

Therapeutic Independent Schools

The Mill School

Elisa Walker, M.Ed.

Ryan Erickson, M.I.T.

Timothy Feeney, Ph.D.



Two Questions:

Two Questions:

1. How do we ensure that ALL Vermont students receive the education that they need?

Two Questions:

2. How do we afford it?

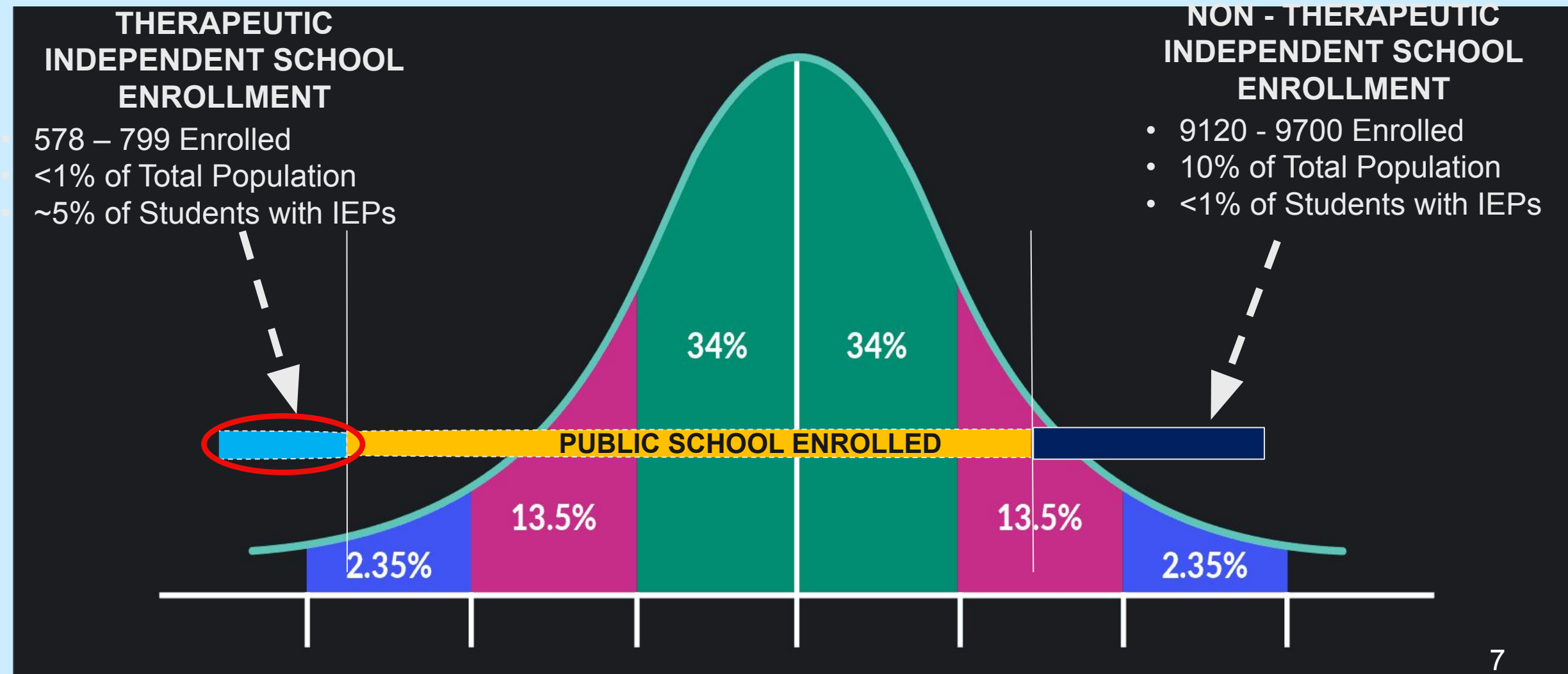
Therapeutic Independent Schools



A Summary of the Population

- ~ 83,000 K-12 students in Vermont
- ~ 14,000 receive Special Ed services (17%)
- 578-799 placed in Therapeutic Schools – including residential therapeutic schools (less than 1% of the total; ~5% of Special Ed students)

Population Served in All Vermont Schools v. Therapeutic Independent Schools



Social Determinants Affecting Student Success

FACTORS	NUMBER OF STUDENTS 24-25	PERCENT OF ENROLLED STUDENTS 24-25	NUMBER OF STUDENTS 25-26	PERCENT OF ENROLLED STUDENTS 25-26
Families at or below poverty threshold	7	28%	13	54%
Families identified as low income	10	40%	10	42%
Families identified as moderate income	5	20%	1	4%
Families identified as middle income	3	12%	0	0

Social Determinants Affecting Student Success

FACTORS	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	PERCENT OF STUDENTS
Students with current DCF cases	11	44%
Students with current Juvenile Justice involvement	7	28%
Students with current Substance Abuse concerns	13	52%
Students with history of violence	16	64%

