

# Center on Secondary Education for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders: Lessons Learned During Intervention Development



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## WHAT IS CSESA?

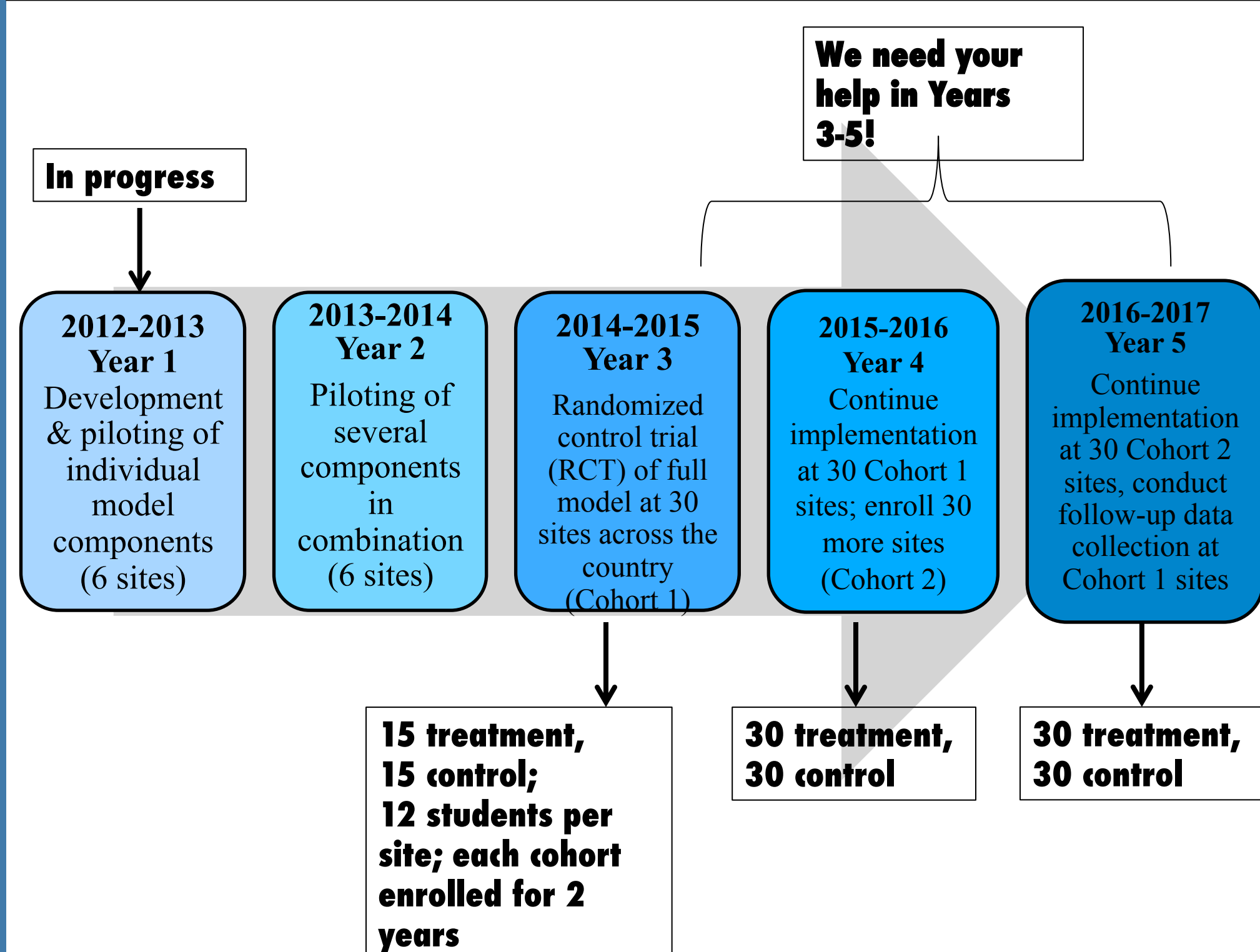
CSESA is a research and development project funded by IES that focuses on developing, adapting, and studying a comprehensive school- and community-based education program for high school students on the autism spectrum.

## WHAT ARE THE CSESA COMPONENTS?

The comprehensive model will have five components that work together to best meet the needs of students, school staff, community partners, and families.

