ALL IN FOR AUTISM INITIATIVE: A CASE STUDY FOR LEHMAN COLLEGE

MEET THE TEAM
(UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA - GALLOWAY)

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AGENDA

WHAT IS AUTISM?

FEDERAL MANDATES RELATED TO DISABILITIES AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS

INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW

BEST PRACTICES

STUDENT DEVELOPMENT THEORY INFORMING RECOMMENDATIONS

ALL IN FOR AUTISM INITIATIVE

ASSESSMENT AS A DRIVING FORCE

BUDGET PROPOSAL

AUTISM SPECTRUM CONDITION OVERVIEW

- Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) represents a group of disorders that impact brain development.

Students with ASC are on a continuum with a variety of symptoms. Some individuals tend to have issues with communication such as inappropriate responses to conversations or may misread nonverbal interactions.

Students with ASC may develop many practical skills, and though they often cannot tolerate the whirl of everyday life, they are capable of living full lives and making important contributions to their living environment.

ASC STATISTICS

FEWER THAN 39% OF STUDENTS WITH ASC GRADUATE FROM COLLEGE

Every year about **49,000 students with ASC** graduate from high school

16,000 of students with ASC make the transition to college campuses to begin their first year

Core ASC Symptoms:

Social-communication difficulties

Structure, routine, and sensory sensitivities

Co-morbid conditions:

Psychopathology - Anxiety, OCD, and depression

Reduced executive function - organization

Fine-motor skills - slow and/or poor handwriting

FEDERAL LAWS RELATED TO STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

	PREK-12	HIGHER EDUCATION
IDEA IDEA provides early intervention, special education, and related services for students with disabilities ages 3-21 (or through high school graduation). IDEA also requires public schools to create an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for each student with a disability to promote their success. An IEP must ensure students receive the necessary and appropriate educational services uniquely designed to achieve the goals stated in the IEP.	AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS	NOT AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS
ADA The ADA is a civil rights law designed to provide equal opportunity for qualified individuals with disabilities, including students. The ADA prohibits discrimination on the basis of a qualified disability and ensures that qualified disabled students can have equal access and opportunity for participation in the programs, services, and activities offered by a recipient of federal financial assistance.	AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS	AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS
SECTION 504 Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act is a federal law that protects individuals from discrimination based on their disability in connection with any public or private program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.	AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS	AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS

IMPLICATIONS OF THE LAW

preK-12

HIGHER EDUCATION

- **IDENTIFICATION/DIAGNOSIS:** At the preK-12 level, the schools are responsible for identifying students with disabilities, testing those students, and providing services.

- **COMMUNICATION:** Students and parents are partners with the school district and work together to promote students' success.

- **ACCOMMODATIONS:** The schools are responsible for providing accommodations.

- **IDENTIFICATION/DIAGNOSIS:** At the college level, students must self-identify, request accommodations, and provide documentation for these accommodations - including paying for their own updated testing or first time testing if not previously diagnosed.

- **COMMUNICATION:** Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) restricts parental access to student information.

- **ACCOMMODATIONS:** Students are responsible for providing or demonstrating a need for accommodations.

In the preK-12 setting, students receive services that enable them to achieve their educational goals. The schools provide the resources and services to students with disabilities, thus giving students more opportunity to attend higher education institutions. Given the differences in the level of support and services that are legally required in preK-12 settings, but not provided in higher education, students experience significant transition challenges. These challenges include adjusting to collegiate level academics and personal and social integration into campus. Higher education institutions need to be prepared to provide policies and services that go beyond federal law in order to accommodate the rising number of students with ASC.

LEHMAN COLLEGE: INSTIUTION AT A GLANCE

GENERAL OVERVIEW

DEMOGRAPHICS

Lehman College is a 4 year, public liberal arts college in The City University of New York (CUNY) system located in the Bronx, New York.

There are over **10,000 students** registered who have a disability throughout the **24 institutions** within the CUNY system.

This number still does not capture all of the students on our campuses who have a disability and have chosen not to disclose. Our services and programs, must reach these students as well.