Why we need Therapeutic Independent Schools

Why we need Therapeutic Independent Schools

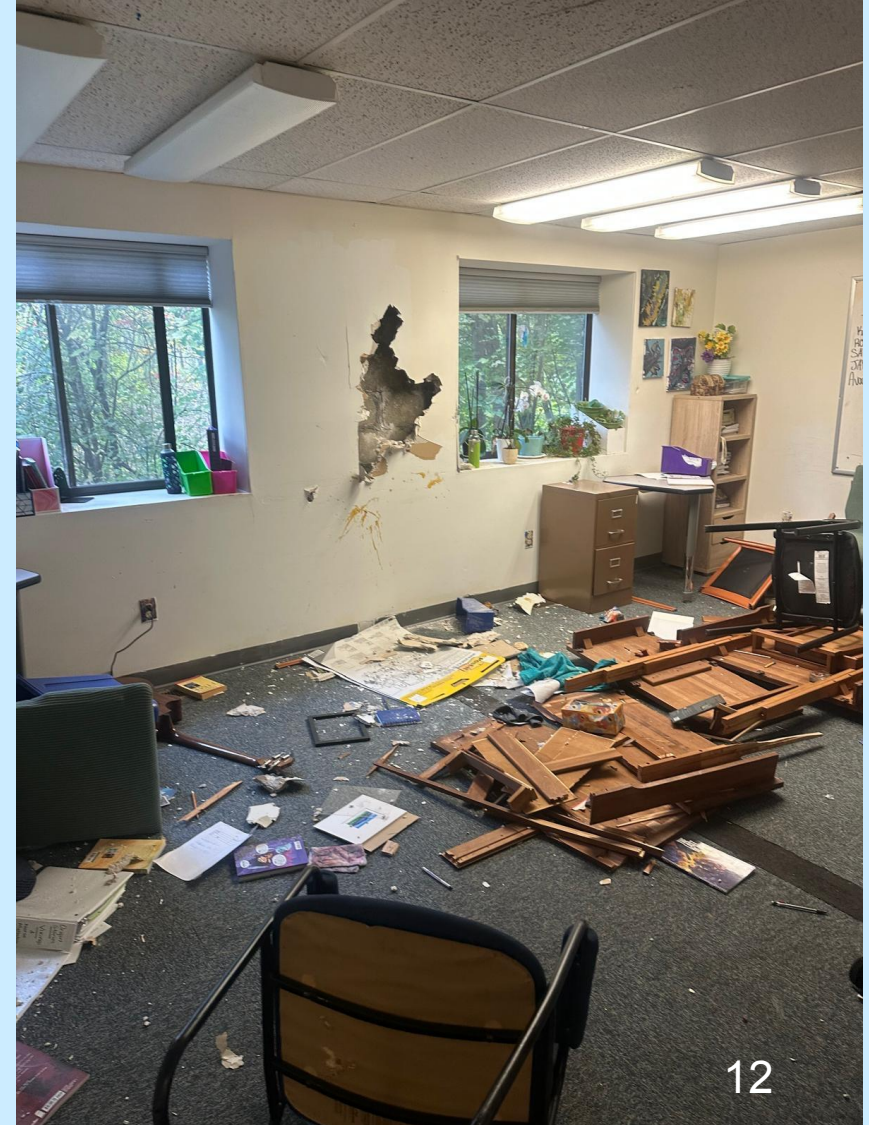
Some students have needs that are beyond what public schools can provide



Why we need Therapeutic Independent Schools

Some students have needs that are beyond what public schools can provide

- Behavioral Issues



Why we need Therapeutic Independent Schools

Some students have needs that are beyond what public schools can provide

- Behavioral Issues
 - Repair & Reintegration



Why we need Therapeutic Independent Schools

Some students have needs that are beyond what public schools can provide

- Emotional Impairment

Why we need Therapeutic Independent Schools

Some students have needs that are beyond what public schools can provide

- Emotional Impairment
 - Extensive and Embedded Clinical Support



Why we need Therapeutic Independent Schools

Some students have needs that are beyond what public schools can provide

- Learning Differences and Neurodiversity



Why we need Therapeutic Independent Schools

Some students have needs that are beyond what public schools can provide

- Learning Differences and Neurodiversity
 - Extensive and integrated Special Ed teachers



Why we need Therapeutic Independent Schools

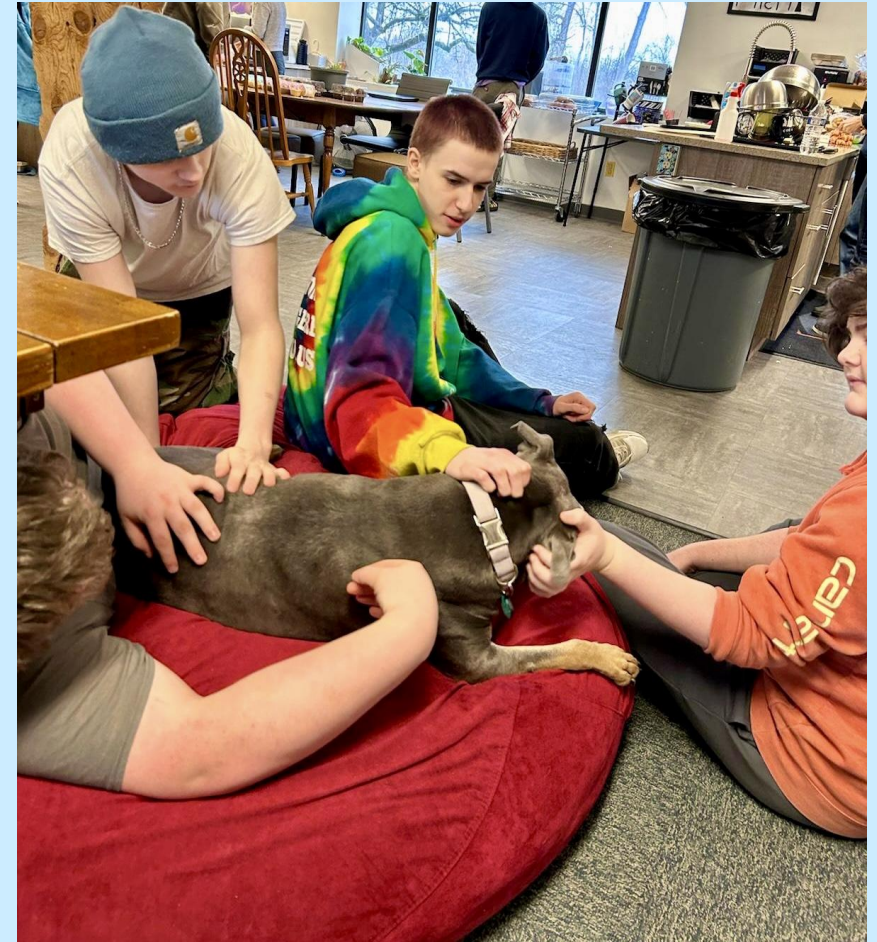
What else makes Therapeutic Independent Schools like the The Mill School different?



Why we need Therapeutic Independent Schools

What else makes Therapeutic Independent Schools like the The Mill School different?

