



**Boston Higashi School  
Research Team  
Strategic Plan  
2016 - 2021**

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### The Vision

To be the leading school research department in the state of Massachusetts that expands the horizons of knowledge about the education of individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder

### The Mission

In line with the Boston Higashi School mission of educating children and young adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder, the Research Team will endeavor to contribute to the world of knowledge by developing, implementing, and disseminating results from educational research studies. To achieve this, we seek to conduct high-quality and professional research projects.

### Core Values

Teamwork  
Professionalism  
Respect  
Integrity  
Accountability  
Efficiency  
Fidelity

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## Foreword

The Boston Higashi School is committed to continuous learning, growth, and development for all students, staff and families. Our goal is to present the philosophy and methodology of Daily Life Therapy® as an effective evidence-based intervention and comprehensive program for children and young adults diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder. This plan underscores the importance of integrating research, program evaluation, pedagogy and practice with fidelity and integrity. The Leadership Team is committed to the implementation of this plan and will endeavor to provide policy guidance and resources necessary for this process. I am proud to share this strategic plan developed by our Research Team who employ the highest standards of ethics and analysis.



**Deborah Donovan, C.A.G.S.**  
**Principal, Boston Higashi School**

## Preface

The Boston Higashi School Research Team is resolved to undertake research studies that drive innovation and provide the evidence base that supports the great work done in educating children and young adults diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder using the methodology of Daily Life Therapy®. As a department, we are excited about the opportunities that research presents by way of harnessing the energies and synergies of a broad coalition of our staff and other stakeholders. This Strategic Plan also provides impetus for building collaborative frameworks with research organizations, learning institutions, and other pertinent organizations. We have a great vision of ensuring that we are part of the process of building a dynamic school that seeks to excel in all areas of its noble mandate. To achieve this and to live Dr. Kitahara's dream, we require the support of everyone in our great school.

In conducting research, we shall be guided by the highest ideals of professionalism, integrity, and prudent leadership and management of the research systems and processes. We will strive to develop our internal capacity to fulfill all of the obligations bestowed upon us by the school management.

I could not have been more proud of my colleagues Yumiko Mori and Rebecca Golden for their dedication and professionalism. We also appreciate the support of Peter Gaitho in the development of this strategic plan. With these team members and with the support of our entire school fraternity, we shall achieve our mission.

I wish to sincerely thank our Executive Director, Mr. Michael Kelly, Principal, Ms. Deborah Donovan, and Director of Clinical Services, Dr. Ann Roberts, for their vision for the school and support for the nascent research department.

Finally, it's our resolve, guided by this Strategic Plan, to build a world-class research department and to make a difference in our school and beyond.

With everyone's support, we are confident that we shall deliver.



**John Maina, Ph.D.**

**Director of Program Research, Evaluation & Development, Boston Higashi School**

## Acronyms

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| ABA   | Applied Behavior Analysis                                       |
| ABLBS | Assessment of Basic Language and Learning Skills                |
| ADA   | Americans with Disabilities Act                                 |
| AS A  | Autism Society of America                                       |
| ASD   | Autism Spectrum Disorder  |
| AYP   | Adequate Yearly Progress  |
| BHS   | Boston Higashi School   |
| CAEP  | Continuing Adult Education Program                              |
| CARES | Collaboration, Accountability, Research, Education, and Support |
| CDC   | Center for Disease Control and Prevention                       |
| CITI  | Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative                 |
| DCF   | Department of Children and Families                             |
| DDS   | Department of Disability Services                               |
| DESE  | Department of Elementary and Secondary Education                |
| DLT   | Daily Life Therapy ®  |
| EEC   | (Department of) Early Education and Care                        |
| EBP   | Evidence Based Practice   |
| FERPA | Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act                       |
| IACC  | Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee                       |
| IDEA  | Individuals with Disabilities Education Act                     |
| IEP   | Individualized Education Program                                |
| IRB   | Institutional Review Board                                      |
| IMFAR | International Meeting for Autism Research                       |

|        |   |
|--------|---|
| IOS    | Issues, Objectives, and Strategies  |
| JASSDD | Japanese Association for the Study of Support System for Developmental Disabilities |
| MHG    | Musashino Higashi Gakuen  |
| NCASES | National Commission for the Accreditation of Special Education Services             |
| NCLB   | No Child Left Behind  |
| NIH    | National Institutes of Health   |
| SPSS   | Statistical Package for the Social Sciences   |
| SWOT   | Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, & Threats                                     |
| TD     | Typically Developing  |
| US     | United States   |

## **Structure of the Strategic Plan**

The Strategic Plan for the Boston Higashi School (BHS) Research Team is divided into six chapters.

Chapter one explores the background of the BHS Research Team. It involves investigation into the past performance of the department to determine which areas should be modified or capitalized upon throughout future work. It also covers information that is pertinent to understanding why cutting-edge and scientifically sound research is necessary at BHS. While undertaking our research, we shall take cognizance of the state, nation, and global contexts. It is this conceptualization that will provide the framework for the implementation of the Strategic Plan in the next five years.

Chapter two covers the situational analysis. Its writings describe the current operating context for the BHS Research Team. It covers the sector outlook, situational analysis, Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis, a list of stakeholders, and the organizational structure of the department. This chapter also contributes to the justification of the basis upon which this Strategic Model has been developed.

Chapter three discusses the strategic model and its many components, including the vision, mission, and core values. In this chapter, the issues, objectives, and strategies are described alongside the contexts within which they will be implemented.

Chapter four presents the implementation matrix upon which the BHS Research Team can focus on throughout five-year period. It shows each strategy, the activities and values associated with it, and the function that the Plan serves.

Chapter five describes proposed financing for the strategic plan, which has been determined based on previous expenses and future goals. The cash flow projections for the plan period and the various resource mobilization strategies will be included for each project.

Finally, chapter six looks at the monitoring and evaluation framework. This includes periodic evaluations and progress of the department and its staff.

## Chapter 1: Introduction & History

### 1.1. Background of The Boston Higashi School

BHS is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, which serves children and young adults diagnosed with the Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) from both the United States (US) and other countries. The school opened in Lexington, Massachusetts in 1987 and moved to its current location in Randolph, Massachusetts in 1994.

