



Exceptional News!

Student Support Services Division Department of Education

Newsletter

February 2011

Inclusive Education

Inclusive Education Canada and the Newfoundland and Labrador Association for Community Living (NLACL) are sponsoring February as National Inclusive Education Month in 2011. They invite nominations for two inclusive education awards to be given to educators in Newfoundland and Labrador. One will be for an individual who demonstrates inclusive philosophy and practices while the second will be awarded to a group or school which embodies these qualities. Please consult the itinerant teacher for inclusive education in your area or Sherry Gambin-Walsh at NLACL sherrygw@nlacl.ca.

Itinerants for inclusive education in the various school districts are organizing other activities for the month which will highlight inclusive education. Watch for information pertinent to your area.

Differentiated Instruction Strategies

TAPS is an acronym for how you can group students in your classroom. Inclusive classrooms have flexible groupings for learning. There are numerous ways to group your students. TAPS stands for:

- Total Group
- Alone
- Partner
- Small group

When planning for lessons, teachers need to carefully consider how students learn best. Some students are very social and like working in small groups. Others have a preference for working on their own, while others like to work with only one partner. Some students work well in any type of grouping. Keep in mind that *Total Group* is most effective when introducing a new concept or topic. Once follow-up work begins, the total group can disperse into various group configurations. All students need ample opportunity to work in a variety of groupings in the classroom which will build independent work skills as well as team skills.

Differentiated Instructional Strategies, Gregory & Chapman, 2007



Scaffolding for Struggling Learners

When students struggle with skills and concepts, provide them with:

- more modeling, additional teacher instruction, review of concepts, peer tutoring
- a template, a set of steps, a formula, extra time
- colour-coded elements, highlighted elements, exemplars of writing or assessments
- manipulatives, sentence strips, sticky notes, flash cards, address labels typed with vocabulary terms, access to text resources
- more opportunities to use language - vocabulary lists, cards with pictures, word banks, opportunities to discuss the topic using provided terms, word walls, lists of questions, a list of signal words
- a graphic organizer, an incomplete outline, a framed paragraph, sentence starters, prompts

Differentiation in Action, Judith Dodge, 2005

Safe & Caring Schools

Safe & Caring Schools Special Project Award Recipients for 2010-11

Eastern School District

- (i) St. Joseph's All Grade – Bee Your Best
- (ii) St. Lawrence Academy (St. Lawrence) – Stepping Up the Spirit
- (iii) Coley's Point Primary (Bay Roberts) – Time for R & R
- (iv) St. Peter's Elementary (Upper Island Cove) – Social Awareness Day
- (v) Clarenville Primary (Clarenville) – CPS Pink Scarf Campaign
- (vi) St. Mark's School (King's Cove) – Virtues Project
- (vii) Bishop White School (Port Rexton) – Virtues Project
- (viii) Swift Current Academy (Swift Current) – L.I.F.E. Virtues Project

- (ix) Bishop Abraham Elementary (St. John's) – Filling Buckets at Bishop Abraham
- (x) St. John Bosco (St. John's) – St. John Bosco Stands
- (xi) Macpherson Elementary (St. John's) – Macpherson's Commitment to Building Community, Compassion and Citizenship
- (xii) Mary Queen of the World (Mt. Pearl) – Anti-bullying Hip Hop Crew
- (xiii) Holy Cross Jr. High (St. John's) – Think Pink at HCJH
- (xiv) St. Peter's Jr. High (Mt. Pearl) – Python Pride Protection Forum
- (xv) Beaconsfield Junior High (St. John's) – Resource Pillar/Street Signs
- (xvi) Holy Trinity High (Torbay) – Gay-Straight Alliance
- (xvii) Booth Memorial (St. John's) – Gotcha PBS Program
- (xviii) St. Kevin's Junior High (St. John's) – Week to Imagine

