



Exceptional News!

Student Support Services Division Department of Education

Newsletter

February 2012

Welcome to Jason Geary – new Autism Consultant!

Jason is new to the position of Autism Consultant with the Division of Student Support Services. He is temporarily replacing Paulette Jackman, who is on maternity leave until August. Prior to coming to the Department, Jason served for three years as the Program Manager of the Autism Society of Newfoundland and Labrador. Prior to that, Jason worked for 7 years as a Clinical Counsellor and Program Coordinator at a residential treatment centre for young offenders in upstate New York. Jason completed his undergraduate degree in Education as well as his Master's Degree in Education with a focus on Autism and Behaviour Disorders at the University of Toledo in Ohio. When he isn't shovelling, he enjoys playing water polo and squash.



Professional Learning in Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

The Department of Education is funding a conference on April 5th, 2012 by Dr. Hanna Rue, Director of Evidence-based Practice at the National Autism Center in Massachusetts and Vice-President of Autism Services for the May Institute. Her responsibilities include overseeing the second phase of the National Standards Project, a multi-year initiative that resulted in a groundbreaking 2009 report which identified best practices in the treatment of ASD. Dr. Rue will share her findings with school district personnel and lead teachers.

The Department of Health and Community Services has invited the Provincial Consultants and District Itinerants for ASD to attend a conference being offered by Dr. Gary LaVigna on April 17-19, 2012. Dr. LaVigna is the co-founder of the Institute for Applied Behaviour Analysis in California. This three day conference will address the areas of positive behavioural support, instructional strategies and positive practices in dealing with challenging behaviour.

Differentiated Instruction Strategy

Placemat Activity

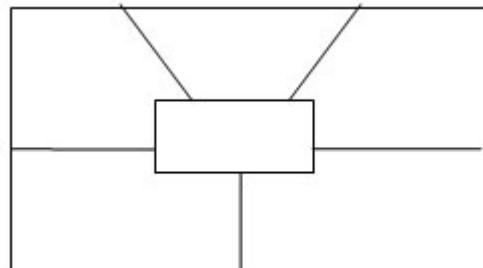
This strategy provides an opportunity for each student in a group to record individual responses and ideas regarding an issue, topic or question for consideration. The strategy can be used to brainstorm ideas, record researched information or analyze documents. Individual responses are shared with the group. After sharing and discussion, the group records agreed-upon response(s) in the centre of the placemat.

Process

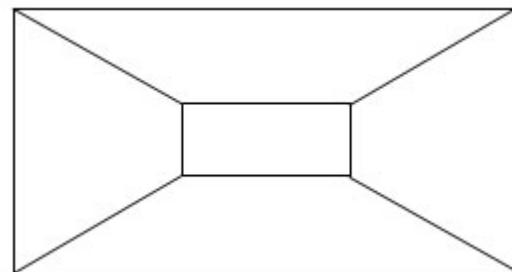
- Divide the class into groups of four or five.
- Provide each group with one large sheet of paper/placemat and a marker for each group member.
- Instruct each group to divide its sheet of paper/placemat into sections, with an area in the centre and enough separate areas around the outside to match the number of members in the group. (samples follow)
- Ask each group member to record individual responses within the allotted space in one of the outside sections.
- Provide time for each student in the group to share his or her recorded responses with the group without discussion or debate from the other students.
- Ask groups to reach consensus on the most important/significant item(s) or response(s) and record them in the centre of the placemat.

Sample Placemat Templates

Placemat for a five-member group



Placemat for a four-member group



Source: Learn Alberta
http://www.learnalberta.ca/content/sssm/html/placematactivity_sm.html

ABC Brainstorming/Alphablocks

ABC Brainstorming/Alphablocks is a tool that can be used to activate a student's prior knowledge before you introduce a major topic.

Process

- Either give students the ABC brainstorming chart or have students list all the letters of the alphabet down a sheet of paper.

- Ask students to leave room beside each letter to write out the rest of a word or phrase.
- Give students a topic on which to brainstorm words. The topic should be big and general enough so that there are many possibilities.
- Working individually, students begin filling in the blanks beside each letter of the alphabet. For instance, if the topic were **World War II**, students might list **Allies, Bombers, Concentration Camps, Dachau, Europe, French Resistance, Germany, Hitler, Italy, Japan**, and so on.
- Give students enough time to think of a lot of ideas.
- After sufficient time, have students work in pairs or small groups to fill in blanks for letters not yet completed.
- When all groups are finished, go around the room asking for possible words for each letter.
- Answers must relevant to the topic being discussed.

