



Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council 2014 Annual Report to the Citizens of Massachusetts

Providing opportunities for people with developmental disabilities and their families to enhance independence, productivity, and inclusion.

Our Purpose

The Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council (Council) is an independent agency funded by the federal government to work with the state of Massachusetts to better support people with developmental disabilities and their families.

Our Beliefs

Individuals with developmental disabilities must have the opportunity to live full, productive and independent lives in the community. Disability is a natural part of the human experience that does not diminish the right of individuals with developmental disabilities to live independently, to exert control and choice over their own lives, and to fully participate in and contribute to their communities.

Making our Future Happen: Safe, Included and Free

Over 400 people attended the Council's annual Legislative Reception on March 5, 2014. In partnership with Arc of MA, the Council has been hosting the event for the past 36 years.

The purpose is to celebrate legislative accomplishments for people with disabilities, recognize state legislators who champion their cause, and connect people with developmental disabilities and their families with elected officials.

Senator Jennifer Flanagan and Representative Brian Dempsey were honored in 2014 for their leadership.



Left to Right: Julie Fitzpatrick, Senate President Therese Murray and Senator Jennifer Flanagan.

Council chairperson Julie Fitzpatrick delivered a powerful speech around the theme of the event: "We as human beings have the right to feel safe in any environment we choose to live; we have the right to fully feel included, whether in the workforce, at school, or any social environment we choose to participate in; and we have the right to feel free to make the choices that directly impact our lives, not having those choices taken away from us by others."

Our Report to the Citizens

We are pleased to present our seventh annual *Report to the Citizens of the Commonwealth*. This report is also available on the Council website www.mass.gov/mddc.

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Chances are you know someone with a developmental disability

Although the exact number is unknown, it is estimated that over 152,000 citizens in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts have a developmental disability.

What We Do

- Work to improve the system of supports for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families by bringing advocates together with lawmakers to make sure people with developmental disabilities are included in public policy decisions.
- Foster partnerships with disability advocacy groups and support initiatives to help build the self-confidence, leadership and interpersonal skills that are needed for people with developmental disabilities to play active roles in the community.
- Serve as an impartial educational resource to inform public policy at both state and federal levels to better meet the needs of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.

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Goals and Objectives: How we measure results.

Council Partners Collaborate on Policy Priorities

In partnership with the Council, Massachusetts Advocates for Children worked on several initiatives to enhance quality transition services for students with developmental disabilities. These included "An Act to Maintain Short Term Objectives for Students with Disabilities," which was signed by Governor Patrick in November 21, 2013.

Other policies expanded inclusive college options for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder and other Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, expanded the Massachusetts' model Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment (ICE) program and adoption of final Transition Specialist Guidelines. The state budget provided \$1 million for ICE, an increase of \$300,000 because of advocacy efforts and education of policy makers.

By working with diverse stakeholders, the project has helped ensure that students with developmental disabilities receive effective transition planning and services to promote their successful transition to employment, higher education, and independent living.

Longstanding Partnership Empowers Citizens in Legislative Process

The Council worked in partnership with Massachusetts Advocates Standing Strong, a statewide self-advocacy organization directed by people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, to provide numerous trainings for people with developmental disabilities. In 2014, 175 people were trained in self-advocacy, leadership, and self-determination, and 71 people with developmental disabilities, 25 family members and other individuals were trained in systems advocacy. Coordinating Legislative Education Days once a month at the State House also resulted in 45 individuals with developmental disabilities, 18 family members and other individuals who were active in disability advocacy this past year.

Many self-advocates who attended the Legislative Education Days shared their experiences with the Council. One self-advocate expressed, "*The legislative education days are important to me because I can talk to my representatives about what is important to me and my community.*"

About the Program Performance Report

The Council submits an annual Program Performance Report to the U.S. Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities detailing progress toward achieving our Five-Year State Plan goals and objectives. The Council Plan addresses seven goal areas.

Year Three Accomplishments

Goal 1 Transition: Objectives 1-4 met, Objective 5 partially met.

Goal 2 Leadership: Objectives 1-2 met

Goal 3 Employment: Objective 1 partially met, objective 2 met.

Goal 4 Supporting Families: Objectives 1-2 met.

Goal 5 Homes: Objective 1-2 met.

Goal 6 Community Supports: Objectives 1 and 3 met, objective 2 partially met.

Goal 7 Self-Determination: Objectives 1 and 2 partially met.

Highlights

Dollars leveraged (all goals:) \$21,756,534. * Other funding, not budgeted.