Nova Central School District

- (i) Lumsden Academy (Lumsden) – Respectful Behaviour Reward Project
- (ii) Baie Verte Academy (Baie Verte) – Peace Begins With Me
- (iii) Phoenix Academy (Carmanville) – PBS Launch
- (iv) Indian River High (Springdale) – PBS Rollout
- (v) Hillview Academy (Norris Arm) – Hillview Hawks SOAR – Bullying Stops Here
- (vi) Memorial Academy (Botwood) – Bee Buck Program
- (vii) Leo Burke Academy (Bishop Falls) – Leo Burke Lightening PBS Launch
- (viii) John Watkins Academy (Hermitage) – Implementation of PBS
- (ix) Glovertown Academy (Glovertown) – Eagle Feathers PBS



Western School District

- (i) St. Thomas Aquinas (Stephenville) - Bully Buster Days
- (ii) St. James' Elementary (Port Aux Basques) - Rainy Day Activities
- (iii) St. Michael's Elementary (St. George's) - Pay It Backward
- (iv) St. Anthony Elementary (St. Anthony) - SAE (Spirit-Attitude-Excellence) Phase 2
- (v) St. Peter's Academy (Benoit's Cove) - Continuation of PBS
- (vi) Labrador Straits Academy (L'Anse au Loup) - Stand Up to Bullying
- (vii) Stephenville Elementary (Stephenville) - Catch Me Good Program
- (viii) C.C. Loughlin (Corner Brook) - CC Spirit
- (ix) St. Gerard's (Corner Brook) - Respect Day / Pink Shirt Day

Labrador

- (i) Jens Haven Primary (Nain) - JHMS is a PAWSitively Great Bucket Filling School
- (ii) A. P. Low Primary (Labrador City) - Highlighting I CARE @ A. P. Low
- (iii) Mealy Mountain Collegiate (Goose Bay) - HAWK (How Are We Kind?)

Conseil Scolaire Francophone

- (i) École Boreale (Happy Valley-Goose Bay) – Crédation d'une troupe permanente de théâtre de marionnettes

Graduating students may apply, indicating their leadership in having created and completed projects or activities aimed at improving the safety and well-being of their schools and/or communities.

Examples of the kinds of projects and activities that may be considered are:

- working with younger children around issues such as bullying, conflict resolution and anger management
- establishing committees or student groups around issues such as safe schools or social justice
- creating dramatic or multi-media productions to promote awareness of safe and caring schools issues and sharing them with others

Awards will be \$500 tuition vouchers to support post-secondary education.

The deadline for applications is April 4, 2011. Further information is available from the school districts and on the Department of Education website www.gov.nl.ca/edu/

Safe & Caring Schools Graduating Student Awards

The graduating student awards aim to promote student awareness of the Safe and Caring Schools policy and acknowledge the contributions of youth in establishing and maintaining safe and caring schools and communities. Specifically, the goal is to:

- Recognize the leadership of youth across the province in completing projects and activities aimed at enhancing the safety and well-being of others in their schools and communities.
- Help students recognize that they can make a difference in the lives of others.
- Encourage and mobilize students to become involved in future initiatives.



February 20th - 27th is Violence Awareness Week in our schools. Go to www.outagengl.ca for information and classroom activities. We are encouraging all schools to participate, and for staff and students to *Find Your Voice Against Violence*. Wednesday, February 23rd will be *Stand Up to Bullying Day*. Students and staff are asked to wear pink in order to send a loud, non-confrontational message of resistance to bullies; to draw attention to the effects of bullying; to stimulate passive bystanders into action; and to identify themselves to victims as a source of support willing to help.

Alternate Format Materials (AFM)

Choosing the Best Alternate Format for Your Students

The purpose behind asking for a specific format is so that the student can be given the format that is best suited to his/her needs. For many resources, there are several online and offline formats available (i.e., digital audio (MP3), PDF, Word or Kurzweil). Providing all of the online and offline formats would likely be overwhelming to the student.

The first decision on choosing the best format is online or offline. You should only choose offline if the student does not have access to the Internet at home or the Internet service is very poor in their community.

The second decision is which is the best format and what software does the student need to access the resource. The following formats are supported by the Department of Education (DOE).

