



**High Road  
Schools of CT &  
B.E.S.T. ACADEMY**  
REGIONAL  
NEWSLETTER  
Volume #1



## WELCOME

The High Road Schools of Connecticut and B.E.S.T. Academy consists of State Approved Private Special Education schools that are also Nationally Accredited with AdvanceEd located in: Hartford, Wallingford, Norwalk, Danielson, with In-District partnerships located in: Hamden, Plainfield, and Windham School Districts.

## SPOTLIGHT:

High Road School of Hartford  
High School's Transition Team

FINISH READING ON PG. 5



## MEET THE REGIONAL TEAM

Here at High Road Schools of Connecticut, our Regional team provides significant levels of support to each school.

FINISH READING ON PG. 2



**BUILDING  
ACADEMIC AND  
BEHAVIORAL  
CONFIDENCE  
AND  
COMPETENCE**



# IT TAKES A VILLAGE:

**In addition to all of the staff at each High Road School in Connecticut, our regional team members support our students and staff, creating our village to help students build academic and behavioral competence and confidence.**

## **Alisha Darin, Board Certified Behavior Analyst**

Ms. Darin joined the High Road School team in September, 2018. Ms. Darin has attended both Albertus Magnus College and the University of Saint Joseph where she obtained her Bachelor's degree in Psychology and Fine Arts followed by her Master's degree in Autism and Applied Behavior Analysis. Her passion for expanding her knowledge and bettering the lives of those with disabilities grows with every student she works with. Ms. Darin assists each school in desinging, monitoring and implementing FBAs, BIPs, classroom incentives and so much more. Outside of school, you can find Ms. Darin on her mountain bike, competing in enduro races all over the northeast.

Ms. Darin, BCBA



### **Megan Mele, Occupational Therapist**

Megan Mele is a graduate of Boston College with a B.A. in English and Bay Path College with a Master's degree in Occupational Therapy. Megan has been practicing as an O.T. for over 8 years, with experience in both the school system and pediatric clinics. She has a strong interest in sensory integration and received specialized mentorship in sensory processing disorders at the STAR Center in Denver, CO in 2013. Megan also has received a broad range of professional development in topics such as sensory defensiveness / Wilbarger Deep Pressure & Proprioceptive Technique, praxis, The Listening Program, Visual/Vestibular Assessment and treatment, executive functioning, and a trauma-informed approach to sensory integration. Megan is trained in the S.O.S approach to feeding and has over five years of experience in feeding therapy.

Megan has two children and a cat. In her spare time, she enjoys playing softball, doing puzzles, and spending time outside with her family. Their favorite game is the "license plate" game.

Ms. Mele, Occupational Therapist



### **Erin McGowan, Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant**

Erin McGowan, COTA/L is a Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant for our schools. Erin has worked with children in schools and a sensory clinic after graduating from Lincoln College of New England in 2015. Since 2017, Erin has provided therapeutic interventions for the students at BEST Academy, High Road School of Fairfield County, and High Road School Hartford Primary. Erin's recent professional development training includes a class on sensory modulation dysfunction treatment and Handwriting Without Tears "Pre-K readiness" and "K-5th Handwriting" training. Erin enjoys all aspects of school-based occupational therapy, but loves working on handwriting in particular. The ability to be creative when planning therapy sessions is what makes her love her job.

Erin is currently pursuing her Masters of Occupational Therapy at Bay Path University. Her spare time is spent hiking with her dog or visiting with her family and friends.

Ms. McGowan, COTA



**Paige Canty, M.A., CCC-SLP**

Mrs. Canty joined the regional High Road School team in August 2013 as a Speech-Language pathologist. Mrs. Canty earned her Bachelor’s degree in Developmental Psychology from Arcadia University and her Master’s degree in Communication Sciences and Disorders from Temple University in Philadelphia, PA. She holds an active Certificate of Clinical Competence from the American Speech-Language Hearing Association (ASHA). Mrs. Canty has a passion for improving the communication and literacy skills of our students through interactive and hands-on therapy.

Mrs. Canty, Speech-Language Pathologist



**Carley Weber, Regional Instructional Specialist**

Carley received her Bachelor’s in Special Education with a Cross Endorsement in Elementary Education from the University of Saint Joseph in 2015. In 2017, she received her Master’s in TESOL Education (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages). Carley would later go on to join our team in September of that same year. She began her career as a Certified Special Education Teacher at High Road School of Hartford Primary where she taught a mixed middle school and K-3<sup>rd</sup> grade classroom. She provided instructional services with a focus in reading, math, writing, and related content areas. In addition, Carley worked collaboratively with an IEP team to identify learning skill deficits and delivered prescribed instructional methods which followed Assessment, Curriculum, Instruction (ACI) initiatives. Carley has recently taken on a new leadership role as Regional Instructional Specialist for the Connecticut Region. Carley works closely with Senior Vice-President of Academics, Regional Vice-President and Regional Directors to assess ACI priorities for schools across the state. Carley values an established balance of empathy and accountability in the classroom and with her staff. She enjoys helping her students and staff achieve their goals by promoting an effective learning environment.

Ms. Weber, Regional Instructional Specialist



# SPOTLIGHT: HARTFORD HIGH SCHOOL TRANSITION TEAM

Staff: Special Education Teacher- Christine Hartwich

Teaching Assistant – Celia Vose-Watson

Paraprofessional- Celia Brown

Paraprofessional- Eddie Ortiz

Paraprofessional - Audie DeJesus

High Road School of Hartford High School serves students from 8<sup>th</sup> grade through the age of 21. Our Transition Classroom focuses mainly on students in the ages of 18-21 who are able to gain life experinece and necessary work skills for their future needs. These students also explore future career options and job training programs. The staff working with our Transition classroom has had a phenomenal start to the school year. They have visited the community over twelve times and taken trips to assess vocational interests such as exploring farming jobs and jobs with animals. The staff are very supportive of the students, their needs, and each other. This team has developed into a great one with excellent communication and a teacher who is very organized. All together, this team exemplifies our CORE 4 values and the amazing service we deliver to all of our students every day!