Over **12,800** students enrolled

Over **10,800** undergraduates

University endowment size **$8,118,309**

Faculty to Student Ratio of **15:1**

Average tuition per year: **$7,123**

58% Full-Time Students

42% Part-Time Students

68% Female / **32%** Male

56% of students are 24 and under

44% of students are 25 and over

CURRENT ISSUE AT HAND: SERVICES PROVIDED BY LEHMAN COLLEGE HAVE NOT PROGRESSED AT A RATE TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASED NUMBER OF STUDENTS DIAGNOSED WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM CONDITION (ACS).

WE IDENTIFIED THREE KEY AREAS THAT WILL BE TARGETED IN ORDER TO PROMOTE **PERSONAL**, **ACADEMIC**, AND **SOCIAL** INTEGRATION INTO THE CAMPUS COMMUNITY.

AREA 1: PERSONAL INTEGRATION

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR 1: INVOLVEMENT WITH PROFESSIONALS

CHALLENGES

Staff attitude
Slow or unsuitable support
Inability to help until disability was proven

BEST PRACTICES

Encourage students to register with ODS
Ensure timely support
Offer developmental support options (i.e. peer mentoring)
Identify student-specific problems during intake meeting
Provide comprehensive, individualized support
Engage family in support

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR 2: WELLBEING

CHALLENGES

Difficulties in everyday life (i.e. eating, washing clothes, cleaning, etc.)
Mental health (i.e. anxiety and/or depression)

BEST PRACTICES

Develop self-help strategies
Provide a point-of-contact on campus for advice and support
Encourage leisure activities and/or physical activity

AREA 2: ACADEMIC INTEGRATION

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR 3: ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

CHALLENGES

Excessive noise on campus
Large crowds
New surroundings
Lack of routine and structure
Need for safety and support
Lack of parental support

BEST PRACTICES

Parental support
Allow students to live at home or in single-occupancy housing
Increase staff awareness of the sensory processing difficulties of students with ASC
Provide social alternatives

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR 4: ACADEMIC FACTORS

CHALLENGES

Problems with executive functioning skills
Time management, planning skills, organization skills, etc.
Struggles with group work
Difficulty concentrating for extended periods of time
Inability to differentiate between details and key points

BEST PRACTICES

Additional time on assignments
Provide more structured teaching and learning
Give students information well in advance
Allow students to visit campus prior to the start of classes
Provide an interpreter of the collegiate social world

AREA 3: SOCIAL INTEGRATION

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR 5: COMMUNICATION AND UNDERSTANDING

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR 6: SOCIAL FACTORS

CHALLENGES

Students lack self-advocacy and self-awareness skills
Non-ASC students and staff lack awareness

CHALLENGES

Difficulty gaining social connections
Social isolation
Social communication difficulties
Inability to differentiate between details and key points

BEST PRACTICES

Educator acknowledgement of the diversity of ASC
Listening to student experiences
Self-advocacy training prior to start of classes
Role-playing to practice self-identification and identifying when and how to disclose their ASC

BEST PRACTICES

Inclusive and accessible spaces
Interventions to promote social opportunities so students with ASC to develop their social skills and establish friendships
Educating non-ASC peers about ASC and its impact has the potential to promote awareness, acceptance, understanding, and empathy

STUDENT DEVELOPMENT THEORIES INFORMING RECOMMENDATIONS

ASTIN'S INVOLVEMENT THEORY

- Astin (1977, 1984) found that greater degrees of involvement with the programs and activities of the campus influence student satisfaction with college, academic achievement, and persistence toward graduation.
- Involvement is defined as "the amount of physical and psychological energy that the student devotes to the academic experience" (1984, p. 297).
- "The amount of student learning and personal development associated with any educational program is directly proportional to the quality and quantity of student involvement in that program. The effectiveness of any educational policy or practice is directly related to the capacity of that policy or practice to increase student involvement" (p. 298).