- On-line Digital Audio (MP3): A format where the text is automatically read to the student but the actual words are not visible on the screen. It is accessed through the DOE website. A student can download a copy of the online version to use on their home computer or to load onto their IPOD or MP3 player.
- On-line E-text Files (Kurzweil, PDF or Word): A format which requires text to voice software and results in the student hearing a computer generated voice read the text while the text being read is highlighted on the computer screen. It is accessed through the DOE website. A student can download a copy of the online version to use on their home computer.
- Offline Digital Audio (MP3): A CD which contains an MP3 file where the text is automatically read to the student but the actual words are not visible on the

screen. The CD is loaned to the school and must be returned to the Department of Education at the end of the school year.

- Offline E-Text Files (Kurzweil, PDF or Word): A CD which contains Kurzweil, PDF or Word files. Text to voice software is required and results in the student hearing a computer generated voice read the text while the text being read is highlighted on the computer screen. The CD is loaned to the school and must be returned to the Department of Education at the end of the school year.

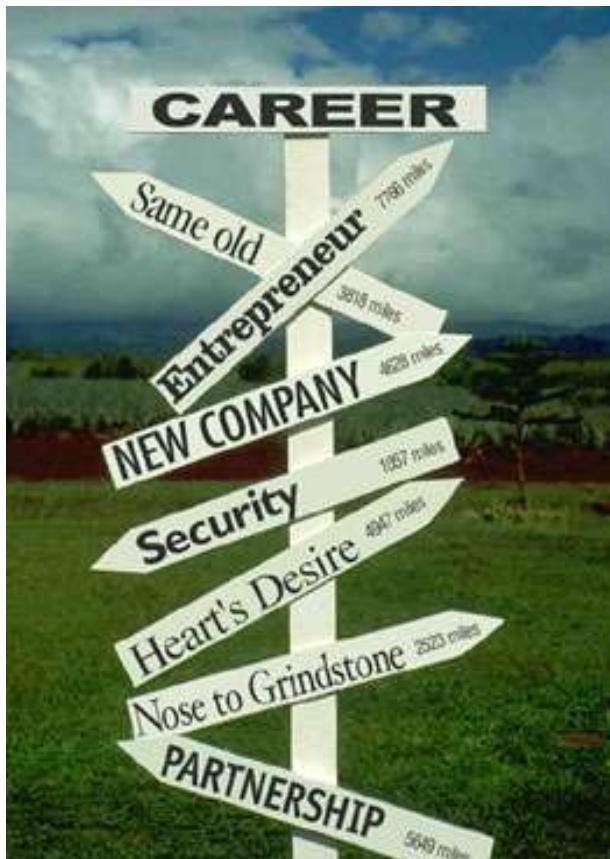
Teachers, parents and students should use the *Browse Content* option on the alternate format materials website (<https://cmaf.gov.nl.ca/>) to get information on available resources such as ISBN and formats currently available.

Teachers involved with alternate format accommodations are encouraged to visit the Alternate Format Materials Learning Centre at www.gov.nl.ca/edu/k12/studentsupportservices/resource_center/index.html for further information on alternate format materials and the application process.

Please note that the application deadline for AFM applications for 2011-2012 is May 13, 2011.



Transition Process Review



The Department of Education is currently examining the transition process for students with exceptionalities. As part of this review, we are seeking input from schools and districts. Student Support Services teams and other professionals involved with transition planning are invited to share their perspectives and opinions by completing a survey.

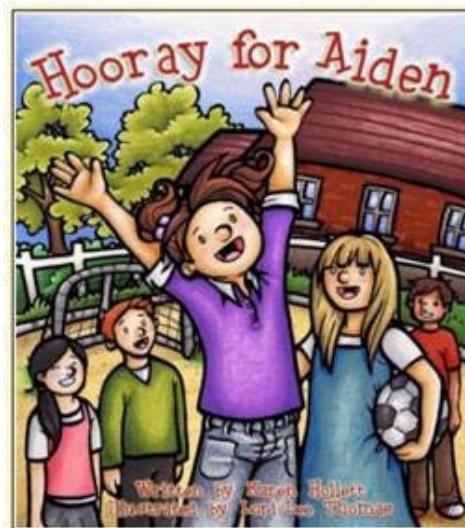
The school surveys can either be completed by the Student Support Services team as a whole, or by individual team members. District surveys may be completed by senior education officers, program specialists -student support services, educational psychologists, itinerants, speech language pathologists or other relevant personnel.