The founder, Dr. Kiyo Kitahara, established Musashino Higashi Kindergarten in 1964 in Tokyo, Japan. Her method for educating children with ASD, called Daily Life Therapy® (DLT), evolved out of her successful efforts to teach children with ASD alongside typically developing (TD) children. In 1973, Musashino Higashi Gakuen (MHG) was designated as the Research Organization of the Ministry of Education (current Ministry of Education, Culture, Science and Technology) of Japan. Dr. Kitahara then established the Musashino Higashi Elementary School in 1977, Junior High School in 1983, and High School in 1986. Around this time, DLT received recognition abroad, and Bowling Green State University in Ohio presented an Honorary Doctorate of Pedagogy to Dr. Kitahara for her innovative contributions to education. As Dr. Kitahara lectured across the United States at annual conferences, parents began requesting admission into MHG for their children. In 1984, the Musashino Higashi International Division embarked. Along with the increase in admissions from outside of Japan, Dr. Kitahara's passion and thoughts that international students should receive their education within their own culture and near their families made the foundation of BHS possible with the support and approval of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The mission of BHS is to help children and young adults with ASD learn to reach their full potential through the methodology of DLT. Students take on challenges, learn to overcome obstacles, and gain confidence from their own success. This approach allows students to develop a love for learning so they may fully enjoy their family, community, and all that life has to offer. As each student grows and learns, their personality and individual character matures, allowing them to benefit from, and most importantly, contribute to society as adults. The school motto is "Challenge, Believe, Together."

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and Massachusetts Department Early Education and Care (EEC) approve BHS as a Day and Residential Program. The school is accredited by The National Commission for the Accreditation of Special Education Services (NCASES).

### 1.2. Background of The Boston Higashi School Research Team

The BHS Research Team was established in September 2012 to evaluate the efficacy of DLT and to make a significant contribution to evidence-based research on methodologies for treating ASD. Prior to the official launch, the steering committee started to meet regularly

in September 2011 with BHS staff and external professionals to investigate the research areas that BHS needed to pursue and to analyze how to implement these areas within the DLT practice. The steering committee also exchanged the information on ASD research in Japan and US with Musashino Higashi Center for Education and Research via video conference call and email.

After this one-year preparation phase, the BHS Research Team started its first official phase with the Director of Clinical Services and the Educational Program Evaluator. The Assistant Clinician joined the team in May of 2013. In September of 2015, the Director of Program Research, Evaluation and Development was assigned to lead the second phase of this team with the Educational Program Evaluator and the Assistant Clinician. The BHS Research Team is monitored by BHS Executive Director and Principal and is supported by stakeholders with diverse specialties both internally and externally.

The research team has the following functions:

- Enhance BHS staff's awareness of Evidence Based Practice (EBP) and the necessity of research;
- Specify the research areas that it needs to pursue and identify which projects should take priority;
- Liaise with external professionals for consultations, exchanges, and collaborations;
- Develop the plans for each project, considering budgets and resources available;
- Lead projects, in accordance with the mission of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and the BHS policies;
- Seek grant resources for BHS research projects;
- Evaluate the BHS program through works of the BHS Research Team and share the outcomes with the school staff;
- Identify factors and needs for BHS to improve the program, while maintaining Dr. Kitahara's legacy;
- Publish works of BHS Research Team to public forums;
- Promote increased awareness, knowledge, and information in both school and public;
- Disseminate knowledge through the education of intern students from related fields;
- Facilitate the process of research projects initiated by other organizations or research team;
- Review the BHS Research Team's performance and functions every five years

### 1.3. Role of BHS Research within a National Perspective

ASD is a lifelong, pervasive developmental disability that affects development of language and communication skills, reciprocal and social interactions, sensory functioning, and cognitive processing. ASD occurs in all racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimated in 2014 that 1 in 68 children in the US have ASD, and the prevalence has drastically been increasing in the last decades.

Currently there is no cure for ASD, but early detection and appropriate intervention can greatly improve symptoms, development, and quality of life. To determine the causes and cures of ASD, researchers from various fields, such as medical, clinical, and educational fields, make their best endeavors to find the answers. The growing population often needs additional health, educational, and other services. In response to the rising costs of ASD, several actions have been taken at the federal level. The Children's Health Act of 2000 established the National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities at the CDC and authorized the establishment of Centers of Excellence at both CDC and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) promote research and monitoring efforts related to the causes, diagnosis, early detection, prevention, and treatment of ASD. The federal Combating Autism Act enacted in 2006 provided funding for ASD and developmental disabilities research, screening, treatment, and education. The Act established a federal advisory committee, the Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee (IACC) to develop a plan for the conduct of, and support for, ASD research. In August 2014, the committee was reauthorized under the Autism Collaboration, Accountability, Research, Education, and Support (CARES) Act of 2014 (Please refer to Public Law 113-157). This authorization will remain effective until September 2019.

Under these circumstances, it is imperative for educational service providers to demonstrate their effectiveness in evidence-based data to improve service recipients' functional development and quality of life. The BHS Research Team will take initiative to prove the effectiveness of the DLT that has been cultivated in the US since 1987 with the founder, Dr. Kitahara's great enterprise to maximize students' potential and benefits. The work of the BHS Research Team will consequently contribute to enhance social awareness and recognition of ASD that may hereafter change the world of the ASD population. The BHS Research Team will accomplish these responsibilities through:

- Enhancing each team member's awareness of ASD in medical, clinical, educational, political, and economical perspectives;
- Fostering access to knowledge;
- Promoting exchanges with individuals with ASD, their families, and professionals from various fields;
- Conducting research studies collaborating with external professionals and utilizing appropriate resources;
- Generating the information and achievement from BHS Research Team to public forums

#### 1.4. Plan and Performance To Date

##### *1.4.1. Plan*

The 2012-2015 Plan focused on the realization of the following strategic objectives:

- Establish the foundation of the BHS Research Team
  - Develop the management framework

- Strengthen capacities and capabilities as a team
- Enhance each member's knowledge and skills
- Develop strategic plan for current and future projects
- Expand network and collaborative relationships
  - Attend/present at ASD research conferences and meetings
  - Activate outreach activities
- Promote research studies
  - Summarize projects conducted prior to 2012
  - Develop plans and conduct research studies for 2012-2016
  - Plan for future (2016-) studies and projects

#### 1.4.2. Performance: Achievements, Strengths, Resources/Contributions

Please refer to Table 1.

Table 1. Performance: Achievements, Strengths, Resources/Contributions

|          | <b>Planned Activities</b>                                | <b>Achievement</b>                        | <b>Strengths</b>  | <b>Resources Contributions</b>  |
|----------|--|---|---|---|
| <b>1</b> | Summarize projects conducted prior to 2012               | - PARO (robotic seal) data analysis       | - Helped BHS Research Team expand the knowledge base of research methods and procedures<br>- Outcomes were presented at International Meeting for Autism Research (IMFAR) in 2013 and Autism Society of America (ASA) in 2014<br>- BHS Research Team members were interviewed about PARO use by a Japanese broadcasting network, "NHK World" with Dr. Shibata <sup>1)</sup> in November 2015.   | - Dr. Shibata (Inventor of PARO) offered a PARO robot to BHS for this study<br>- Dr. Shore <sup>2)</sup> and undergrad student interns helped data entry and analysis   |
|          |  | - Restraint data collection               | - Data was internally shared and helped BHS staff become more aware of information about student restraints   | - Students' data collected by the Director of Quality Assurance and The Nursing Department  |
| <b>2</b> | Develop plans and conduct research studies for 2012-2016 | - Outcomes study with BHS former students | - Reached out to BHS former students and their families<br>- Updated BHS database with former students' contact information<br>- Examined adult outcomes of BHS former students in terms of employment, living status, daily living skills, communication, exercise, recreation/leisure, and happiness and obtained positive outcomes<br>- Expanded collaborative networks<br>- Wrote up the outcomes and submitted in an international journal | - BHS former students and their families<br>- Dr. Tsai <sup>3)</sup> supported BHS to develop the research design<br>- University of New Hampshire Survey Center assisted in developing and analyzing the initial results of survey<br>- Dr. Chiang <sup>4)</sup> led BHS Research Team on data analysis and write-up |

