

A CCE Chronology

The Center for Collaborative Education – Metro Boston, Inc. was founded by Larry Myatt and Linda Nathan in September 1994 when both were Co-Directors of the Fenway Middle College High School, Boston’s first Pilot School. The purpose of the Center was “to provide technical assistance to schools in and around Boston that are interested in restructuring and implementing creative new educational models to improve student learning.” The Center was intended to become a regional center for the National Coalition of Essential Schools (CES), serving CES schools in the Greater Boston area. The idea for the Center, and indeed its name, was patterned after the Center for Collaborative Education in New York City, founded by Deborah Meier to support CES schools there.

In partnership with Fenway Middle College High School, the Center was housed rent-free in three windowless rooms in the basement floor of Bunker Hill Community College, next to Fenway High School. Seed funding for the Center was provided in large part through a grant from the Goldberg Family Foundation. Its initial Guiding Principles were the following:

- Provide direct hands-on technical assistance
- Function as a learning organization
- Focus on approaches that work
- Emphasize documentation

The initial two years found the Center engaged in a number of activities involving local school communities in improving practice and sharing knowledge:

- Coordinated visits to Fenway Middle College High School to provide practitioners with an in-depth look at how a small, urban, personalized school works.
- Formed the Boston Educators for School Reform (BESR) network, the precursor to the Boston Pilot Schools Network, consisting of the leaders of the Pilot Schools who engaged in sharing practice and addressing common concerns with the district.
- Worked with Brighton High School and Charlestown High School in Boston, and Winthrop High School on school restructuring in the Innovative Schools Project.
- Convened several sharing sessions through the Portfolio Network for teachers in the Greater Boston area who were interested in developing their portfolio practice.
- Held the conference, *Reinventing Public Education: The Move Toward Small Schools*, which 130 participants attended in teams.
- Played a key role in bringing Annenberg Challenge funds to the Boston Public Schools.

In 1997, Dan French, the current executive director, was hired. In April 1997, CCE hosted a two-day leadership retreat for the Boston Pilot Schools. At the time, the Pilot Schools were still operating individually and negotiating separately with the district. At this retreat, the Pilot Schools agreed to the following:

- To unite and form the Boston Pilot Schools Network to have one voice with the district
- To develop and endorse a set of guiding principles which would govern the Network
- To have CCE serve as the Network's coordinating organization

This represented CCE's first official school network.

Since the spring of 1997, CCE has added school reform networks and grown in capacity, staffing, and visibility.

Stages of CCE's growth:

- [Boston Pilot School Network](#)
- [Coalition of Essential Schools \(CES\), Small Schools Network \(SSN\), and Small Learning Communities \(SLCs\)](#)
- [School Reform and Turnaround Models](#)
- [Expansion to Los Angeles](#)
- [Further Growth in Research Initiatives](#)
- [Organizational History and Capacity](#)

Boston Pilot School Network

CCE began managing the funds of a few Pilot Schools in 1997. This figure has grown to over \$1 million annually in managed school funds.

In 2000, CCE launched the Principals Residency Network (PRN) an apprenticeship-based principal preparation and credentialing program to develop a pipeline for Pilot and small school leaders. The first cohort of 10 aspiring principals graduated in the fall of 2001. To date ten cohorts representing 108 candidates have graduated from this program from participating schools that include Pilot, Charter, and District schools in the greater Boston area.

In 2001, CCE launched its community organizing model through hiring our first-time Community Coordinator to build community and political support for the Pilot Schools. That fall, the new CCE research and evaluation team published its first two evaluation reports, both on the Pilot Schools, which garnered widespread interest.

In 2005, CCE received a Gates Foundation grant to strengthen and grow the Pilot Network in Boston, to replicate the Pilot model to Fitchburg, and to invest significantly in special education professional development within the Pilot schools.

In 2006, CCE released its second major Pilot Schools' report, *Progress and Promise*, at a forum hosted by The Boston Foundation. The report garnered widespread local and national media attention on the levels of student engagement and achievement attained by Boston Pilot Schools.

By 2007, the Boston Pilot School Network was comprised of 20 schools across the city.

In 2008, the CCE Report: Strong Results, High Demand was published about the ten Boston Pilot high schools. The report examined the ways the highly chosen schools within the district serve their students.

During the 2008-2009 school year, an additional three schools were approved to open as Boston Pilot Schools, and two others expanded to additional school pathways and grade levels. The Boston Pilot Youth Leadership Conference was opened to the entire BPS District. Seven hundred students attended student-led workshops on technology and its implication for equity in education.

Coalition of Essential Schools (CES), Small Schools Network (SSN), and Small Learning Communities (SLCs)

In 1997, CCE officially became the Massachusetts Coalition of Essential Schools Regional Center. In the spring of 2002, CCE transitioned to become the Southern New England Coalition of Essential Schools Regional Center, covering Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut.

The same year, CCE launched the planning phase of the SIMSE (Systemic Initiative in Math and Science Education) project, funded in large part by the Noyce Foundation, to assist CES schools in math and science, with implementation beginning in the summer of 1998. After a successful first three years of implementation, the Noyce Foundation granted CCE a second three-year grant in summer 2001. This initiative ended in 2004 when CCE embedded math coaching into its reform networks and program teams.