MARGINALITY AND MATTERING

- Feelings of marginality often occur when individuals take on new roles, especially when they are uncertain about what that new role entails.
- Marginality is defined as a sense of not fitting in and can lead to self-consciousness, irritability, and depression. For members of non-dominant groups (students with ASC), marginality is often a permanent condition. Individuals who feel marginal worry about whether they matter to anyone.
- Mattering is defined as "our belief, whether right or wrong, that we matter to someone else" (p.9) and is composed of four aspects: attention, feeling noticed; importance, belief that one is cared about; ego-extension, feeling someone else will be proud of or sympathize with us; dependence, feeling that one is needed.

In short, higher education should provide services that will convince students with ASC that they are not marginal, and that they truly matter to the campus community. As a result, students with ASC will become increasingly involved in campus life and will be more likely to persist to graduation.

ALL IN FOR AUTISM INITATIVE

MISSON STATEMENT

The Lehman College's All in for Autism Initiative provides students with Autism Spectrum Condition an array of programs, resources and services to assist students with their personal, academic, and social integration to campus.

VISION STATEMENT

The Lehman College's All in for Autism Initiative is a collaborative effort between university partners to create an ideal campus environment that supports students with Autism Spectrum Condition; contributes to the education and training of our students, faculty, and staff; and increases the inclusivity of our campus community.

CORE FUNCTIONS

This four part initiative includes a Residential Bridge Program, a Peer Mentor Program, Campus Education and Advocacy Training, and a Success Collaborative Program.
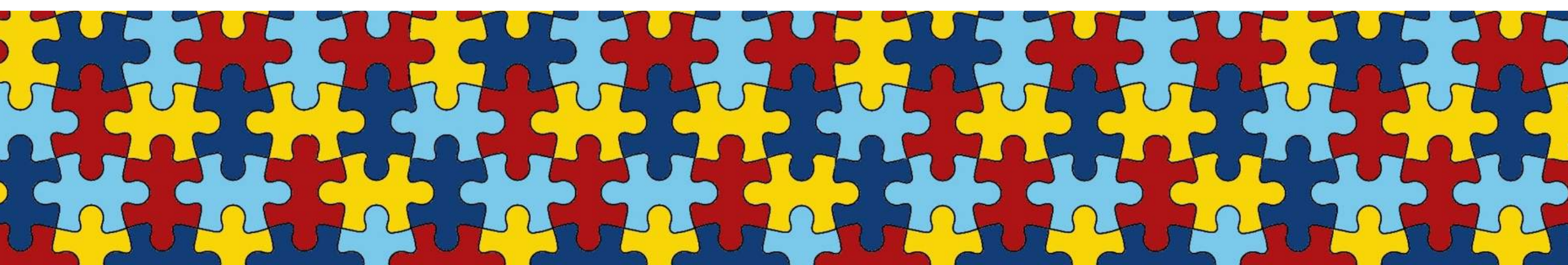
RESIDENTIAL BRIDGE PROGRAM

WHAT:

- This two week opt-in residential Bridge program provides interested students the opportunity to improve their academic study skills, interact with their peers and professionals, and get acclimated to the Lehman campus. With workshops structured like a typical college classroom, students also have the chance to experience the routine of a college course.

WHO:

- Incoming first year students with ASC who have registered with Disability Services

- Cap size of 30 students for the pilot year

WHEN:

- Two weeks before the start of classes

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS ACHIEVED:

- Key Performance Indicator 3: Environmental Factors

- Key Performance Indicator 4: Academic Factors

- Key Performance Indicator 6: Social Factors

PEER MENTOR PROGRAM

WHAT:

- This program allows for interested students with ASC to be paired a specified peer as a go-to for support and aid in adjusting to all aspects of college life. students with ASC will receive developmental coaching in executive functioning skills, academic self-regulation skills, and communication skills from trained peer mentors, all of which will aid the student with ASC in connecting with the classroom and campus community.

WHO:

- Students are able to be placed with a peer mentor during their first and second years on campus. After that time the hope is that students will be better acclimated to campus and may be interested in serving as mentors for future students.

- Mentors should be a junior or senior in standing

WHEN:

- This program will take place during the academic year

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS ACHIEVED:

- Key Performance Indicator 2: Wellbeing

- Key Performance Indicator 4: Academic Factors

- Key Performance Indicator 6: Social Factors

CAMPUS EDUCATION & ADVOCACY TRAINING

WHAT:

- Targeted trainings center around recognizing, working with, and advocating for autism. Trainings will be designed for specific members of the campus community based on best practices.