|          |   |   |  |   |
|----------|---|---|--|---|
|          |   | - Baseline data system  | - Developed an evaluation system by modifying the Assessment of Basic Language and Learning Skills (ABLBS)<br>- Data is shared with the staff to develop students' Individual Education Programs (IEP) and utilize it in daily practice    | - Dr. Shore was consulted during the process of developing the BHS skill assessment tool  |
|          |   | - Admission data collection   | - A new data entry system was created in BHS database to track students' educational histories<br>- Data is collected regularly (i.e., 3 times/year) and is shared with the BHS staff  | - Admission forms<br>- Interviews with Director of Student Services, Admissions Coordinator, or/and students' parents   |
|          |   | - Physical Education study  | - Examined the influence of vigorous exercise on behavior problems, academic engagement, and sleep among youth with ASD<br>- Data was collected in July and August of 2016   | - Dr. Woodman <sup>5)</sup> and her team collaborate with BHS Research Team<br>- Dr. Sato <sup>6)</sup> assisted BHS Research Team to choose the biometric device |
| <b>3</b> | Plan and prepare for future projects  | - PARO study  | - Had meetings with Dr. Shibata<br>- Selected the domains in which PARO will be used for future studies (i.e., social interaction skills within an anti-bullying curriculum self-care skills, comparison with other items such as canines) | - Dr. Shibata offered to lend two new PARO robots to BHS  |
|          |   | - Sleep study   | - Revised the sleep log for residential students<br>- Searched on devices for collecting sleep data  | - Input from BHS residential staff<br>- Dr. Woodman<br>- Dr. Sato<br>- Online   |
|          |   | - Sibling study   | - Held Sibling Day sessions three times a year<br>- Conducted Sibling Questionnaire  | - BHS siblings<br>- Dr. Roberts   |
|          |   | - Alumni study  | - Launched the Continuing Adult Education Program (CAEP) in September of 2015<br>- Conducted satisfaction surveys  | - Former students<br>- Parents<br>- Caretakers<br>- Adult Service Staff   |
| <b>4</b> | Enhance research team members' knowledge & skills and expand networks and collaborative relationships | - Participated in various conferences and seminars  | - Had an opportunity of professional development<br>- Expanded professional networks<br>- Enhanced recognition of BHS  | - Each organization's website<br>- Social networks<br>- BHS Advisory Board members<br>- BHS staff members   |
|          |   | -Dr. Roberts presented at IMFAR on PARO study in April 2013                                       | - Summarized the outcomes of the PARO study<br>- Had an opportunity of professional development<br>- Enhanced recognition of BHS<br>- Expanded professional networks   | - IMFAR   |
|          |   | - Dr. Maina presented regarding the importance of autism education around the world at the United | - Became aware of international trends in ASD<br>- Enhanced international recognition of BHS<br>- Expanded professional networks   | - The United Nations<br>- Dr. Maina and his family<br>- Mr. Kelly<br>- Ms. Donovan  |

|   |                              |   |  |  |
|---|------------------------------|---|--|--|
|   |                              | Nations on Autism Awareness Day in 2016   |  |  |
|   |                              | - Dr. Maina presented to Advocates in May 2016  | - Enhanced recognition of BHS<br>- Expanded professional networks  | - Advocates<br>- Dr. Maina   |
|   |                              | - Ms. Mori presented to Japanese Association for the Study of Support System for Developmental Disabilities (JASSSDD) on a case study of BHS staff with ASD in December 2013 and received the award | - Summarized a case report of a staff member with ASD<br>- Had an opportunity of professional development<br>- Enhanced recognition of BHS<br>- Expanded professional networks | - JASSSDD<br>- Assistant Directors from Musashino Higashi Center of Education and Research<br>- The BHS staff-person and his parent                        |
|   |                              | - Ms. Mori presented at two universities in December 2013 and January 2014 on ASD and BHS   | - Educated undergraduate and graduate students and professionals in Japan<br>- Enhanced recognition of BHS<br>- Expanded professional networks                                 | - Dr. Araki <sup>7)</sup> and Dr. Masuda <sup>8)</sup> from Ritsumeikan University<br>- Dr. Noutomi <sup>9)</sup> from the Fukuoka University of Education |
|   |                              | - Ms. Mori presented to ASA on PARO study in July 2014  | - Summarized the outcomes of the PARO study<br>- Had an opportunity of professional development<br>- Enhanced recognition of BHS<br>- Expanded professional networks           | - ASA<br>- Dr. Roberts   |
|   |                              | - Research meetings with external professionals   | - Had an opportunity for professional development<br>- Expanded professional networks  | - Research collaborators<br>- MHG  |
| 5 | Activate outreach activities | - Collaborative meetings with BHS Department of Development and external parties  | - Obtained resources of grant opportunities<br>- Expanded professional networks<br>- Enhanced recognition of BHS   | - Paul Fanning<br>- Yoshie Gordon<br>- External people or organizations introduced by the personnel as above<br>- Online resources                         |

<sup>1)</sup> Takanori Shibata, Ph. D., Chief Senior Research Scientist of National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology, Inventor of PARO

<sup>2)</sup> Stephen M. Shore, Ed. D., Assistant Professor of Adelphi University, Boston Higashi School Advisory Board Member

<sup>3)</sup> Luke Tsai, M.D., Professor Emeritus of University of Michigan Medical School

<sup>4)</sup> Hsu-Min Chiang, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Columbia University

<sup>5)</sup> Ashley Woodman, Ph.D., Director of the Undergraduate Specialization in Developmental Disabilities and Human Services, Lecturer of University of Massachusetts Amherst

<sup>6)</sup> Hironori Sato, Ph.D., Senior Engineer of Omron Healthcare Co., Ltd.

<sup>7)</sup> Hozumi Araki, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus of Ritsumeikan University

<sup>8)</sup> Rika Masuda, Ph.D., Professor of Ritsumeikan University

<sup>9)</sup> Keiko Noutomi, M.D., Fukuoka University of Education

### 1.4.3. Performance: Gaps, Weaknesses, Operating Constraints

Please refer to Table 2.