The information collected will help guide a review of the transition process and inform edits and additions to the draft document Guidelines for Transition Planning.

Survey links have been provided to senior education officers for Student Support Services and school principals. **Please note that the survey deadline has been extended to March 2, 2011.**

If you have any questions about these surveys, or comments/suggestions regarding the review of the transition process, please contact Anna Powell at annapowell@gov.nl.ca

A New Resources for Speech-Language Pathologists(S-LP)



Hooray for Aiden - A Feel-Good Book for Children Who Stutter and for Educating Children Who Don't

The Department of Education has purchased the book *Hooray for Aiden* for all S-LPs in the education system. *Hooray for Aiden* is a story about a young girl who stutters and who is initially having difficulty at a new school. With a little help from a caring teacher, Aiden soon learns that stuttering doesn't need to hold her back from doing the things she wants to do. The book was written by Karen Hollett, originally from Fogo Island, and illustrated by Mount Pearl artist, Lori-Lee Thomas. If you would like to preview this book, please speak to the speech-language pathologist responsible for your school.

Assistive Technology (AT)

Beginning in February, all teachers in the province will be able to access resources and communicate through the AT Room on the Virtual Teacher Centre (VTC) on assistive technology. Teachers can access the VTC through the link listed below. A teacher has to register to access the VTC, however, the AT Room will be an open resource and blog area for any teacher in the province.

In February, each school in the province will be receiving the textbook called *Children with Disabilities: Reading and Writing the Four-Blocks® Way* by David Koppenhaver and Karen Erickson. The book provides a consideration of three children with differing exceptionalities and how they can be supported in the classroom. It is a wonderful resource for any teacher as an exemplar of how to utilize assistive technology in the classroom to support teaching and learning to read and to write.

Link to VTC: www.myvtc.ca

Learning Disabilities Dyscalculia Resources for Teachers

Dyscalculia is a term that refers to severe difficulties in learning about numbers and arithmetic. Although the majority of research literature on learning disorders concerns reading disabilities, in every classroom there are children struggling with mathematics and teachers trying discern the best way to assist them. (Adapted from Glynis Hannell, 2005)

The Department of Education has purchased two math resources on dyscalculia:

- *The Dyscalculia Toolkit* by Ronit Bird – a collection of teaching activities and games to use with students who struggle with math for students aged 7 to 14 years.

- *Dyscalculia: Action Plans for Successful Learning in Mathematics* by Glynis Hannell – provides an overview of dyscalculia and offers numerous straightforward and practical action plans for addressing math difficulties.

These resources provide practical strategies for helping students with dyscalculia, as well as other students in K-9 who are struggling with math. The department will be providing copies of these resources to all schools with students in Kindergarten to Grade 9. Both classroom teachers and instructional resource teachers should find these resources useful. In addition, *Dyscalculia: Action Plans for Successful Learning in Mathematics* contains information sheets for parents which provide practical suggestions that parents can use to help children be successful in math. Please put these resources in your library of professional learning materials.

Further information and suggested resources on dyscalculia can be found at:

www.dyscalculia.org
www.ldonline.org/indepth/math
www.ldanl.org



Feedback

Please share your thoughts regarding this newsletter including any suggestions for future articles. Our hope is to facilitate better communication with teachers throughout the province.

Contact us at:

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Intersession (6 weeks) Education 3650

Summer (6 weeks) Education 3600, 3650, 4510, 4520, 4540

Questions?

Please contact the Office of Undergraduate Student Services,
Faculty of Education. Email: muneduc@mun.ca.

For complete course offerings, visit www.mun.ca/educ.