Adaptations

- Rather than brainstorm ideas for all 26 letters of the alphabet, students brainstorm ideas within groups ("blocks") of letters (ABC, DEF, GHI, and so on) using the Alphablocks chart. This simplifies and speeds up the brainstorming, while still causing students to think about the topic at hand.

Source: Reading Quest -
<http://www.readingquest.org/strat/abc.html>

Sample ABC Brainstorming and Alphablocks

Reading Quest
 Making Sense in Social Studies

| A | B | C | Brainstorm |
|---------|---------|---|------------|
| Topic | | | |
| A _____ | N _____ | | |
| B _____ | O _____ | | |
| C _____ | P _____ | | |
| D _____ | Q _____ | | |
| E _____ | R _____ | | |
| F _____ | S _____ | | |
| G _____ | T _____ | | |
| H _____ | U _____ | | |
| I _____ | V _____ | | |
| J _____ | W _____ | | |
| K _____ | X _____ | | |
| L _____ | Y _____ | | |
| M _____ | Z _____ | | |

Summary Paragraph:

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ReadingQuest
<http://www.readingquest.org>

Reading Quest
 Making Sense in Social Studies

| Alpha • Blocks | | |
|----------------|-----|-----|
| ABC | DEF | GHI |
| JKL | MN | OPQ |
| RST | UVW | XYZ |

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ReadingQuest
<http://www.readingquest.org>

Service Delivery Model

Since the release of the ISSP and Pathways Commission Report in 2007, the Department of Education has made a number of changes to the Pathways Model of Service Delivery.

The Department of Education, advised by the Pathways Review Committee, consolidated these changes into one service delivery document entitled "Service Delivery Model for Students with Exceptionalities." The intent of the document is to consolidate and clarify the directives released over the past five years while reflecting the philosophy of inclusive education.

The Department of Education spent two days in the fall of 2011 with all district leadership personnel on the service delivery document.

Topics addressed at the in-service included:

- An Overview of the Professional Learning Package
- The Philosophy of Inclusion
- Teacher Partnerships
- Service Delivery Model
- Complex Organizational Change
- Organizational and Interdivisional Collaboration
- Communication Plan
- Roles of District and School Leaders
- Legacy and Continued Learning for District and School Leaders

Districts have developed their own communication plans for their school staffs and school communities. In most instances, department and district staff will collaboratively offer this professional learning to principals. These sessions are tailored to the needs of school administrators and will include discussions around district-school partnerships and leading change in schools.

Communication regarding this model is ongoing with other divisions and departments

of government as well as outside agencies including NLTA, and post-secondary

institutions. A communication plan is also being developed for special interest groups, parents and the public.

The service delivery model and associated professional learning materials will be posted on a teacher professional learning website in the spring of 2012 to facilitate teacher learning and support district and school communication plans. The forms provided in the document will be posted on-line for program planning team use in the fall of 2012.



Phase 4 Inclusive Education Schools

Thirty-eight schools have been selected to enter Phase Four of the Inclusive Education Initiative.

These are:

Eastern School District

Gonzaga High School, St. John's
Prince of Wales Collegiate, St. John's
MacDonald Dr. Jr. High, St. John's
St. Peter's Jr. High, Mt. Pearl
St. Peter's Elementary, Mt. Pearl
Virginia Park, St. John's
Beachy Cove Elementary, Portugal Cove/ St. Phillips
St. George's Elementary, Conception Bay South
Christ the King, Rushoon
John Burke High, Grand Bank

Bacalieu Collegiate, Old Perlican
Carbonear Collegiate, Carbonear
Holy Redeemer, Spaniard's Bay
St. Catherine's Academy, Mount Carmel
Clarenville High School, Clarenville
Matthew Elementary, Bonavista

Labrador School District

Henry Gordon Academy, Cartwright
Amos Comenius Memorial School, Hopedale
St. Peter's School, Black Tickle