Table 2. Performance: Gaps, Weaknesses, Operating Constraints

|          | <b>What was not achieved under the previous plan</b>                                      | <b>Reasons for not achieving these initiatives</b>  |
|----------|---|---|
| <b>1</b> | Obtaining grant funding (i.e., proposals were rejected by two organizations)              | - Lack of baseline data<br>- Lack of resources<br>- Lack of experiences                     |
| <b>2</b> | Following up on the Outcomes Study through visitation with former BHS students            | - Lack of funding   |
| <b>3</b> | Publishing the Outcomes Study in peer-reviewed journals (i.e., rejected by five journals) | - Lack of baseline data<br>- BHS Research Team's lack of experience in research publication |
| <b>4</b> | Acquire a membership for an online peer-reviewed journal system                           | - Lack of funding   |
| <b>5</b> | Complete more program evaluations and research projects                                   | - Lack of experiences<br>- Lack of manpower<br>- Lack of funding                            |

### 1.5. Rationale for Strategic Plan 2016-2021

This strategic plan spells out short, medium, and long-term objectives to be reached by the BHS Research Team. It also specifies the actions to be taken in order to achieve the aspired objectives. The plan gives a clear sense of purpose and direction that guides the implementation of BHS research projects. The Strategic Plan was developed based on careful consideration of previous experiences of the department as a whole.

To guide the process, this Strategic Plan has outlined the team's mission and a vision statement. The mission statement outlines:

- The overall goal that the team seeks to accomplish;
- The process to follow to reach the stated goal;
- The basic principles and values that will guide the fulfillment of our mission

## Chapter 2: Situational Analysis

### 2.1. Contextual Analysis

From the mid-twentieth century, when Leo Kanner first coined the term Autism, until fairly recently, limited resources have been available to individuals with ASD. Members of this population were often restricted by insufficient opportunities for cognitive stimulation, skill development, or social interaction. However, in 2004, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) was revised as part of an ongoing initiative, initially launched in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, to improve the quality of accommodations for people with disabilities like ASD. The IDEA mandates that special education and related services be provided to students with ASD in a way that appropriately meets their needs within the least restrictive environment possible. Stemming from this requirement is a myriad of treatment approaches that have been created for children and adults with ASD, many of which are famous for successfully mitigating the consequences of the disorder. Because of the availability of these resources, there is now a greater likelihood of more desirable outcomes for members of this population, despite the fact that a cure for the disorder remains to be found.

In recent years, effort has been dedicated to the production of empirically based studies that validate the methods used for educating ASD. These studies are purposed for systematic program evaluation, methodological comparisons, and providing an unbiased proof of concept. The inclusion of frequent, systematic evaluation of ASD-related programs can make a difference in the lives of a program's recipients by allowing for the identification of programmatic strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, which can be considered in future implementation. Some methodologies, such as Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), have been included in over 100,000 published studies research to date, while others, including our methodology of DLT, have only been rated through anecdotal reports. Because of the subjective nature of such reports, there is a strong impetus for conducting thorough, high-quality, standardized assessments of DLT.

The dearth of research on DLT may be explained by the complexity of its fundamental components. Rather than the use of discrete trials for establishing individual skills, DLT encourages multidimensional, multidisciplinary instruction for the development of multiple skills at a time. While the context of lessons oriented under DLT is very natural and maximizes generalizable growth for the student, it makes it difficult for researchers to isolate which variables are catalysts for change in behavior or cognition. Thus, evaluation of DLT at BHS requires tactful planning and careful implementation.

Over the past few years, the BHS Research Team has gradually been formulated to address the gap in the research available on DLT through the consideration of its context. Its members have oriented themselves to research practices by working from the ground up. This includes enrollment in various research methods and statistics courses, exploration into previous and similar studies, completion of small-scale pilot studies, and planning for

future research. In this endeavor, sustained relationships have been established with experts from the University of Michigan, Adelphi University, Columbia University, Boston University, University of Massachusetts Amherst, and Lesley University, who specialize in research in Developmental Disabilities. Although the task of addressing the intricacy of DLT remains, assistance from these experts elucidates some potential options.

To date, headway in the BHS Research Team has been moderate, but with the increase in the availability of resources and with the growing need for research of this nature, it is expected that progress will be substantial in the coming five years. Completion of work of this nature will reveal pertinent information about a methodology that can be used for educating individuals with ASD. With the number of people diagnosed with ASD growing quickly, information of this sort is essential. It will help members of local and national sectors to locate and capitalize on effective techniques more confidently and sooner in a child's life.

## 2.2. Environmental Analysis & Considerations for Future Research

Please refer to Table 3.

Table 3. *Environmental Analysis & Considerations for Future Research*

|  | <b>Observations</b>                                      | <b>Implications</b>  |
|--|--|--|
| <b>National Level<br/>Legal and<br/>Regulatory<br/>Environment</b> | Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (1973)             | Section 504 is a civil rights act that protects persons with disabilities who are receiving federal funds. Section 504 defines a disability as a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. It covers students who do not meet IDEA criteria but who still have disabilities. Section 504 provides for free, appropriate education in the least-restrictive environment, reasonable accommodations, and a written plan describing placement and services.  |
|  | Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (1974, 2001)   | The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) provide privacy safeguards to parents, legal guardians, and students. It forbids the release of a student's records or personally identifiable information to unauthorized persons. It is tied closely with IDEA. In addition to the protections afforded by FERPA, IDEA prohibits a school district from releasing a student's information to unauthorized persons regarding a student's disability or the fact that the student is disabled without the consent of the student's parent or guardian.   |
|  | Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (1975, 2004) | The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is the most comprehensive federal law regarding special education. It governs the process of providing a free and appropriate education to all students with disabilities, including those attending private/parochial schools. These services are to be available on the child's third birthday and may continue through age twenty-one. It states that students have the right to an educational service provided in the least restrictive environment, the right to instructional support services and aids when needed, the right to fair assessment procedures, the right to be involved in developing an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), and the right to due process. |
|  | Americans with Disabilities Act (1990)                   | The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) gives civil rights protections to individuals with disabilities similar to those provided to individuals on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, age, and religion. It guarantees equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities in public accommodations, employment, transportation, state and local government services, and  |