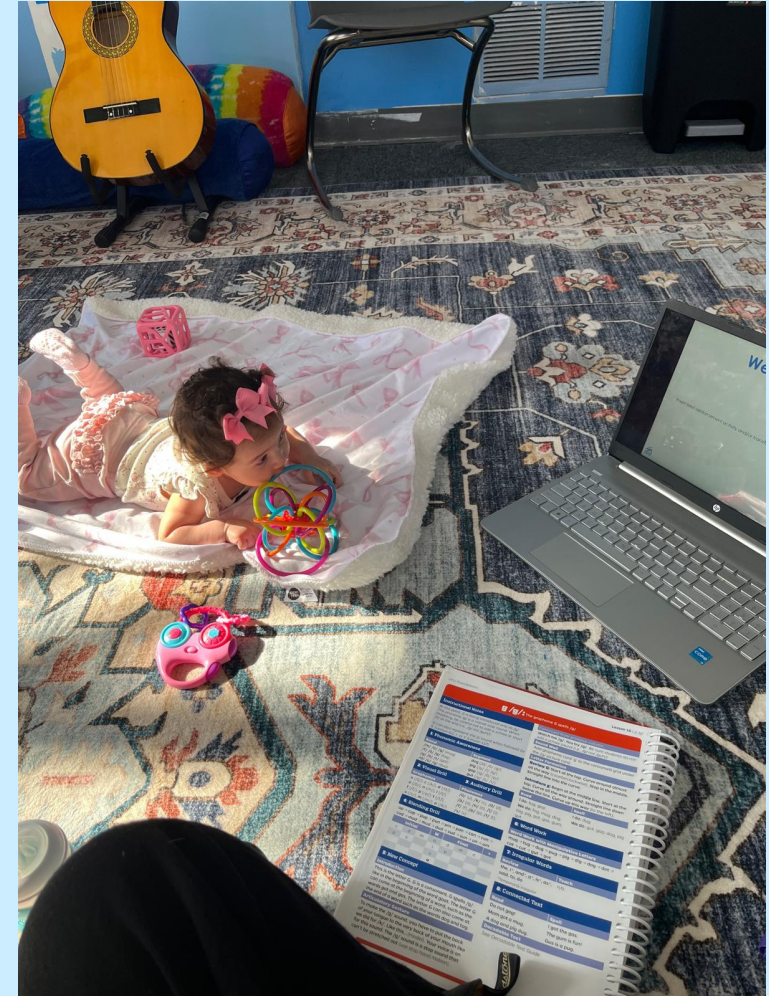
- The Centrality of Relationships



Why we need Therapeutic Independent Schools

What else makes Therapeutic Independent Schools like the The Mill School different?

- Flexibility



Why we need Therapeutic Independent Schools

What else makes Therapeutic Independent Schools like the The Mill School different?

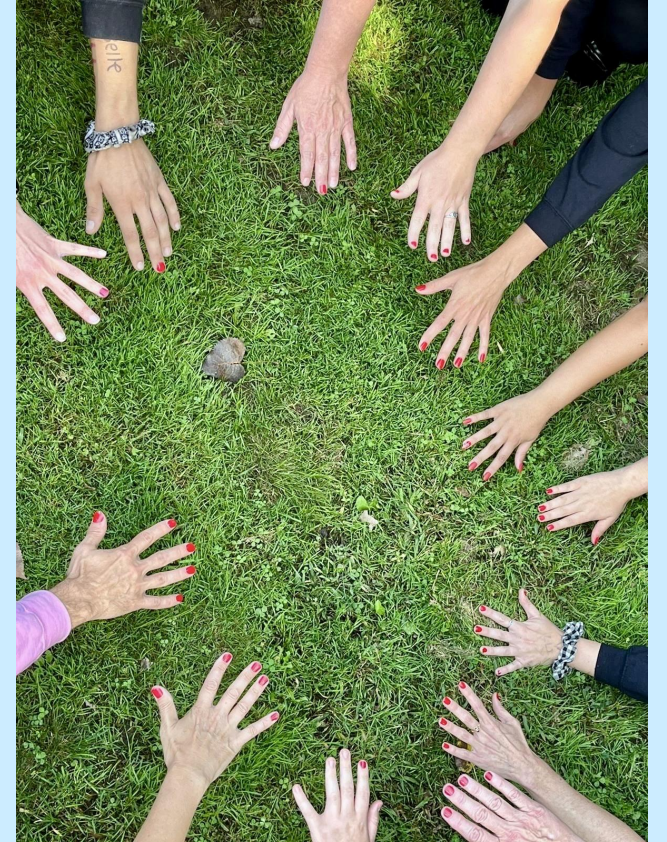
- Community Partnerships



Why we need Therapeutic Independent Schools

What else makes Therapeutic Independent Schools like the The Mill School different?

