



Exceptional News!

Student Support Services Division
Department of Education
Newsletter

January 2014

Staffing Changes



We are pleased to welcome Mike Walsh to the division as our new consultant for Safe and Caring Schools. He may be contacted at michaelgwalsh@gov.nl.ca (note the G in his email address).

Assistive Technology

The DoE website now has a page devoted to Assistive Technology. It may be accessed from the Student Support Services index page or directly from

www.gov.nl.ca/edu/k12/studentsupportservice/s/assistive_tech.html

This page consolidates the process flowchart, trial form, device lists and application.

When applying for assistive technology, it is important that you use the most recent application form (found at the web link above). Applications which are missing signatures, trial forms, or other pertinent information, will be returned to the school via the district office. This will increase the time a student is waiting for the technology. Any assistive technologies

at your school which are no longer being used by the student to whom it was assigned must be returned to your regional program specialist for student support services. These devices will then be redeployed by the DoE.

Safe and Caring Schools

Policy Released



The Safe and Caring Schools Policy – Revised, 2013 is currently online at www.gov.nl.ca/edu. Copies of the policy will be sent to all schools during Violence Awareness Week, February 23 – March 1, 2014.

Graduating Student Awards

The Safe and Caring Schools **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 goals are 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 students to become involved in future initiatives.

The Safe and Caring Schools Initiative has 15 awards of \$500 each for deserving graduates across the province.

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

The deadline for application is April 4, 2014.



Special Project Awards

The winners of the 2012-13 Safe and Caring Schools special projects awards have been announced. They are:

Western Region

Corner Brook High-Provincial GSA Conference

Viking Trail Academy-Building the Foundation for School Spirit and Leadership

White Hills Academy-Pink ladies Girls Program

James Cook Memorial-Career Development Display

St. Mary's All Grade School-Bullying Intervention through Dramatization

Mary Simms All Grade-Pink Shirt Day and Rachel's Challenge-Random Acts of Kindness

Main River Academy-Think Pink

Piccadilly Central High School-Project PBIS/Respect Day Celebration

Belanger Memorial High School-We've Got SOLES (Respect for Self, Others, Learning, Environment and Safety)

Labrador

Menihek High School-Relaxation Station

Mealy Mountain Collegiate-Stop to Stop Bullying Day

Central Region

Hillview Academy-Hillview Holistic Health Day
Smallwood Academy-Respectful and “Paw-sitive”
J.M. Olds Collegiate-It’s Hard to be a Duck-Anti-Bullying Stop Motion Claymation
Sprucewood Academy-Safe and Caring Song
Centreville Academy-Drama Takes on Cyber Bullying
Leo Burke Academy-Let’s Build Awareness: Character Building at LBA

Riverwood Academy-After School Shop

Helen Tulk Elementary-Peacemakers Initiative Training

St. Joseph’s Elementary-Kids of Character
Eastern Region

Lake Academy-Building a Caring School: Peace by Piece

Matthew Elementary-How Do You “Rock”?

Jamieson Academy-Inclusion Project

St. Mark’s School-St. Mark’s Mini-Olympics

Heritage Collegiate-Annual Awareness Day

Ascension Collegiate-Character Boxes

All Hallows Elementary-Bucket Fill-osophy

St. Matthew’s School-Peace Begins with Me

Sacred Heart Academy-Adventures with “SAM”

St. Andrew’s Elementary-Fun Friends

Mobile Central High School-Risks of Today’s Youth

Holy Spirit High School-Interactive Game Club

Mary Queen of the World-Matrix Madness

Holy Trinity High School-“In the Moment”-Mindfulness Training

Macdonald Drive Junior High-Green Apples Alliance

Goulds Elementary-Celebrate Diversity

Prince of Wales Collegiate-Diversity Awareness Day

Holy Cross Junior High-Body Right

Conseil Scolaire Francophone

École Boréale – Cyber bullying prevention



Violence Awareness Week

February 23 to March 1, 2014 is Violence Awareness Week in the Newfoundland and Labrador K-12 school system. The purpose of this week is to encourage discussion and participation in the activities of Violence Awareness Week. We encourage all districts and schools to participate in the week’s activities. As usual, the Department will distribute materials to heighten awareness of violence, and bullying in particular. Schools will be receiving buttons, magnets, posters, and copies of the Safe and Caring Schools Policy, 2013. Activities which link curriculum to violence awareness will be available online at: www.ed.gov.nl.ca/edu/k12/bullying/index.html.

The Department also encourages schools to participate in the international practice of wearing pink on Wednesday, February 26, in order to bring awareness to bullying, discrimination and homophobia.