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
|   |  | telecommunications.  |
|   | No Child Left Behind (2002)  | No Child Left Behind (NCLB) is the most recent authorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act affecting the education of students K-12. It includes accountability measures for all public schools based on the goal that all children will be proficient in reading and math by 2014. School districts and individuals schools must show that students are making “adequate yearly progress” (AYP) toward that goal. It requires that highly qualified teachers teach children, that communication improves with parents, and that schools are made safer. It sets high expectations for all students regardless of race, ethnicity, family background, or disability. |
|   | <b>Observations</b>  | <b>Implications</b>  |
| <b>State Level Legal and Regulatory Environment</b> | Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)            | Through the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), audits of programs are conducted in order to strengthen the education system so that every student is prepared to succeed in postsecondary education, compete in the global economy, and understand the rights and responsibilities of US citizens, and in so doing, proficiency gaps will be closed.   |
|   | Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC)                       | The Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) provides the foundation that supports all children in their development as lifelong learners and contributing members of the community, and supports families in their essential work as parents and caregivers. This agency oversees education and care and after-school services for families.  |
|   | National Commission for the Accreditation of Special Education Services (NCASES) | The National Commission for the Accreditation of Special Education Services (NCASES) verifies and promotes excellence in special education services through an accreditation process in order to: 1) give families/program recipients an assurance of quality, 2) reinforce a program’s mission and goals, 3) strengthen standards for best practices, 4) gain support from foundations and the community, and 5) achieve peer reviewed recognition for excellence.  |
|   | <b>Observations</b>  | <b>Implications</b>  |
| <b>Economic Environment</b>                         | Inadequate funding for special education services                                | There is insufficient financial support for the promotion of quality special education programming. Programs are frequently understaffed or under-resourced, despite the fact that individuals with ASD comprise the most expensive group of individuals with developmental disabilities to fund.  |
|   | AYP dictates which schools receive funding                                       | Although AYP results in financial rewards from government agencies, this incentive tends to widen the gap between successful and failing schools by helping those who are already doing well compared to those who are failing (likely due to insufficient resources).   |
|   | Vagueness in federal mandates leave room for interpretation                      | Use of the words “appropriate”, “reasonable” and “adequate” are ambiguous and leave room for minimalism. Some schools only work to meet requirements, which means that they may fall short of the needs of the special and general education populations.  |
|   | Limited allocation of resources for educational research                         | Districts that are bound by limited finances do not prioritize research, but rather, they focus on the more exigent features of education, such as staffing, materials, etc.   |
|   | Low return on investment   | Because individuals with disabilities tend to need lifelong support, there is a low chance that they will receive paid employment, become taxpayers, or be able to contribute enough to society to fully pay back what has been put into their education. This reduces the motivation for funding education and research in Developmental Disabilities.  |

|                                  | <b>Observations</b>   | <b>Implications</b>  |
|----------------------------------|---|--|
| <b>Social Environment</b>        | Growing understanding of Developmental Disabilities and their complexities          | Knowledge about ASD and other Developmental Disabilities is expanding, which assists in generating acceptance of persons with such disabilities in the general public setting.   |
|                                  | Progressive increase in local and state government support for educational research | Governmental agencies encourage an increase in the production of robust research studies to help prove the effectiveness of methodologies in order to justify their costs.   |
|                                  | Inadequate knowledge of educational research practices                              | Those who do not specialize in research have a limited understanding of the rigor in which research studies are designed, implemented, and assessed.   |
|                                  | Limited acceptance of researchers in educational settings                           | Researchers are perceived as a threat and a disruption by teachers.  |
|                                  | <b>Observations</b>   | <b>Implications</b>  |
| <b>Technological Environment</b> | Existence of indigenous technologies and knowledge                                  | BHS has a strong foundation of educational techniques that have been sustained for decades and that can be preserved to promote indigenous knowledge (e.g., DLT Practices).  |
|                                  | Abundance of database systems for exploring existing research                       | There are many programs that house peer-reviewed, published articles that explore various topics. Membership to such databases permits comprehensive exploration of digital versions of research journals, although membership is expensive. |
|                                  | Availability of research data sharing technologies                                  | Programs for managing research protocols and data are available for reasonable funds. Secure data sharing programs (e.g., Google Drive, Box.com) are now available at a low cost.  |
|                                  | Increased government support to technological advancement                           | Recent promotion of Science, Technology, and Innovation initiatives and development of capacity on emerging technologies helps to facilitate research practices.   |
|                                  | Increased use of communication technologies   | Inclusion of technology for communication allows more people with Developmental Disabilities to 'have a voice' within educational settings and research.   |

### 2.3. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis

- *Strengths:*
  - BHS is the only school in the US that offers the unique methodology of DLT.
  - DLT already offers evidence of effectiveness.
  - BHS is a rich ground for clinical and other types of research.
  - The BHS Research Team has the support of the school administration and staff.
  - The BHS Research Team has a strong collaborative relationship with the staff of the school.
  - The school houses a diverse and a committed staff who contribute unique perspectives and combined years of experience.
  - The structure of the program facilitates capacity building at the individual and group levels.

- *Weaknesses:*
  - The department is still very young and its purpose is unknown to many staff.
  - Previously, there has been a lack of an internal operating policy for the BHS Research Team. This eliminates the possibility of clearly outlined short and long-term goals.
  - There is a need for focused training on research methodologies and statistics for the members of the BHS Research Team.
  - No specific guidelines exist for structuring relationships with Research Consultants, Collaborators, and Contributors.
  - Limited funding eliminates the possibility of acquiring membership to database systems.
  - The team is yet to tap into the grant system for resources to support research.
  - Team members have limited exposure to conferences and avenues, which could provide opportunities for learning about other research and or for present its own work.
  - The uniqueness of DLT as an educational approach limits the results of studies from the BHS Research Team because results cannot be generalized to students with ASD who are educated under different methodologies.
- *Opportunities:*
  - The field of research on ASD and DLT remains untapped.
  - There are significant emerging technologies becoming available for research initiatives of this nature.
  - Friends and families associated with BHS are very supportive and enthusiastic about research initiatives and they wish to be part of the process.
  - The BHS Board of Directors has expressed interest in investing resources into this essential department, which serves the purpose of fulfilling the need for evidence-based processes.
  - There are many universities that are willing to collaborative with the BHS Research team. This will not only increase the caliber of research studies (e.g., through the use of an IRB), but can help with the expansion of knowledge about the program.
  - BHS is licensed and overseen by various educational departments who would support these initiatives and provide the legal framework within which research can be anchored.
  - BHS has a robust school website that can be used as a platform for communication with parents as well as members of the community off campus.
- *Threats:*
  - There is an inadequate awareness of the role of Research Team by other stakeholders in the school may causes resistance to the implementation of research practices.

- The discrepancy between the jargon provided in research and the language needed for helping staff to understand its purpose may lead to confusion or misunderstanding.
- There is still lack of a designated budget for this high-cost department, which causes funding to be drawn from other departments, thereby jeopardizing other school needs.
- Regulations that govern research in the US are very stringent so there is a length of time to lay a foundation for the research. For example, studies cannot be published without pre-approval from an IRB and the threshold for IRB approval is very high, especially with this vulnerable population (i.e. children with disabilities).
- There has been a loss of key members of the research team because projects have taken significant time to complete.
- The BHS Research Team has a conflict of interest in grant writing when proposing projects to be done at BHS. This significantly reduces opportunities for driving research from within.
- So far, there has been an inadequate fusion of research findings into curriculum, instruction, and program development. Such gaps reduce the utility of research results.