- A Restorative, Repair-Based Discipline System



Therapeutic Independent Schools
are *schools first*

Vermont Education Quality Standards

Vermont Education Quality Standards

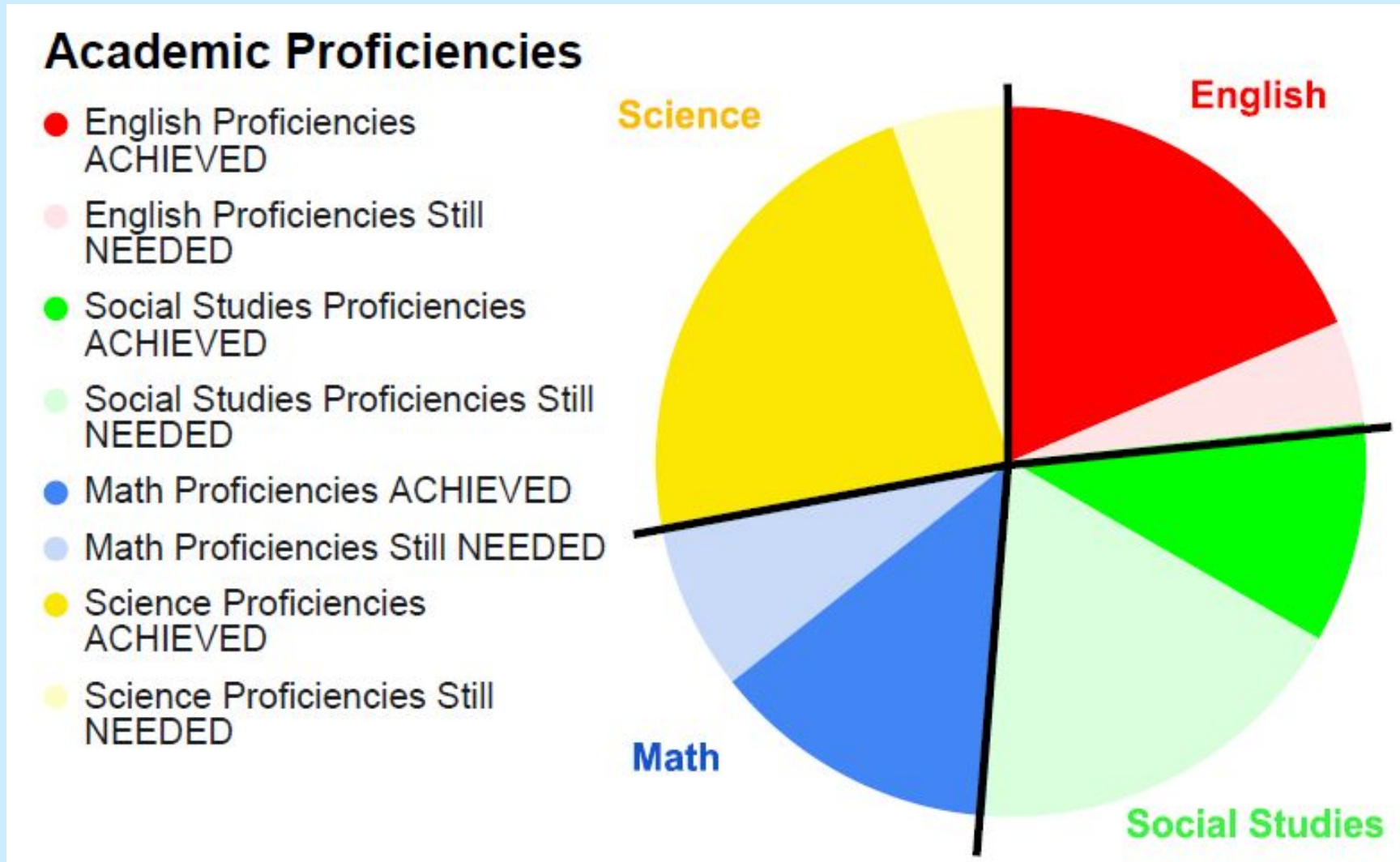
- English Language Arts and Literacy
- Mathematical Content and Practices
- Science and Engineering Practices
- Global Citizenship
- Physical Education and Health Education
- Artistic Expression and Core Arts Disciplines
- Transferable Skills
- Ethnic and Social Equities Studies

Mill School Graduation Requirements

- English Language Arts and Literacy - ELA
- Mathematical Content and Practices - Math / Financial Literacy
- Science and Engineering Practices - Science
- Global Citizenship - Global Citizenship
- Physical Education and Health Education - Physical Education / Health
- Artistic Expression and Core Arts Disciplines - Art
- Transferable Skills - Transferable Skills
- Ethnic and Social Equities Studies - Global Citizenship /
Transferable Skills