WHO:

- Faculty, staff, and students

- All student organizations

- Peer Leaders

  - Resident Mentors, Supplemental Instruction Tutors, etc.

WHEN:

- For any new faculty members

- Yearly for any student organization that receives funding

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS ACHIEVED:

- Key Performance Indicator 1: Involvement with Professionals

- Key Performance Indicator 3: Environmental factors

- Key Performance Indicator 4: Academic Factors

- Key Performance Indicator 5: Communication and Understanding

SUCCESS COLLABORATIVE PROGRAM

WHAT:

- The program includes scheduled meetings with students and their guardians based on the needs of each individual student. Topics include academic, social, and personal challenges and achievements over the course of students' academic careers. This partnership would help to provide resources for both parents and student to support campus integration.

WHO:

- Office of Disability Services Staff Member

- Parents and/or Guardians

- Students

WHEN:

- One hour meetings based on needs of the individual student and/or parent.

- Over the course of their academic career or until they no longer feel the need to use our services.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS ACHIEVED:

- Key Performance Indicator 1: Involvement with Professionals

- Key Performance Indicator 2: Wellbeing

- Key Performance Indicator 3: Environmental Factors

- Key Performance Indicator 5: Communication and Understanding

INITIATIVE SUMMARY

	KPI 1: INVOLVEMENT WITH PROFESSIONALS	KPI 2: WELLBEING	KPI 3: ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS	KPI 4: ACADEMIC FACTORS	KPI 5: COMMUNICATION AND UNDERSTANDING	KPI 6: SOCIAL FACTORS
RESIDENTIAL BRIDGE PROGRAM			✔	✔		✔
PEER MENTOR PROGRAM		✔		✔		✔
CAMPUS EDCUATION AND ADVOCACY TRAINGING	✔		✔	✔	✔	
SUCCESS COLLABORATIVE PROGRAM	✔	✔	✔		✔	