Nova Central School District

Brian Peckford Primary, Triton
Dorset Collegiate, Pilley's Island
Sprucewood Academy, Grand Falls-Windsor
Point Leamington Academy, Point Leamington
Helen Tulk Elementary, Bishop's Falls
Leo Burke Academy, Bishop's Falls
Hillview Academy, Norris Arm
Centreville Academy, Centreville

Western School District

Basque Memorial, Red Bay
Raymond Ward Memorial, Norman Bay
William Gillett Academy, Charlottetown
Bayside Academy, Port Hope
St. Lewis Academy, St. Lewis
St. Mary's All Grade, Mary's Harbour
Gros Morne Academy, Rocky Harbour
Bonne Bay Academy, Woody Point
Jakeman All-Grade, Trout River
Hampden Academy, Hampden

Conseil Scolaire Francophone

École Boréale, Happy Valley-Goose Bay

Safe and Caring Schools

Violence Awareness Week

February 26th to March 3rd was Violence Awareness Week in the K-12 schools of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Wednesday, February 29 was Stand Up to Bullying Day when all students and teachers were encouraged to wear pink.

To continue the work of violence awareness, teachers are encouraged to review the information and activities at

www.ed.gov.nl.ca/edu/k12/bullying/index.html for curriculum links.



Building Awareness of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered and Queer (LGBTQ) Issues in K-12 Schools

It is expected that all members of the school community will promote safe, caring and inclusive practice by doing their best to ... embrace the diversity of all peoples, regardless of... sexual orientation...

Safe & Caring Schools Policy, 2006

The vision of the Safe & Caring Schools Policy is that the school community is safe and caring: there is respect for each other and any form of violence is unacceptable. On January 12, 2012, personnel from the Department of Education and school district offices participated in a full day session facilitated by the Institute on Sexual Minority Health. The purpose of the session was to build awareness of issues faced by LGBTQ youth and adults in society and to identify how schools can be 'safe spaces' for LGBTQ students and teachers, as well as for the entire school community.

During March, April and May 2012, Egale Canada and the Department of Education will facilitate a full day session for school administrators and guidance counsellors on LGBTQ issues. The department has also contracted Egale Canada to edit and print a

My.GSA resource for the province, which will be provided to each junior and senior high school. These sessions will be a great opportunity to discuss how to use this resource and other school-based initiatives to further develop our safe & caring school communities and safe spaces for LGBTQ youth.

The goal of this project is that by the end of the 2012-13 school year, all teachers will have had the opportunity to participate in similar sessions across the province. Further information on the resource *My.GSA* and the work of Egale Canada is available online at www.egale.ca

Special Project Awards

The Special Project Awards recognize district and school efforts to:

- establish and maintain safe and caring learning environments;
- strengthen partnerships and promote effective actions;
- create positive school climates;
- support and help sustain safe and caring communities.

This year's award recipients are:

Eastern School District

Amalgamated Academy
Ascension Collegiate
Bishop White School
Brother Rice Junior High
Frank Roberts Junior High
Gonzaga High School
Holy Family Elementary
Holy Redeemer Elementary
John Burke High School
Marystown Central High School
Morris Academy
St. Andrew's Elementary
St. Augustine's Elementary
St. Joseph's All Grade
St. Mark's School
St. Peter's Elementary
Upper Gullies Elementary

Virginia Park Elementary

Nova Central School District

Cape John Collegiate
Glovertown Academy
Greenwood Academy
John Watkins Academy
Leo Burke Academy
Lewisporte Collegiate
Memorial Academy
Millcrest Academy
Valmont Academy



Western School District

Bonne Bay Academy
Burgeo Academy
Humber Elementary
Sacred Heart Elementary
St. James' Elementary
St. Peter's Academy
St. Simon and St. Jude Academy
Stephenville Middle School
Templeton Collegiate

Labrador School District

Amos Comenius Memorial School
J. R. Smallwood Middle School
Queen of Peace Middle School

Feedback

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

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Safe & Caring Schools Graduating Student Awards

Are you graduating this year?

You may be eligible to win a \$500 tuition voucher.

During your high school career,
how have you demonstrated leadership in making your
school and community a more safe and caring environment?

The Provincial Advisory Committee for Safe & Caring Schools
has \$500 to award to 15 deserving graduates
across the province.



Applications are available through your district office
as well as the Department of Education website
www.gov.nl.ca/edu/

Application deadline is April 4, 2012