Mill School Graduation Progress

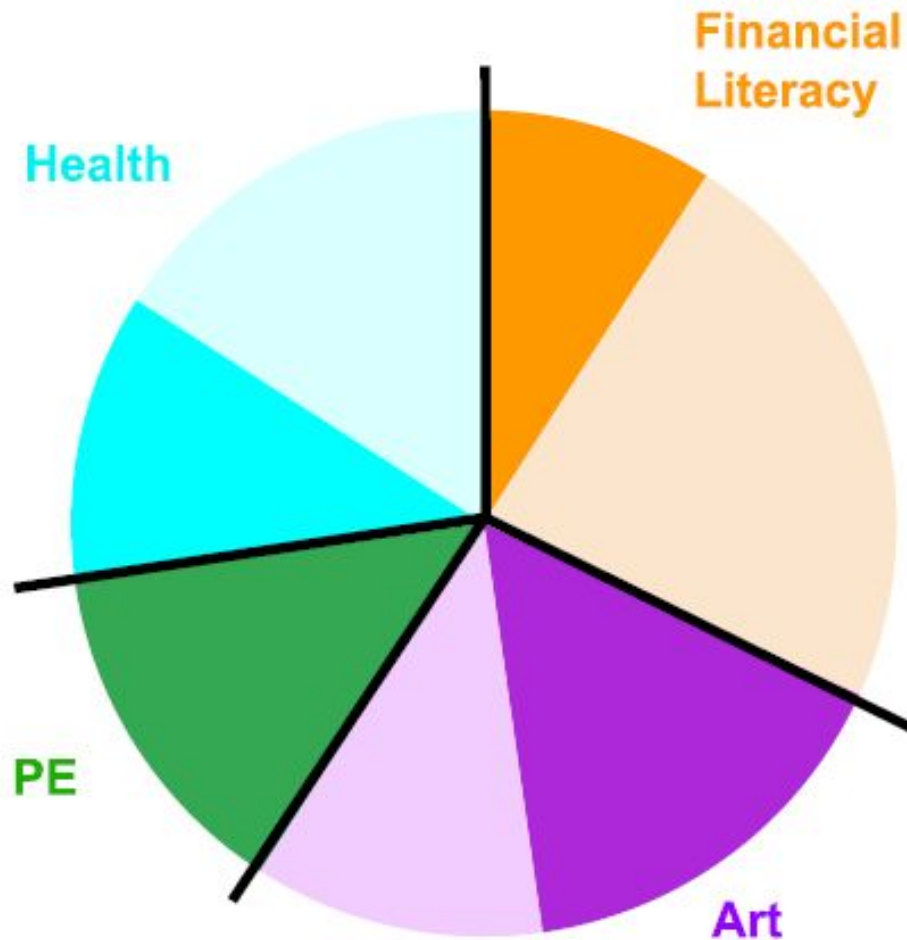
Mill School Graduation Progress



Mill School Graduation Progress

Elective Proficiencies

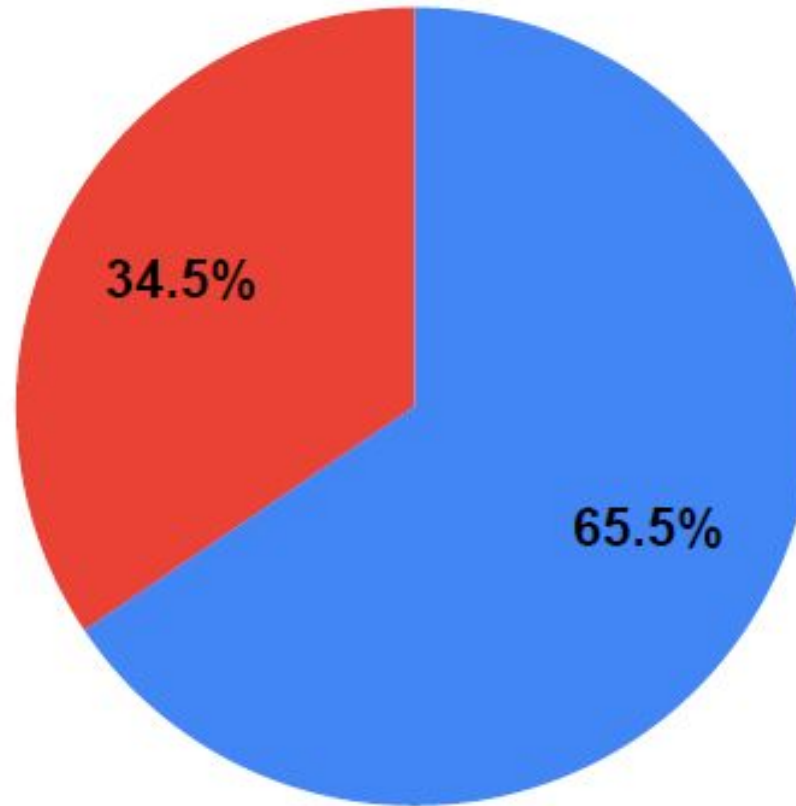
- Financial Literacy Proficiencies ACHIEVED
- Financial Literacy Proficiencies Still NEEDED
- Art Proficiencies ACHIEVED
- Art Proficiencies Still NEEDED
- PE Proficiencies ACHIEVED
- Health Proficiencies ACHIEVED
- Health Proficiencies Still NEEDED



Mill School Graduation Progress

Transferable Skills Progress

- Transferable Skills ACHIEVED
- Transferable Skills Still NEEDED



TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

Specific Performance Indicators Checklist

Clear and Effective Communication	Proficiency Level for this Semester
Articulate thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively in written form.	Regularly
Articulate thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively in oral form.	Regularly
Engage in active listening.	Regularly
Informed and Integrative Thinking	Proficiency Level
Apply knowledge from various disciplines and contexts to real life situations.	Regularly
Analyze the truthfulness and trustworthiness of information	Sometimes
Self-Direction	Proficiency Level
Identify goals related to desired life outcomes and personal values.	Regularly
Identify obstacles to achieving goals.	Regularly
Demonstrate the ability to make plans to achieve goals	Regularly
Demonstrate initiative, responsibility and perseverance toward achieving goals.	Regularly
Responsible and Involved Citizenship	Proficiency Level
Practice responsible digital citizenship.	Consistently
Take responsibility for personal decisions and actions.	Sometimes
Respect diversity and differing points of view. (don't be an asshole)	Sometimes
Creative and Practical Problem Solving	Proficiency Level