In 1999, CCE underwent the CES affirmation process as a CES affiliate center. The process led to the further development of CCE's mission and to the creation of the CCE Theory of Action that provides an overarching philosophy and approach to school reform across all CCE's programs. In addition, each network team began creating benchmarks and road maps for the work in schools. In 2009, CCE's [Theory of Action](#) was revised into ten CCE Design Principles and Supporting conditions.

In 2000, CCE received a significant grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to launch the New England Small Schools Network. This grant supported work with urban New England districts to create Pilot-like schools through free-standing new schools or through converting large schools to small ones sharing facilities. Five districts (Worcester, Lawrence, Malden, Cambridge, Providence) were selected in the spring of 2001, and the network was launched in the summer of 2001 with the goal of creating 35 small schools or small learning communities.

In 2003, CCE joined a partnership with the Boston Public Schools, Jobs for the Future, Boston Plan for Excellence, and Boston Private Industry Council to launch 12 new small high schools in Boston, using a \$13.5 million grant from the Gates Foundation. CCE co-hosted a study with Jobs for the Future and MassInc's Rennie Center on successful Massachusetts urban high schools, and the state and district policy implications for creating more of them. The studies were presented at a state-wide forum for 350 policymakers and educators. This led to a further collaboration with the Rennie Center to conduct a state-wide High Schools of the Future Conference in January 2006, at which there were over 400 attendees.

School Reform and Turnaround Models

In 1997, the Carnegie Corporation agreed to provide two-year funding to CCE to launch the Boston Turning Points Network, a middle school reform model. In the fall of 1998, the Carnegie Corporation asked CCE to become the National Turning Points Center and to affiliate with New American Schools, an umbrella organization serving national school reform models. The Carnegie Corporation granted CCE the trademark name, Turning Points.

In 2007, the Massachusetts Department of Education contracted with CCE to work with four historically underperforming schools in Springfield, Fitchburg, and Boston as "Commonwealth Pilots."

Mass Insight published a [case study on CCE's "turnaround work" in Springfield's Duggan Middle School](#) (a Commonwealth Pilot) which lauded the approach as a significant turnaround strategy for national replication.

In 2010, CCE began work with 16 of the 35 level four schools in Massachusetts on school redesign plans for the state and federal departments of education.

Expansion to Los Angeles

In 2007, after over a year of collaboration, CCE in partnership with local community activist organizations launched the Belmont Pilot Schools Network in the Pico Union neighborhood of Los Angeles. Two schools opened that fall, and three more schools were approved.

By 2008, the Los Angeles Pilot Network grew to seven Pilot schools and four more were approved to open. In fall 2010, ten Los Angeles Pilot Schools were operating in two local districts.

In the fall of 2008, the U.S. Department of Education awarded CCE a five year grant to establish a Los Angeles Principal Residency Network in partnership with the California State University Los Angeles.

The following fall, the U.S. Department of Education awarded CCE a second grant in partnership with the California State University Los Angeles to establish a Teacher Residency Program for teacher certification and induction based on the Boston Teacher Residency model. The first cohort of 23 Residents began their training in summer 2010.

Further Growth in Research Initiatives Since 2007

In 2008, with funds from the Nellie Mae Educational Foundation, CCE launched the [Building Quality Performance Assessment Initiative](#) (BQ) to demonstrate the potential use of performance assessments as part of a balanced student assessment and accountability system. In its first year, the Initiative included a comprehensive review of the current status of performance assessment in U.S. education. BQ began working with 12 schools across the Commonwealth in fall 2009 to build valid and reliable local assessment systems and cross-school common performance tasks. Field testing of the common performance assessment tasks in 20 schools in MA and RI is occurring during 2010-2011.

In 2009, in collaboration with the Gaston Institute at the University of Massachusetts-Boston, CCE published, a report on Boston Public Schools' service to English Language Learners over the previous five years.

In 2010, CCE continued its research on English Language Learners, focusing next on programs, outcomes, and recommendations for the Springfield, MA, public schools. It also hired an English Language Learner Project Manager to work with schools in Springfield and elsewhere.

Organizational History and Capacity

In 1998, CCE moved to the 9th floor of Renaissance Park on the Northeastern University campus. Two years later, CCE moved to the fourth floor in search of more office space. In the summer of 2002, CCE leased additional space on the third floor to account for a growing staff. In January 2010, CCE moved to its current home on the 6th floor of the UniteHere building in Chinatown.

In 1999, CCE hired its first western Massachusetts staff person, as a result of a growing demand for its work in that section of the state. CCE also hired a Comptroller to replace our Business Manager, as our revenue and staffing had increased. CCE started a Research and Evaluation unit in 2000 to begin documenting our work. Beginning in 2001, CCE began presenting research studies at various conferences, and used the findings to improve our work. In February 2001 CCE hired a Communications and Technology Director to manage its computer network, launch a CCE website, and improve CCE's public relations materials.