SURETTE, ADAM CONANT, ALEX ROMANO, DANTE DRAGONE, MIKE WORKMAN (TEACHER), JEANMARIE PELUSO (TEACHER), AVA MCMULLEN, CASSIDY BELTRAN.



Community Based Day Services: Celebrating Partnerships

When the Tewksbury Public Library reached out to Valley's Adult Services program about a pumpkin decorating event, the response was an enthusiastic 'yes.' Ten Individuals from the Community Based Day Supports program or CBDS headed to Tewksbury to paint pumpkins. And a great time was had by all, says Matt Gentile, Assistant Director of DDS and Transitional Services. "Many of our Individuals love Halloween and get excited for all of the festivities around it."

The pumpkin event was also the latest in a long partnership between the Tewksbury Public Library and CBDS. The connection started three years ago when CBDS staffers were looking for activities that would enable Individuals to be more active in the community. "We're a group of people who want to be out in the community," says Job Coach Katlyn Winch. "So we're always in search of

opportunities for our Individuals to learn more about towns that are new to them and be part of activities that will help them develop their skills."

Nikki Gounaris, a Field-Based Teacher for Adult Services, found her way to the Tewksbury Library when she was searching for places and opportunities for Individuals to pursue their interests. Before long, she'd formed a connection with Robert Hayes, who coordinates many of the events. If the library had an event that Individuals might be interested in, Hayes sent an alert.

"We've attended different kinds of music events, career planning talks, an evening with an author. If there's something happening that might be of interest to our individuals, then we hear about it," says Nikki. Nikki says that she was particularly impressed by the library's commitment to the needs of its extended community. When an Individual with an interest in writing began attending a Poetry Circle group, Diane Giarrusso, the library director, would provide enlarged versions of all of the poems to be discussed that month in order to accommodate for a visual impairment.

"She continues to send over poems monthly in case any of our Individuals want to participate," says Nikki. "They really are fantastic there. It's been so nice to have this ongoing relationship." ■

AT LEFT: SOPHANNA SAM AND CHRIS SOILES GET CREATIVE.



ABOVE, LEFT TO RIGHT: JOE PIRANIAN, ELIZABETH BOCHAN, JOE GONSALVES ENJOY SOME PUMPKIN DECORATING AT THE TEWKSBURY PUBLIC LIBRARY.

BELOW: SHANE O'BRIEN SHOWS OFF HIS HANDIWORK.



Valley Collaborative Leadership Team



Chris A. Scott, PhD

Executive Director,
Finance and Operations
cscott@valleycollaborative.org



Jennifer Bergeron

Valley Elementary School
Special Education Director
jbergeron@valleycollaborative.org



James George

Business Manager/Accountant
jgeorge@valleycollaborative.org



Heather Mackay

Principal, Valley
Elementary School
hmackay@valleycollaborative.org



Joia Mercurio

Deputy Director
jmercurio@valleycollaborative.org



Nicole Noska

Principal, Transitional
Programming,
Valley Middle School,
Valley Transitional High
School
nnoska@valleycollaborative.org



Kari Morrin

Director of HR, Title IX and
504 Coordinator
kmorrin@valleycollaborative.org



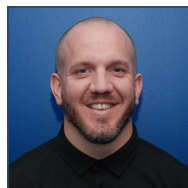
Julie Fielding

Principal, Alternative
Programming,
Valley Middle School,
Valley Transitional High
School
jfielding@valleycollaborative.org



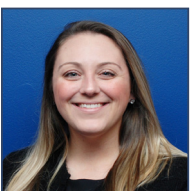
Heather Valcanas

Director of Adult and
Transitional Services
hvalcanas@valleycollaborative.org



Matthew Gentile

Assistant Director of DDS &
Transitional Services
mgentile@valleycollaborative.org



Jessica Scalzi

Lead Nurse
jscalzi@valleycollaborative.org

cial support of the Today & Tomorrow program. This is especially significant because Adult DDS workers are still restricted from performing on-site tasks.

- EOHHS Covid-19 restrictions are still in place, significantly reducing on-site program and transportation capacity.

- Individual, family, staff and agency satisfaction with Valley programming remains high despite significant state-imposed restrictions.

- Two new programming options were offered in FY'21, after Valley successfully applied for and was awarded this year: the DESE/DDS residential program and In-Home Supports.

Challenges, Success

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Adult Program Highlights

- Valley's DDS remote programming has been a Northeast Region Leader in FY'21, with over 50 devices loaned/purchased for Individuals.
- Small Business relationships remain strong through the continued finan-

Valley Collaborative Board

Chair: Mr. Timothy Piowar
Superintendent, Billerica Public Schools

Dr. Jay Lang
Superintendent, Chelmsford Public Schools

Mr. Steven Stone
Superintendent, Dracut Public Schools

Dr. Laura Chesson
Superintendent, Groton-Dunstable Regional School District

Dr. Denise Pigeon
Superintendent, Nashoba Valley Technical School District

Mr. Brad Morgan
Superintendent, North Middlesex Regional School District

Mr. Christopher Malone
Superintendent, Tewksbury Public Schools

Dr. Michael Flanagan
Superintendent, Tyngsborough Public Schools

Dr. Christopher Chew
Superintendent, Westford Public Schools

- Total Adult Program Revenue increased from \$2,035,000 in FY'16 to a projected \$2,700,000 in FY'21.

- Small Business billing was reduced 12% in FY'21, while expenses were down 93%.

- Pre-Covid-19 revenue estimates for FY'21 were over 3 million dollars.

- FY'22 Adult Revenue is projected to be 2.9 million.

Thank you for your support of Valley Collaborative. If you ever have a suggestion or need assistance, my door is always open.

My best to you,

Chris

Chris A. Scott, Ph.D.
Executive Director