#### 2.4. List of Stakeholders

- Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)
- Department of Early Education and Care (EEC; Residential Program Only)
- Department of Developmental Services (DDS)
- Department of Children and Families (DCF)
- School Districts and Authorities
- Universities and Research Institutions (e.g., Columbia University, Boston University, University of Massachusetts Amherst, Lesley University)
- Grant Agencies & Organizations
- BHS Board of Directors
- BHS Advisory Board
- BHS Faculty & Staff
- Advocacy Groups for Individuals with ASD
- BHS Parents/Families
- Adult Service Providers
- BHS Former Students and their Families
- Individuals with ASD
- Media
- General Public

#### 2.5 Organizational Structure

- School Management:
  - Michael Kelly, Executive Director
  - Deborah Donovan, Principal

- Research Department:
  - Dr. John Maina, Director of Research and Program Development
  - Yumiko Mori, Educational Program Evaluator
  - Rebecca Golden, Assistant Clinician/Case Worker
- Primary Internal Collaborators:
  - Dr. Ann Roberts, Director of Clinical Services
  - Peter Gaitho, Residential Division Director
- Consultants:
  - External Consultants from Affiliating Universities
  - Internal Consultants- Director of Special Education, Director of Training, Curriculum Coordinator, Director of Transition, Director of Quality Assurance, Nurse Practitioner, Division Directors, Master Teachers, Classroom Teachers, Special Subject Teachers, Academic Support Staff, Information Technology Staff, Residential Directors, Residential Master Teachers, Residential Group Instructors. Case Managers
  - Interns & Volunteers
- Contributors:
  - Parents/Guardians
  - Siblings
  - Family & Friends
  - Caretakers
  - Adult Service Providers

## Chapter 3: Strategic Model

The Strategic Model addresses areas of focus in pursuit of competitive edge over the Plan period. It takes into account challenges that the BHS Research Team faced in the implementation of the 2011-2016 Plan, requirements for future success, results of the situation analysis, stakeholders' expectations, and the requisite mitigation measures on the identified risks.

### 3.1. The Vision

To be the leading school research department in the state of Massachusetts that expands the horizons of knowledge about the education of individuals with ASD

### 3.2. The Mission

In line with the Boston Higashi School mission of educating children and young adults with ASD, the BHS Research Team will endeavor to contribute to the world of knowledge by developing, implementing, and disseminating results from educational research studies. To achieve this, we seek to conduct high-quality and professional research projects.

### 3.3. Core Values

Teamwork  
Professionalism  
Respect  
Integrity  
Accountability  
Efficiency  
Fidelity

### 3.4. Strategic Issues, Objectives, and Strategies (IOS)

- I. Clarification of the Role of the BHS Research Team
- II. Coordination of Research and Development Activities
- III. Resource Mobilization for Researchers, Educators, Practitioners, and Families

#### *Strategic IOS I: Clarification of the Role of the Boston Higashi School Research Team*

Clarification of the role of the BHS Research Team involves a multistage introduction period. The first, and perhaps most exigent, matter is to explain why a research department has been added to an organization that was formerly not dependent on data to prove its effectiveness. This involves explanation of the school's adherence to educational mandates set forth by school districts and federal agencies. A second discussion will then circulate around the identification of research team members, their relevant trainings/skills, and

their designated roles within the projects. Sharing these pieces of information will likely promote socialization of research within the school and will increase confidence in the research staff.

With the establishment of a research culture, plans for new and informative research studies can smoothly unfold. Research team members and BHS staff, alike, can identify objectives that they would like to achieve across both the long- and short-term. These studies will be designed strategically by the BHS Research Team in collaboration with the staff in order to ensure that the protocol is noninvasive, yet maximally beneficial.

#### *Strategic IOS II. Coordination of Research and Development Activities*

Research and development activities at BHS require careful and tactful planning. The quality of output is predicated on the knowledge input into research designs. Therefore, to ensure best practices, any BHS staff involved in research initiatives is required to follow protocol recommended by reputable corporations and organizations that regulate research practices. This includes IRB and the Collaborative Institute for Training Initiatives (CITI). With proper training and preparation, the BHS Research Team can design studies that meet two very specific needs: program evaluation and proof of concept. The results of these meticulously designed studies can make validated claims about DLT that were previously only anecdotal in nature.

#### *Strategic IOS III. Resource Mobilization for Researchers, Educators, Practitioners, and Families*

As stated in the mission and models of the CITI program, researchers should conduct studies with the intention of distributing the results to safely inform as many people as possible. Sharing such results will provide unbiased evidence for positive valuations of an education under DLT. By exploring and describing which variables within DLT have the most potent effect on changes in behavior and cognition of individuals with ASD, the BHS Research Team and its affiliates can shed light on why educational tools and techniques should be financially and socially supported by local and federal governmental institutions. This will subsequently help to mobilize resources for researchers, educators, practitioners, and families by demonstrating which components of DLT and other methodologies promote the best functional progress and educational growth.

## Chapter 4: Implementation Matrix

### 4.1. Matrix

The success of any strategy lies in its implementation. The Implementation Matrix identifies the various initiatives that will be undertaken to achieve the strategic objectives identified and proposes budgetary implications. The Strategic Plan will be implemented through annual work plans and shall be integrated into the annual performance contracting cycle. However, successful implementation shall be preceded by the following key activities:

- I. Clarification of the Role of the BHS Research Team
- II. Coordination of Research and Development Activities
- III. Resource Mobilization for Researchers, Educators, Practitioners, and Families

Please refer to Table 4.

Table 4. *Implementation Matrix*

| <i>Strategic IOS I: Clarification of the Role of the Boston Higashi School Research Team</i> |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
| <b>Strategy</b>  | <b>Activities</b>  | <b>Core Value(s)</b>   | <b>Purpose</b>   |
| State Purpose  | -Identify the justification for establishing a research department   | -Accountability<br>-Fidelity   | -Reveal the function of the department   |
| Define Roles   | -Form a steering committee<br>-Establish relationships with university-based consultants<br>-Gather input from an interdisciplinary team of experts  | -Teamwork<br>-Respect  | -Delegate responsibilities among the team members<br>-Obtain access to university resources and support<br>-Incorporate various levels of expertise and training   |
| Define Goals   | -Design a strategic plan<br>-Formulate clear, reasonable long-term goals<br>-Determine clear, reasonable short-term goals  | -Efficiency<br>-Professionalism<br>-Accountability   | -Implement a set of guidelines for ensuring steady, but well-planned progress  |
| Collect Information  | -Review previous works through the completion of extensive literature reviews<br>-Recognize others by sharing periodic presentations of interesting topics within the research field   | -Respect<br>-Accountability  | -Determine the position of the BHS Research Team in relation to other professionals<br>-Use other studies' successes and shortcomings to inform practice   |
| Disseminate Information  | -Establish an effective communication system within the BHS and within its surrounding community<br>-Create a clear research center within BHS that has resources for staff reference<br>-Generate empirically-based results about DLT from high caliber studies<br>-Submit articles for publication<br>-Apply for poster sessions and presentations at research conferences | -Teamwork<br>-Professionalism<br>-Respect<br>-Integrity<br>-Accountability<br>-Efficiency<br>-Fidelity | -Collect objective information about the effectiveness of DLT<br>-Expand/contribute to knowledge about ASD and effective treatments<br>-Efficiently spread information to BHS staff and surrounding community of ASD-related parents and professionals<br>-Promote outreach to other researchers and establish working relationships |