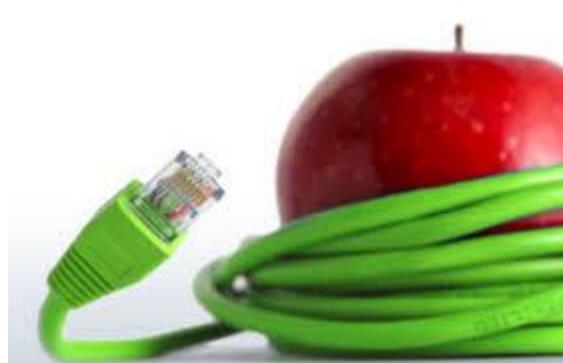
This year we are also planning a flash mob dance for all students across the province on Wednesday, February 26 at 2:00 PM. This will involve choreographed movement to the song *Roar* by Katie Perry. Watch for more details from your district about this event, and please plan to participate with your students. Our goal is to have all students, from kindergarten to grade 12, dancing to the same song, with the same movements, at the same time, across the province, in order to bring awareness to violence and bullying prevention.

All schools are encouraged to:

1. Recognize Violence Awareness during February 23 to March 1, 2014.
2. Participate in the Department's Violence Awareness Week activities.
3. Celebrate "Pink Day" on Wednesday, February 26.
4. Participate in the synchronized dance scheduled for Wednesday, February 26 at 2:00 pm



Watch for additional information via the Department of Education twitter handle @EDU_GovNL



Fostering Accommodation Independence through Assistive Technology

The goal of this initiative is to introduce students to the use of assistive technology for reading text aloud and scribing. Eleven provincial high schools have been involved in this project since 2012-13. Students involved in this project will be able to increase their independence as they move from school to post-secondary or the work force. (Post-secondary institutions are requiring students to use assistive technology for these types of accommodations) The data gathered through this project will shape provincial assistive technology practices and policies.

Inclusive Education Initiative – Phase 6

The Newfoundland and Labrador English School District (NLES) has identified the schools which will participate in the sixth phase of the Inclusive Education Initiative. Training for the lead team from each school will begin in March with full school sessions planned for spring and fall 2014. The schools for Phase 6 include:

Labrador School Region:

1. Northern Lights Academy, Rigolet
2. B.L. Morrison, Postville
3. J.C. Erhardt Memorial School, Makkovik

Western School Region:

4. C.C. Loughlin, Corner Brook
5. Corner Brook Regional High, Corner Brook
6. J.J. Curling Elementary, Corner Brook
7. Sacred Heart Elementary, Corner Brook
8. Stephenville Elementary, Stephenville
9. Stephenville High, Stephenville
10. Stephenville Middle School, Stephenville

Central School Region:

11. Gander Collegiate, Gander
12. Glovertown Academy, Glovertown
13. Jane Collins Academy, Hare Bay
14. Fogo Island Central Academy, Fogo Island
15. Hillside Elementary, La Scie
16. Cape John Collegiate, La Scie
17. Fitzgerald Academy, English Harbour West

Eastern School Region

18. O'Donel High School, Mt. Pearl
19. St. Paul's Jr. High, St. John's
20. Elizabeth Park Elementary, Paradise
21. St. Augustine's Elementary, Bell Island
22. St. Theresa's Elementary, St. John's
23. Topsail Elementary, Topsail, CBS
24. Vanier Elementary, St. John's
25. Pearce Junior High School, Burin Bay Arm
26. Fatima Academy, St. Bride's
27. Immaculate Conception Primary, Colliers
28. Perlwin Elementary, Winterton
29. Woodland Elementary, Dildo
30. Catalina Elementary, Catalina
31. Random Island Academy, Random Island

This brings the total number of schools participating in this initiative to 205.

Gifted Education: Suggested Websites

Teachers frequently ask about resources to extend the learning of students who are particularly able or those who have been identified as Gifted and Talented. It is important to realize that students who are gifted and talented have strengths and

interests in many areas. What is a favourite for one might not be of interest to another.

The following sites might be worth exploring:

World Clock

www.peterrussell.com/Odds/WorldClock.php

This site uses past research statistics to estimate how many births and deaths are occurring right now, today, this week, month or year. There are many other cumulative statistics such as the number of extinct species, the earth's temperature, CO₂ emissions, military spending, etc.

On this day in history

www.history.com/this-day-in-history

This site is exactly as the name suggests. It features a short video on the lead story of the day and then further information in text form. The lead stories seem American centred, but the feature *History this Week* is much more global in scope.