Identify the root cause of an issue.	Regularly
Analyze information to understand the problem.	Regularly
Generate potential solutions to the problem.	Sometimes
Evaluate effectiveness of the solutions and make adjustments as needed.	Sometimes

TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

Specific Performance Indicators Checklist

Participation	Proficiency Level
Maintain attendance.	Regularly
Actively participate in academic and non-academic activities.	Regularly
Participate for the prescribed times.	Consistently
Self-awareness and Self-management	Proficiency Level
Identify and manage one's emotions and behavior.	Regularly
Recognize personal qualities and external supports.	Regularly
Demonstrate skills related to achieving personal and academic goals.	Regularly
Social Awareness and Interpersonal Skills	Proficiency Level
Recognize the feelings and perspectives of others.	Sometimes
Recognize individual and group similarities and differences.	Sometimes
Use communication and social skills to interact effectively with others.	Sometimes
Demonstrate an ability to prevent, manage, and resolve interpersonal conflicts in constructive ways.	Sometimes
Decision-making Skills	Proficiency Level for this Semester
Consider ethical, safety, and societal factors in making decisions.	Sometimes
Apply decision-making skills to deal responsibly with daily academic and social situations.	Regularly
Contribute to the well-being of one's school and community.	Regularly

Two Questions:

2. How do we afford it?

A Summary of the Population

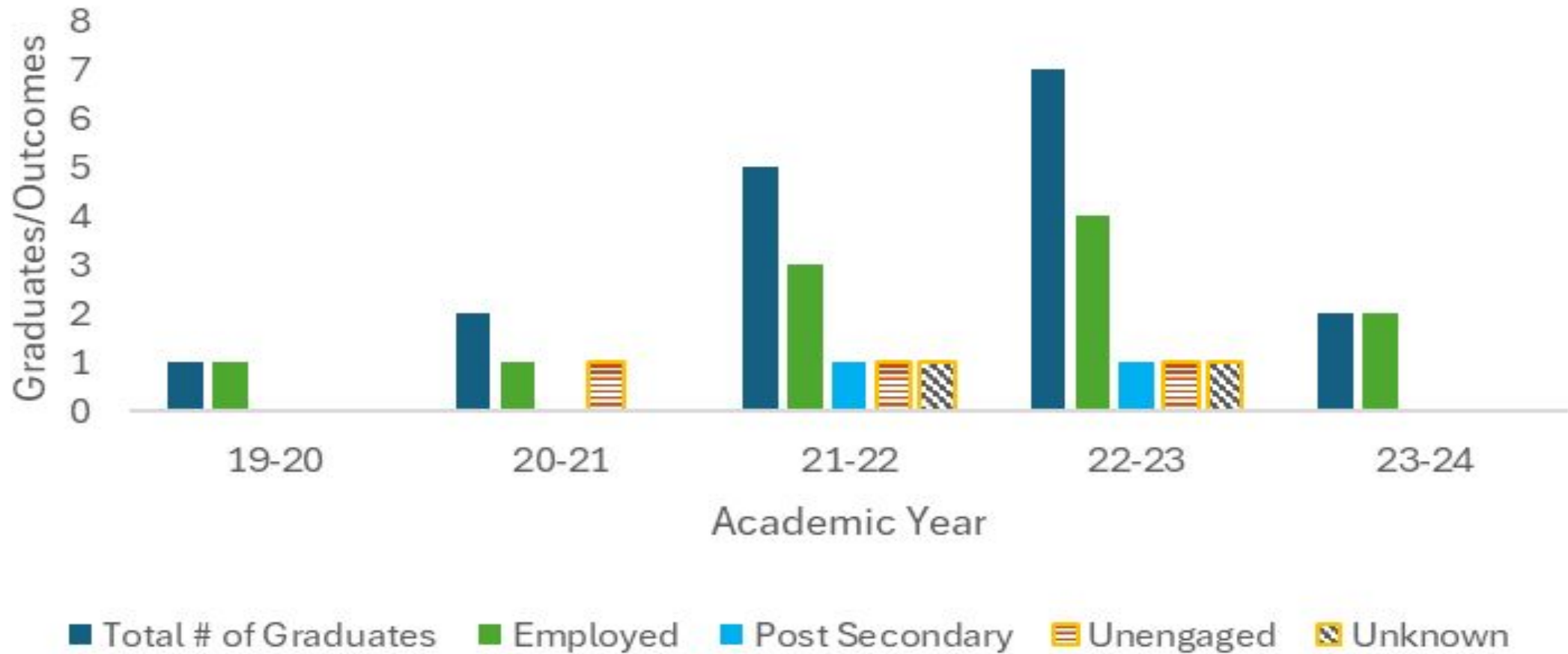
- ~ 83,000 K-12 students in Vermont
- ~ 14,000 receive Special Ed services (17%)
- 578-799 placed in Therapeutic Schools – including residential therapeutic schools (less than 1% of the total; ~5% of Special Ed students)