People trained (all goals:) 7,074

The complete report is available at www.mass.gov/mddc. Alternative formats of this report are available upon request.

We encourage you to give us feedback. Please send all questions and comments to craig.hall@state.ma.us.

Stakeholder Collaboration Leads to National Results

The Council has collaborated with the Massachusetts Lifespan Respite Coalition (MLRC) to build a sustainable statewide respite coalition through the first three years of the State Plan. During this time the coalition has expanded to more than 50 member organizations and family caregivers.

In 2014, the "Freedom Trail to Respite" conference was held with 200 people from 34 states and Canada. The Coalition also held its second annual statewide CARE (Connecting and Advocating Respite for Everyone) conference for family caregivers in May, with over 180 people in attendance.

The MLRC continues to strengthen and expand its coalition of over 70 member organizations and family caregivers from across the Commonwealth representing diverse disability, elder, chronic disease and other respite stakeholders.

Maintaining Customer Satisfaction

The Council conducts customer satisfaction surveys for projects and activities held or funded by the Council. Survey results help determine the impact of our efforts on the lives of individuals with developmental disabilities and their family members. The questions are mandated by the U.S. Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities and the results are reported in the Council's annual Program Performance Report. In 2014, 98.80% overall satisfaction was achieved. This exceeds the 2013 overall performance of 95% and the 2012 overall performance of 90%.



Please visit our website, www.mass.gov/mddc, for more information!



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Revenue and Expenses

Revenue

Source of Revenue	2014 Revenue (in \$)
Federal Funding	\$960,402.62
Commonwealth Non-Financial Match	\$259,325.53
Sub-Grant Match	\$462,986.82
Developmental Disabilities Suite	\$215,596.89
Total Revenue	\$1,898,311.86

*The **financial mission** of the Council is to maximize the use of our federal awards, while leveraging additional resources from the Commonwealth, our grantees and other collaborations and partnerships, to meet our five-year State Plan goals and objectives. The matching goal was met during the first three years (2012-2014).*

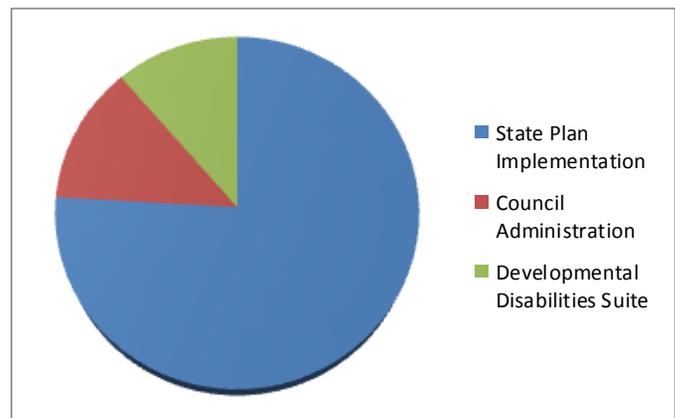
Note: The Council is funded through a federal formula grant and is authorized under Subtitle B of Public Law 106-402, the Developmental Disabilities Act of 2000, and through state Executive Order #512.

Independent Audit

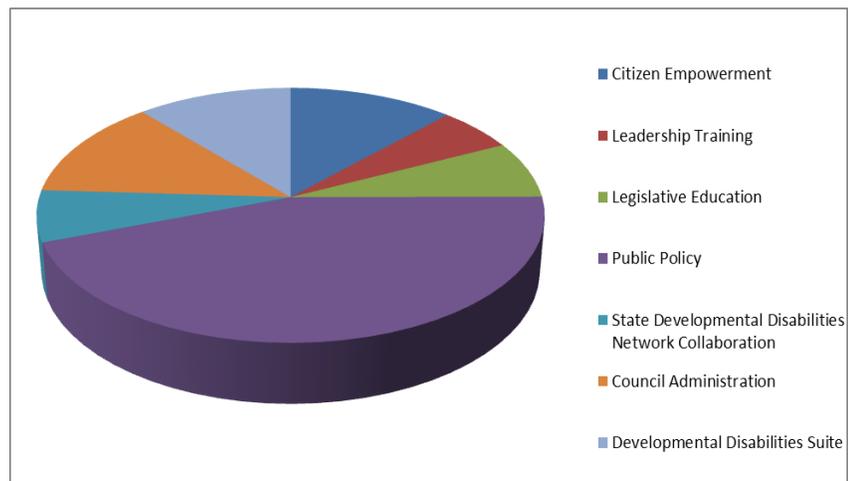
The Council participated in the independent audit, receiving a clean opinion. Complete financial information is available at www.mass.gov/osc.