ASSESSMENT AS A DRIVING FORCE

Data driven assessment will evaluate the six KPIs within of each of the four programs. This will ensure the All in for Autism Initiative will ensure that programs are meeting their specified KPIs while allowing administrators to increase the effectiveness of the programs and overall initiative.
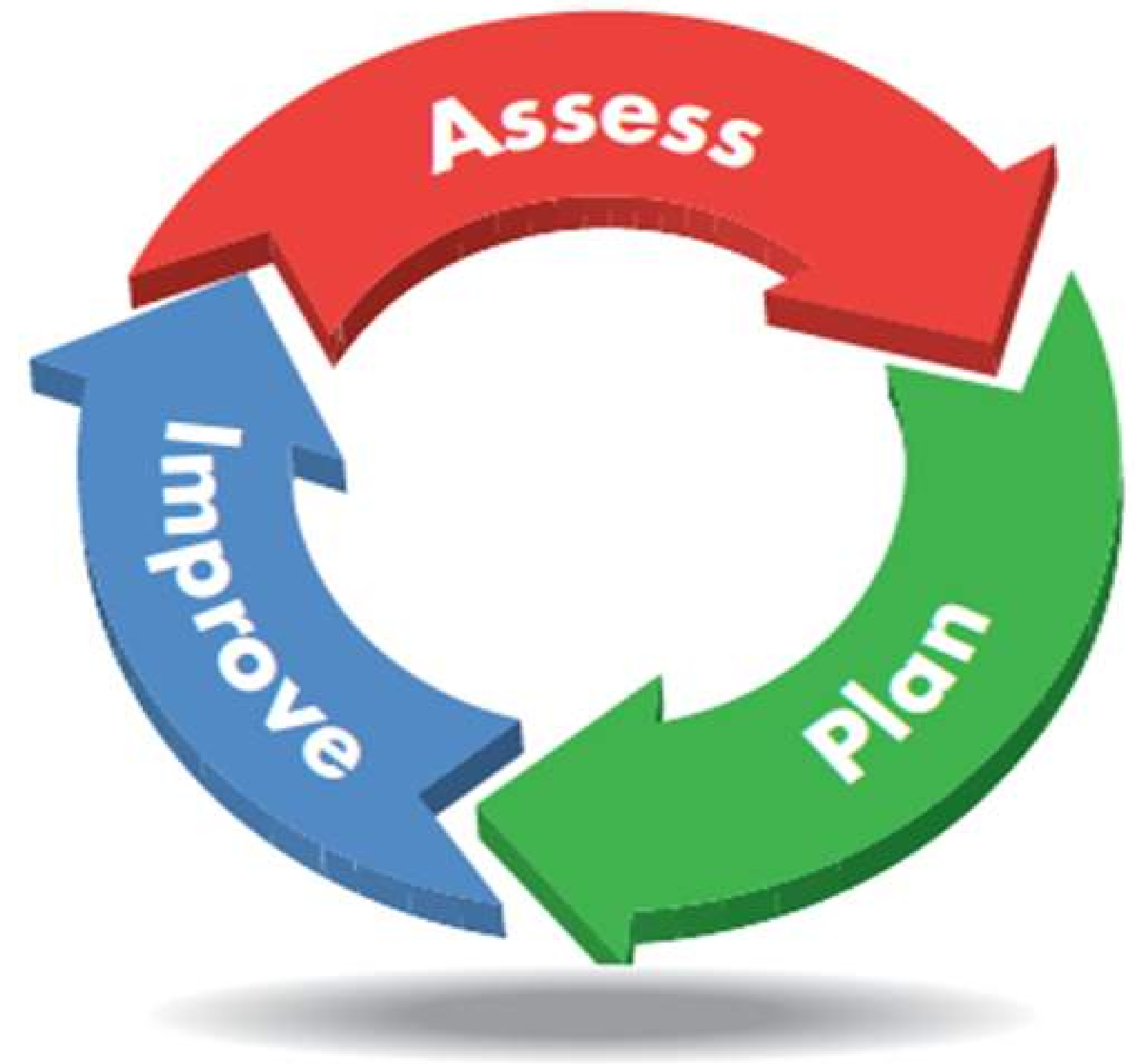
BUDGET PROPOSAL

All In for Autism Budget Proposal

Program Initiative	KPI	Cost	Quantity	Total
Residential Bridge Program	**3 / 4 / 6**			
Student Fee (Includes housing fee)		$500.00	30	$15,000.00
Meals (3 per day, 14 days, $5/meal)		$210.00	30	-$6,300.00
Faculty (2 for $1000 each week)		$1,000.00	4	-$4,000.00
Misc. Program Materials		$1,000.00	1	-$1,000.00
T-shirts		$10.00	40	-$400.00
			Residential Bridge Progam Total Cost	**$3,300.00**
Peer Mentor Program	**2 / 4 / 6**			
Monthly Meeting Refreshments (4/semester)		$25.00	8	-$200.00
Mentor Stipend ($400/semester)		$400.00	60	-$24,000.00
			Peer Mentor Program Total Cost	**-$24,200.00**
Campus Education & Advocacy Training	**1 / 3 / 4 / 5**			
Faculty Lunch & Learn Workshop Costs (4/semester, 20/session, $5/lunch)		$100.00	8	-$800.00
Administrative Costs (Room reservations, printing materials, etc.)		$25.00	8	-$200.00
			Campus Education & Advocacy Training Total Cost	**-$1,000.00**
Success Collaborative Program	**1 / 2 / 3 / 5**			
Success Collaborative Coordinator Salary		$49,000.00	1	-$49,000.00
Administrative Costs (Room reservations, printing materials, etc.)		$500.00	1	-$500.00
			Success Collaborative Program Total Cost	**-$49,500.00**
			Total Cost Year One	**-$71,400.00**

MOVING TOWARD POLICIES THAT SUPPORT STUDENTS WITH ASC MAY REQUIRE FUNDAMENTAL SHIFTS IN CAMPUS RESOURCES AND MINDSET—BUT OUR STUDENTS DESERVE NO LESS.

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