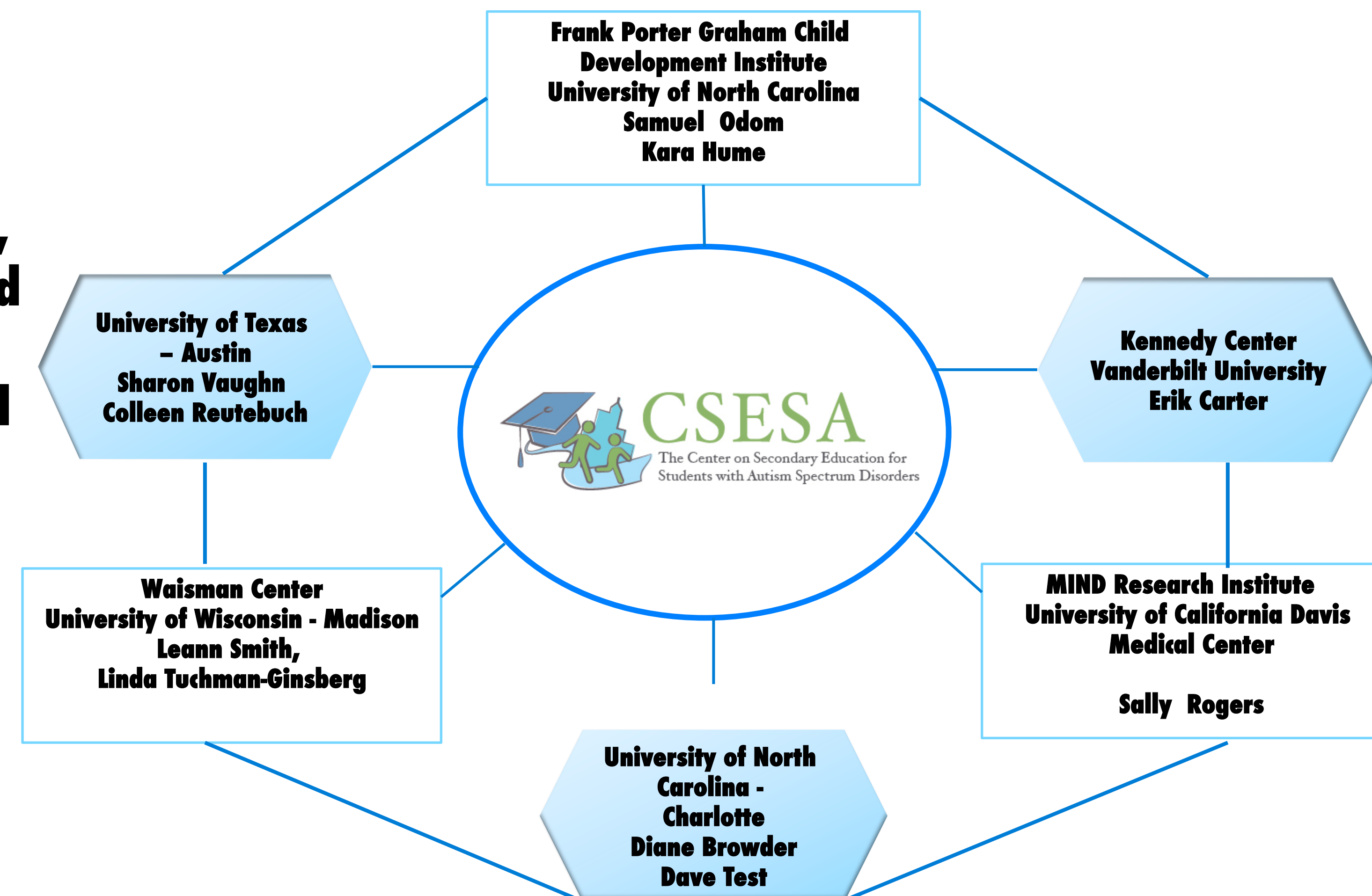


## CSESA TIMELINE



## WHO ARE THE CSESA PARTNERS?

Across five years, researchers from six universities will collaborate with schools, businesses, families, and adolescents on the autism spectrum to build and study a high school program that supports optimal outcomes for students in high school and after graduation. Lead investigators are listed to the right.



## YEAR 1 CSESA ACTIVITIES

**Focus Groups:** 28 focus groups were conducted across four states, with 141 participants representing various stakeholder groups. Participants shared their perspectives on the needs of high school students with ASD, as well as the needs of families and school/community staff that provide support to this population. The data shared is being used to refine CSESA interventions.

**Pilot Studies:** Currently we are piloting intervention components at 9 high schools in five states across the country. We are examining the feasibility, acceptability, and social validity of the intervention pieces, as well as student outcomes after receiving intervention components. 135 participants across stakeholder groups are taking part in our pilot studies. The data gathered will also be used to refine CSESA interventions, as well as to develop training materials for school sites. Teams are using design experimentation and single-case design.

Focus Groups N = 141		Year 1 Pilot Studies	
Stakeholder	Sample Size	Participant Groups	Currently Enrolled
Administrators	27	Schools	9
Community Members	16	Teachers and staff	33
Educators	50	Students with ASD	33
Parents	42	Other students	32
Service Providers	1	Families	28
Youth	5		

## FINDINGS FROM YEAR 1

Preliminary focus group findings indicate a number of concerns and considerations around programming in secondary settings. Data analysis is ongoing to compile cross-site data.

Concerns	Considerations
Time & funds to support students with ASD	Emphasize improving learning environment
Limited understanding of ASD in high school settings	Focus on plan for professional development
Demands of high school can be overwhelming: "There are lots of expectations but no reminders"	Create a balanced model Keep feasibility in mind
Inconsistent staff & programming	Share relevant information readily

Teams are collecting frequent data from stakeholder groups. Pilot findings demonstrate promise and feasibility.

## YOU CAN PARTICIPATE

Consider districts with whom you work:

- Are there high schools that could benefit from comprehensive programming for their students with ASD?
- Are there district/school leaders who are interested in collaborating with a research team?

**Benefits to collaborating with CSESA:**

Intervention Group	Control Group
Support in developing site based team	Support in developing site based team
Ongoing assessment of program quality	Ongoing assessment of program quality
Training and weekly coaching on each component	Financial compensation for team members
Financial compensation for team members	Training at the end of the study (2017)

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