| <i>Strategic IOS II: Coordination of Research and Development Activities</i> |  |   |   |
|--|--|---|---|
| <b>Strategy</b>  | <b>Activities</b>  | <b>Core Value(s)</b>  | <b>Purpose</b>  |
| Manage Quality of Research Initiatives                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Ask all staff involved in research projects to complete the online CITI ethics course through the affiliating university</li> <li>-Submit all research protocols (including informed consent and assent processes) to the IRB of the affiliated university</li> <li>-Encourage BHS Research Team members to complete courses in basic statistics and to learn fundamentals of statistical software packages (e.g., Statistical Package for the Social Sciences)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Respect</li> <li>-Professionalism</li> <li>-Integrity</li> <li>-Accountability</li> </ul> | -Ensuring that those who are involved in research through collaboration with the BHS Research Team work in the most appropriate way possible  |
| Develop and Implement Studies  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Conduct studies for program evaluation:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Using PARO to teach social skills</li> <li>2. Comparing animal-assisted therapy to robot-assisted therapy</li> <li>3. Evaluating quality of life for families of children with ASD</li> <li>4. Examining the BHS Research Team in relation to other local programs</li> <li>5. Examine the effect of music on jogging participation</li> </ol> </li> </ul>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Professionalism</li> <li>-Respect</li> <li>-Accountability</li> <li>-Fidelity</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Determine if the BHS is the least restrictive environment for enrolled students</li> <li>-Manage quality assurance of programming</li> <li>-Ensure fidelity to guidelines set forth by DESE &amp; DLT</li> <li>-Predict student outcomes in post-secondary education</li> </ul> |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Conduct studies for Proof of Concept:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Interviews of BHS alumni (Outcomes, Phase 2)</li> <li>2. Physical Education Assessment (PE, Phase 2)</li> <li>3. Assessing sleep in children with ASD</li> <li>4. Criterion-based assessments of students at the BHS at admission and discharge</li> </ol> </li> </ul>   |   |   |

| <i>Strategic IOS III: Resource Mobilization for Researchers, Educators, Practitioners, and Families</i> |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|
| <b>Strategy</b>   | <b>Activities</b>  | <b>Core Value(s)</b>   | <b>Purpose</b>   |
| Use research findings to justify investment in educational programs for ASD                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Acquire resources necessary for maximizing research quality and outcomes:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Adopt a database system for literature review</li> <li>2. Obtain membership to lead journals</li> <li>3. Develop a structured lab setting</li> <li>4. Obtain gold-standard testing materials</li> <li>5. Establish research reliability for members of the research team on gold-standard tests</li> <li>6. Apply for grant funding</li> <li>7. Allocate a budget for remaining costs</li> </ol> </li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Efficiency</li> <li>-Fidelity</li> <li>-Accountability</li> <li>-Teamwork</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Fulfill the purpose and obligation to find information that will inform educational and research practices in the field of education</li> <li>-Justify the need for willing and able investors to contribute to programs for individuals with ASD</li> </ul> |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Capitalize on and spread information from research initiatives to stakeholders</li> <li>-Use information to support claims about why it is worthwhile for districts to send students to BHS</li> <li>-Collaboration between educational and research departments</li> <li>-Provide opportunities for data sharing through research symposiums</li> </ul>   |  |  |

## **Chapter 5: Financing the Strategic Plan**

### 5.1. Research Budget

The research department intends to undertake at least two major studies every year. The department will request funds to undertake each study based on a budget proposal. The funds will go towards personnel expenses for the essential activities of conducting the study across all phases of research. This includes compensation for outside consultants and teams who may play the roles of Principal Investigator, Co-Principal Investigator, testers and research assistants. To this end, the Principal Investigators will be responsible for the successful execution of the project in collaboration with the BHS Research Team. The budget will also include estimated direct expenses for the project such as the cost of necessary supplies and equipment. Other costs include the cost of maintaining research databases, SPSS licensure and cost of membership to secure data storage systems.

To ensure that the budgetary needs of the research department are met, the department will seek supplementary sources of funding such as grants, through assistance of the Development Team. Budget proposals and funding issues will be addressed directly with the Executive Director. It is however, the intention of the department to have a research kitty of about \$500,000 in the next 5 years to fund approved research projects.

## Chapter 6: Monitoring and Evaluation

### 6.1. Research Program Monitoring and Evaluation

The research department will routinely and systematically monitor and evaluate the implementation of the Strategic Plan. Monitoring and evaluation will be done amongst team members alongside contributors, in order to gain the most comprehensive insight possible. Monitoring will be completed using the Program Monitoring and Evaluation form (Table 5). The department will utilize this information in pursuit of its goals and objectives. More specifically, the department will use monitoring and evaluation feedback to learn about our own research and related activities and results. This will provide for effective planning and development of our programs. Monitoring will be a key pivot point for accountability to our stakeholders. Furthermore, continuous and systematic monitoring and evaluation will provide necessary evidence of the efficiency and effectiveness of programs and research undertakings for the school administration, funding agencies, consulting teams and researchers. The process will be an important basis when communicating our achievements to stakeholders and the wider public. Finally, the role of monitoring and evaluation in providing learning and in improving our department is most important.

Table 5. *Program Monitoring and Evaluation Form*

|                  | <b><u>Relevance</u></b><br>➤ Did the project/activity meet the needs of BHS? | <b><u>Efficiency</u></b><br>➤ Was the project/activity delivered in a timely and cost-effective manner? | <b><u>Effectiveness</u></b><br>➤ To what extent did the project/activity achieve?<br>➤ What are the supportive factors and obstacles encountered during the implementation? | <b><u>Impact</u></b><br>➤ What happened as a result of the project/ activity, including intended and unintended positive and negative effects? | <b><u>Sustainability</u></b><br>➤ Are there lasting benefits after the project/ activity is completed? |
|------------------|--|---|---|--|--|
| <b>Project 1</b> |  |   |   |  |  |
| <b>Project 2</b> |  |   |   |  |  |

### 6.2 Staff Evaluations

All staff of the department will be objectively evaluated on their performance at least once a year. The following forms should be used annually for such evaluations. Staff should complete the Self Evaluation Form (Table 6) at the end of each Academic Year and submit the form to his or her supervisor. In turn, supervisors should complete the Staff Evaluation Form (Table 7) and should review it with the staff person before submitting it to the Human Resources Office.