Solution Costs

- **Cost of hiring special educator: \$75-100k**
- **Cost of hiring a behavioral intervention specialist: \$50-\$100k**
- **Cost of hiring a reading intervention specialist: \$65-85k**
- **Cost of hiring a math intervention specialist: \$65-100k**
- **Cost of hiring a school clinician: \$65-100k**
- **Cost of yearly tuition at the Mill School: \$76,805**

Post Graduation Outcomes

17 Graduates/5 Years



JT

- Natural leader
- Academically talented
- Mechanically inclined
- Funny
- Resilient



JT

Emotional Disturbance



JT

Emotional Disturbance DCF Involvement



JT

**Emotional Disturbance
DCF Involvement
Childhood Trauma**



JT

**Emotional Disturbance
DCF Involvement
Childhood Trauma
Verbal Aggression**



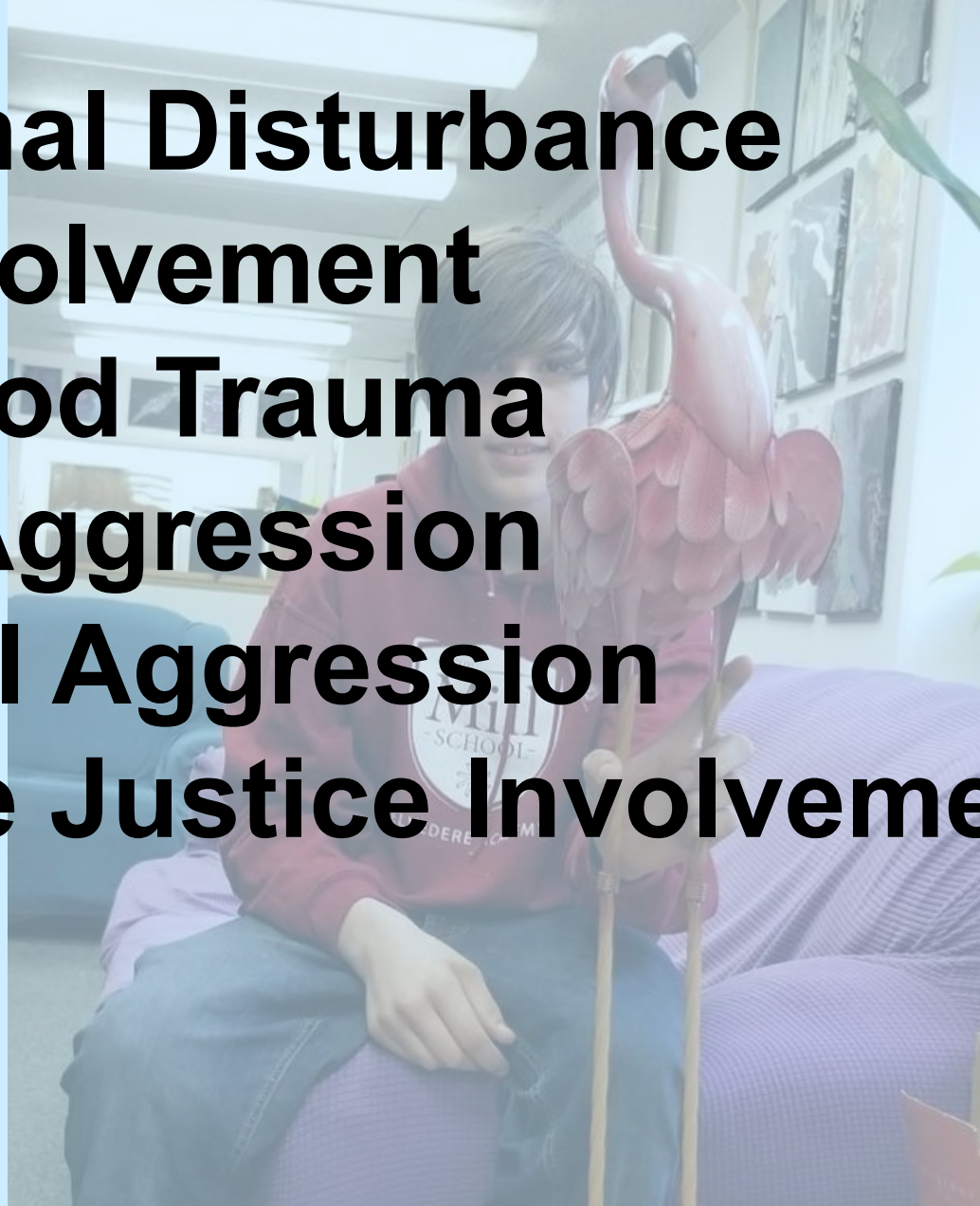
JT

**Emotional Disturbance
DCF Involvement
Childhood Trauma
Verbal Aggression
Physical Aggression**



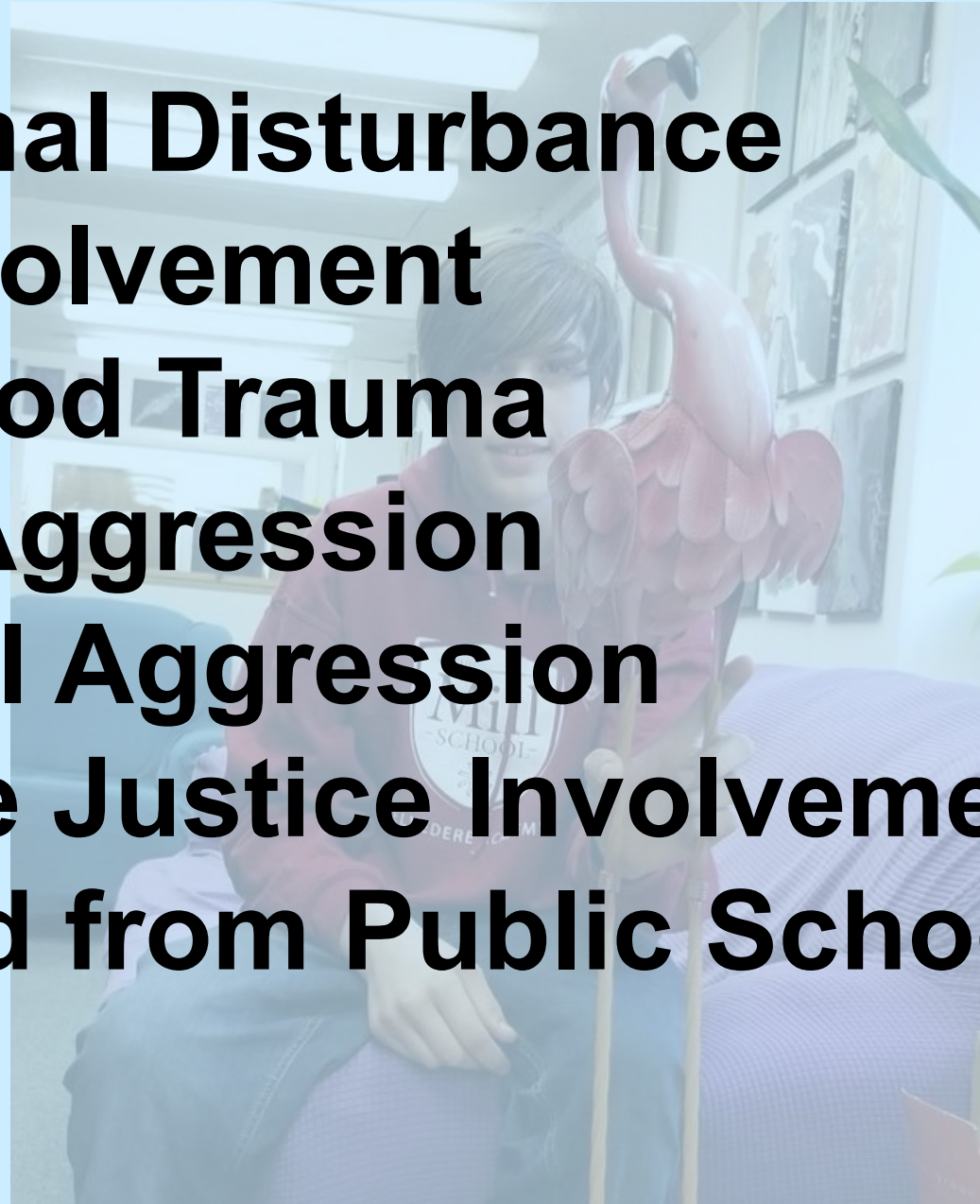
JT

**Emotional Disturbance
DCF Involvement
Childhood Trauma
Verbal Aggression
Physical Aggression
Juvenile Justice Involvement**



JT

**Emotional Disturbance
DCF Involvement
Childhood Trauma
Verbal Aggression
Physical Aggression
Juvenile Justice Involvement
Expelled from Public School**