Expenses

By Functional Area	2014 Expense (in \$)
State Plan Implementation	\$1,440,924.94
Council Administration	\$241,790.03
Developmental Disabilities Suite	\$215,596.89
Total Expenses	\$1,898,311.86



By Major Activity Area	2014 Expense (in \$)
Citizen Empowerment	\$228,738.87
Leadership Training	\$107,109.01
Legislative Education	\$137,563.33
Public Policy	\$843,747.96
State Developmental Disabilities Network Collaboration	\$123,765.77
Council Administration	\$241,790.03
Developmental Disabilities Suite	\$215,596.89
Total Expenses	\$1,898,311.86



What We Do: Our Primary Program Areas

The Council has two primary program areas. The **functional area** divides the organization by our program and administrative activities.

The **major activity areas** identify the program activities we undertake to successfully meet our five-year State Plan goals and objectives.

A Model of Transparency

The Council's has received the Certificate of Excellence in Citizen-Centric Reporting from the Association of Government Accountants for advancing government accountability for the past six years. The logo recognizes the importance of a citizen focused initiative for financial reporting.



2012-2016 State Plan: Looking Ahead

Federal Perspective for Massachusetts

Despite ongoing uncertainty, 2014 brought legislative accomplishments at the federal level. Council policy staff attended the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities' (NACDD) annual Disability Policy Conference in Washington, DC to gather information about federal policies that affect people with developmental disabilities. Council policy team members were also active participants on NACDD's Public Policy Employment Workgroup. Staff analyzed federal disability legislation and in April 2014 provided briefings to members of the Massachusetts Congressional delegation and members of the U.S Senate about the Work Force Investment Act and the Autism CARES Act. The Council's advocacy efforts contributed to passage of these bills, which were signed into law by President Obama in the summer of 2014. These laws will help people with disabilities access the services they need to succeed in employment and provide crucial investments in research. Although budgetary and disability policy legislative challenges lie ahead, the Council is well positioned with its partners and policy makers to develop effective solutions.

(Pictured to right: Council Member Tim Kunzier and Senator Elizabeth Warren)



Self-Advocacy and Students in Transition

The ongoing challenge to effectively prepare students with developmental disabilities transitioning from high school to work, college and adult life was embraced as an opportunity by the Council. Resulting in expansion of our the Self-Advocacy Leadership Series (SALS) .



The Sun Chronicle, of Attleboro, featured a story about the SALS efforts to increase education to students in transition ages 18-22. The classes are offered through ongoing partnerships with Bridgewater State University, the University of Massachusetts and Westfield State University. The curriculum prepares students to become better self-advocates, public speakers, and leaders. Students engage in a variety of activities focusing on communication, team building and leadership. Often, these skills lead to higher education and competitive employment.

Although financial barriers exist, such as trainer costs and transportation, the Council is developing creative solutions and networking with additional school districts and colleges to bring the SALS Transition curriculum to more students.



Pictured above is state Senator Donald F. Humason, Jr. with SALS students at Westfield State University.

Massachusetts Innovation- Key to States

In January 2015 the Council will release Developmental Disabilities Suite 5.0, a performance management system used by all 56 state Councils across the country. DD Suite 5.0 will provide an unprecedented level of performance, accountability and transparency. The federally funded project focused on upgrading technology, interface redesign new public search features that link together data collection, analysis and reporting.

New Direction

In April 2014 the Council's main office relocated to North Quincy. The new office provides improved accessibility needs with wider hallways, more open meeting areas and accessible parking. Meetings can now be held in the fully accessible first floor conference room, providing significant cost savings to the Council.



Members of Council Staff at the new office location.

Fostering New Collaborations

The Massachusetts Council has led continued efforts to bring the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities together with the Council of State Governments (CSG). Both organizations share common policy objectives, and in 2014 the Massachusetts Council facilitated communication between the organizations on disability policy, budgetary priorities for people with developmental disabilities, and ideas for CSG's eAcademy for state policy makers.

Critical Issues and Barriers

The Council has identified a number of critical issues and barriers impacting individuals with developmental disabilities and their families still to be addressed. These include increasing opportunities for self-determination, maintaining support of self-advocacy, leadership development, emergency preparedness, and coordination of the state developmental disabilities network. These are areas of focus for the final two years of the Council's State Plan.



Please visit our website, www.mass.gov/mddc, for more information!



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