Table 6. *Self-Evaluation Form*

Boston Higashi School Research Team  
Self Evaluation Form

**A. Attendance**  
1. General attendance/punctuality

**B. Professionalism**  
1. Professionalism (appearance, attitude, following staff guidelines)  
2. Professional Practices (policies, procedures, protocols, and accountability)  
3. Cooperation and positive attitude (team work, flexibility, responsibility, effort, initiative, reliability)  
4. Communication (with other staff, Master Teacher, Directors, residence, parents, other departments and offices and reporting skills)  
5. Self improvement (active learner, self-discipline, constructive attitude, attending conferences/professional trainings)  
6. Contribution towards the program (participating in school events - required and non-required, adding creative input in planning events, taking on additional responsibility)  
7. Licensure Status (enrolled in graduate program, has taken MTEL, enrolled in ESL in prep. for continuing ed., has taken TOEFL)

| Obtained License | Working towards / Enrolled | Not Enrolled |
|------------------|----------------------------|--------------|
|                  |                            |              |

If staff are "Not Enrolled" describe action plan to be put into place within 30 days:

**C. Knowledge and Implementation of Education/Clinical Services**  
1. Knowledge of special education (knowledge of educator's responsibilities/typical human development/knowledge of various teaching approaches)  
2. Knowledge of Autism (character/tendencies/strengths/weaknesses/learning style of people with autism, general knowledge about autism and trends, and implementation of that knowledge)  
3. Knowledge of Daily Life Therapy (our mission, educational goals, and general philosophy and methodology and implementation of that knowledge)

**D. Organizational/Management Skills**  
1. Prioritizing assignments  
2. Organization of Workload  
3. Accomplishes assignments in a timely manner  
4. Shows initiative toward identifying and solving problems  
5. Identification of needs and ability to use a good judgment in following up (prioritizing, handling difficult issues, reporting and following up)

**E. Teaching Skills/Clinical Skills**  
1. Care for the educational environment (developing/creating materials/maintaining the environment/accessing and following the curriculum/teaching methods)  
2. Approach towards the students (attitude and behavior as an educator, level of expectation, and consistently challenging the students)  
3. Research Skills  
4. Problem solving skills (following 5 steps of problem solving)  
5. Ability to use a good judgment (prioritizing, handling difficult issues, reporting and following up, reliability)

**F. Writing Skills**  
1. Writing skills (timeliness and quality of paperwork such as daily students logs, incident report, C-Form, IEP, quarterly report,

weekly plan, Lesson plan, etc.)

**G. Completion of Required Training**

1. Received CPR training on \_\_\_\_\_
2. Received First Aid training on \_\_\_\_\_
3. Received N.A.P.P.I. training on \_\_\_\_\_
4. Attended all mandatory trainings (number) \_\_\_\_\_

**H. Short term Goals for the Next Year (1-2 years)**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

**I. Long term Goals for the Next Year (3-5 years)**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

**H. Comments by Staff**

Staff Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

*Table 7. Staff-Evaluation Form*

Boston Higashi School Research Team  
Staff Evaluation Form

**A. Attendance**

1. General attendance/punctuality

| Exceeds expectations | Meets expectations | Needs improvement |
|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
|                      |                    |                   |

Comments:

**B. Professionalism**

1. Professionalism (appearance, attitude, following staff guidelines)

| Exceeds expectations | Meets expectations | Needs improvement |
|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
|                      |                    |                   |

Comments:

2. Professional Practices (policies, procedures, protocols, and accountability)

| Exceeds expectations | Meets expectations | Needs improvement |
|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
|                      |                    |                   |

Comments:

3. Cooperation and positive attitude (team work, flexibility, responsibility, effort, initiative, reliability)

| Exceeds expectations | Meets expectations | Needs improvement |
|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
|                      |                    |                   |

Comments:

4. Communication (with other staff, Master Teacher, Directors, residence, parents, other departments and offices and reporting skills)

|                      |                    |                   |
|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Exceeds expectations | Meets expectations | Needs improvement |
|                      |                    |                   |

Comments:

5. Self improvement (active learner, self-discipline, constructive attitude, attending conferences/professional trainings)

|                      |                    |                   |
|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Exceeds expectations | Meets expectations | Needs improvement |
|                      |                    |                   |

Comments:

6. Contribution towards the program (participating in school events - required and non-required, adding creative input in planning events, taking on additional responsibility)

|                      |                    |                   |
|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Exceeds expectations | Meets expectations | Needs improvement |
|                      |                    |                   |

Comments:

**C. Knowledge and Implementation of Education**

1. Knowledge of special education (knowledge of educator's responsibilities/typical human development/knowledge of various teaching approaches)

|                      |                    |                   |
|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Exceeds expectations | Meets expectations | Needs improvement |
|                      |                    |                   |

Comments:

2. Knowledge of Autism (character/tendencies/strengths/weaknesses/learning style of people with autism, general knowledge about autism and trends, and implementation of that knowledge)

|                      |                    |                   |
|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Exceeds expectations | Meets expectations | Needs improvement |
|                      |                    |                   |

Comments:

3. Knowledge of Daily Life Therapy (our mission, educational goals, and general philosophy and methodology and implementation of that knowledge)

|                      |                    |                   |
|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Exceeds expectations | Meets expectations | Needs improvement |
|                      |                    |                   |

Comments:

**D. Organizational/Management Skills**

1. Prioritizing assignments

|                      |                    |                   |
|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Exceeds expectations | Meets expectations | Needs improvement |
|                      |                    |                   |

Comments:

2. Organization of Workload

|                      |                    |                   |
|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Exceeds expectations | Meets expectations | Needs improvement |
|                      |                    |                   |

Comments:

**3. Accomplishes assignments in a timely manner**

|                      |                    |                   |
|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Exceeds expectations | Meets expectations | Needs improvement |
|                      |                    |                   |

Comments:

**4. Shows initiative toward identifying and solving problems**

|                      |                    |                   |
|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Exceeds expectations | Meets expectations | Needs improvement |
|                      |                    |                   |

Comments:

**5. Identification of needs and ability to use a good judgment in following up (prioritizing, handling difficult issues, reporting and following up)**

|                      |                    |                   |
|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Exceeds expectations | Meets expectations | Needs improvement |
|                      |                    |                   |

Comments:

**E. Writing Skills**

1. Writing skills (timeliness and quality of paperwork such as daily students logs, incident report, C-Form, IEP, quarterly report, weekly plan, Lesson plan, etc.)

|                      |                    |                   |
|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Exceeds expectations | Meets expectations | Needs improvement |
|                      |                    |                   |

Comments:

**F. Completion of Required Training**

1. Received CPR training on \_\_\_\_\_
2. Received First Aid training on \_\_\_\_\_
3. Received N.A.P.P.I. training on \_\_\_\_\_
4. Attended all mandated trainings (number) \_\_\_\_\_

Which trainings need to be made up: \_\_\_\_\_

**G. General Comments by Dr. John Maina (BHS Director of Research, Evaluation and Development)**

**H. Comments by Staff**

**I. Short term Goals for the Next Year (1-2 years)**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**I. Long term Goals for the Next Year (3-5 years)**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Staff Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_