JT

Emotional Disturbance

DCF Involvement

Childhood Trauma

Verbal Aggression

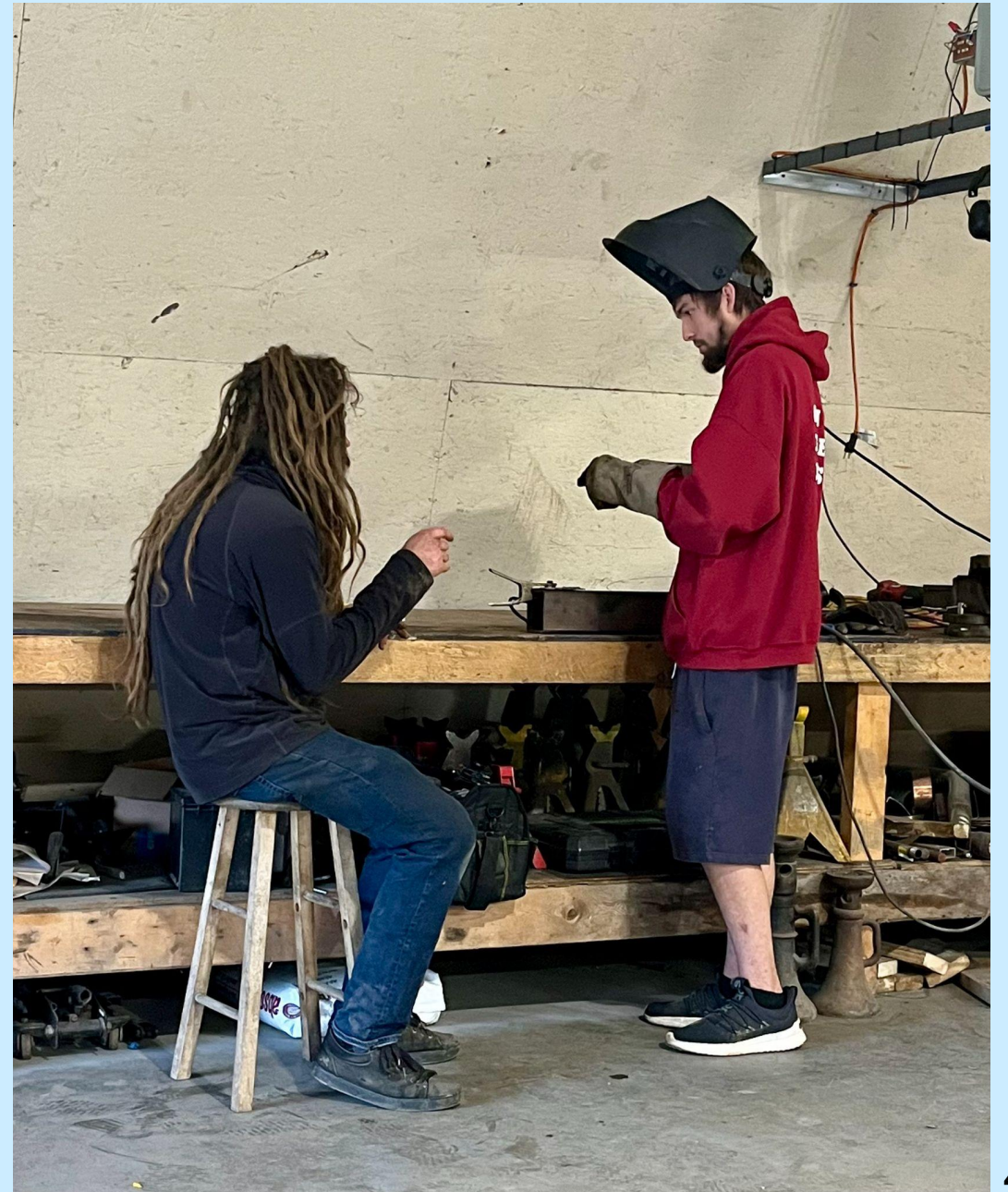
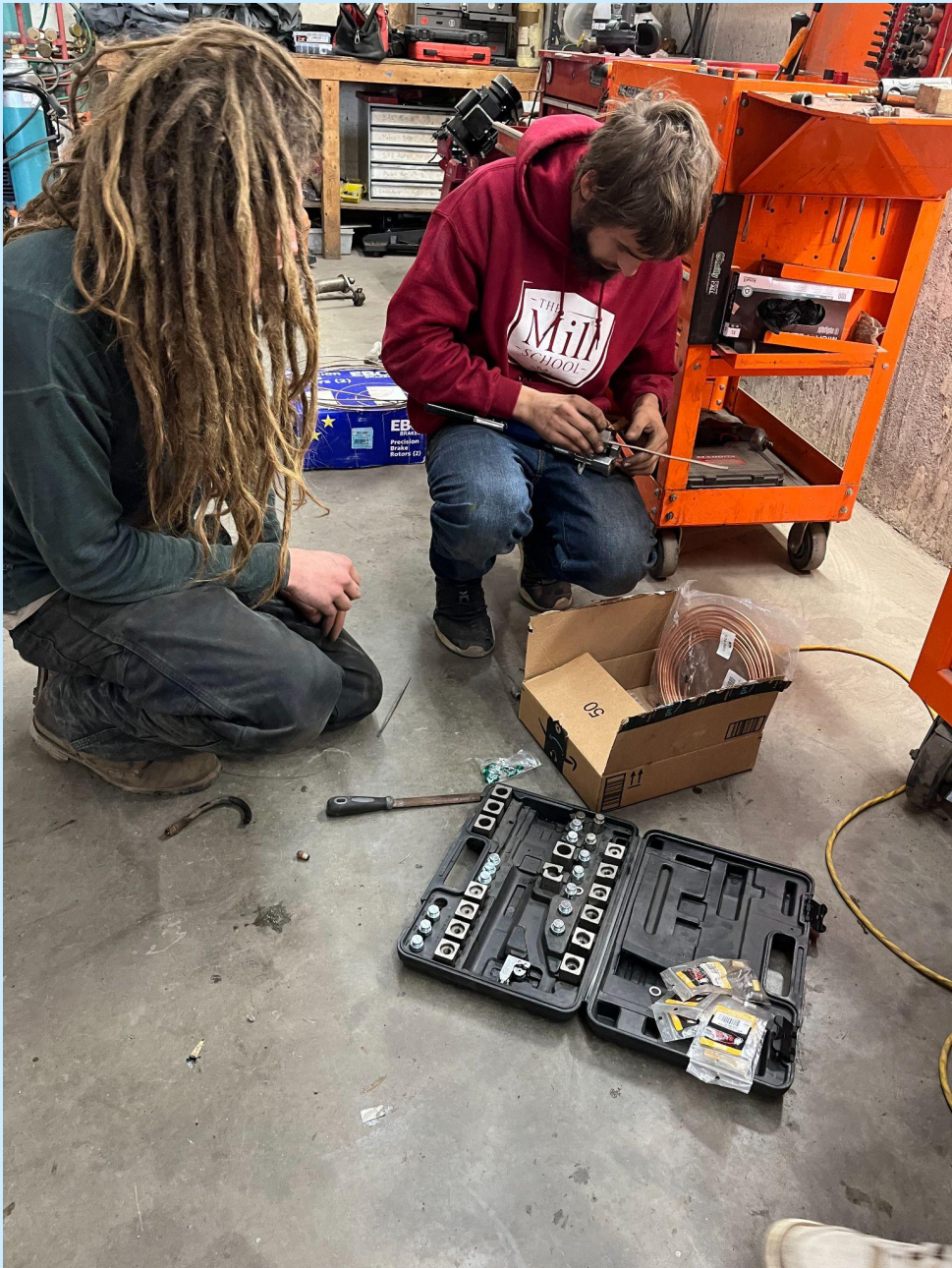
Physical Aggression

Juvenile Justice Involvement

Expelled from Public School

Expelled from Alternative School





In Conclusion: Our Asks

In Conclusion: Our Asks

Predictability

In Conclusion: Our Asks

Predictability

1. Financial Predictability

In Conclusion: Our Asks

Predictability

- 1. Financial Predictability**
- 2. Regulatory Predictability**

In Conclusion: Our Asks

Predictability

- 1. Financial Predictability**
- 2. Regulatory Predictability**
- 3. Statutory Predictability**