The week of Jan 20 - Jan 26 featured:

Jan 20, 1981

Iran Hostage Crisis ends

Jan 21, 1977

President Carter pardons draft dodgers

Jan 22, 1998

Ted Kaczynski pleads guilty to bombings

Jan 23, 1957

Toy company Wham-O produces first Frisbees

Jan 24, 1935

First canned beer goes on sale

Jan 25, 1905

World's largest diamond found



Hoagie's Gifted

www.hoagiesgifted.org/investigations.htm

The Hoagie's Gifted site is a well-established source of information and resources on many facets of giftedness from parenting to education to resources. This part of the site is designed for educators and collects a treasure trove of site and sources for challenging material.

This is a great site to find resources to appeal to the interests and levels of your gifted learner.

Gifted and Talented Education

We are in the planning stages for province-wide professional learning during March and April to support the release of *Handbook for Teachers: Teaching Students who are Gifted and Talented*. Meanwhile, teachers may explore this resource on www.gov.nl.ca/edu/k12/studentsupportservice/s/publications/TeachingStudentsGiftedTalented.pdf

Differentiation Instruction Strategy

Adjusted Questions and Question Starters

Adjusted questioning is an effective way to differentiate instruction. This is one of the easiest ways for a teacher to help students meet with success but also a way to challenge higher-level students with the use of open-ended, divergent questions. By asking questions appropriate to a student's readiness or ability level, questions can be adjusted to the level of complexity or abstractness that fits that student. It is important to give students wait time and to sometimes allow students the opportunity to pair with a partner for discussion before answering a question. Essential, thought-provoking questions can connect a new concept with the content to be learned and drive the success level upward

for students by creating important connections between new content and content previously learned.

Questions which are asked "off the cuff" tend to be knowledge based. Therefore, it is important that key questions be developed prior to a lesson to ensure **all** students experience a variety of levels according to Bloom's Taxonomy. The following resources provide question stems to help meet this goal.



Process:

Reinhart offered five suggestions for implementing questioning strategies:

- Never say anything a kid can say.
- Ask questions that require more than recalling a fact or reproducing a skill - the best questions are open-ended.
- Use more process questions (requiring the student to reflect, analyze, and explain his/her thinking and reasoning) than product questions (requiring short answers, yes/no responses, or relying almost completely on memory).
- Replace lectures with sets of questions.
- Be patient. Wait time is very important; increasing it to five seconds or longer results in better responses.

Question Matrix

Question stems become increasingly more challenging as you move from left to right in the chart.

	Event	Situation	Choice	Person	Reason	Means
Present	What is?	Where/ When is?	Which is?	Who is?	Why is?	How is?
Past	What did?	Where/When did?	Which did?	Who did?	Why did?	How did?
Possibility	What can?	Where/When can?	Which can?	Who can?	Why can?	How can?
Probability	What would?	Where/When would?	Which would?	Who would?	Why would?	How would?
Prediction	What will?	Where/When will?	Which will?	Who will?	Why will?	How will?
Imagination	What might?	Where/When might?	Which might?	Who might?	Why might?	How might?

Source: “Never say anything a kid can say!” by S.C. Reinhart (2000), *Mathematics Teaching in the Middle School*, 5(8), 478–483.

www.assessmentforlearning.edu.au/verve/_resources/Filter_question_matrix.doc

Speech-Language Pathology

AUGMENTATIVE AND ALTERNATIVE COMMUNICATION (AAC)

WHAT IS AAC?

- For students with complex communication needs (i.e., those unable to meet their daily communication needs through “natural” modes such as speech) speech-language services can be helpful, as well as some form of assistive technology accommodation
- Augmentative and Alternative Communication” (AAC) can be defined as any device, system, or method that improves the ability of a student with a communication impairment to communicate effectively. It can include sophisticated devices and systems (sign language, communication boards, or

speech-generating devices) as well as less sophisticated means (pictures or objects used as symbols, etc.)

- AAC is introduced when the student does not develop communication in the typical fashion, or experiences significant delays, and is used to AUGMENT or add to (not replace) whatever communication the student possesses, as part of a “multimodal” system.

SOME TYPES OF AAC

- No Tech: These are “unaided” systems an individual uses with no additional tools or technology such as motor behaviours, gestures, vocalizations, verbalizations (or verbal approximations), proxemics (approach or avoidance of a communication partner), eye gaze, and facial expressions.

- Low Tech: These are “aided” communication strategies (i.e., requiring some type of external assistance for the symbols) which do not run from a power source. Examples: picture or object communication, the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), partner assisted scanning, etc.
- Light Tech: voice output communication systems which are typically battery operated and have a static (non-changing) display e.g., Big Mac, Go Talk, Supertalker, or 7-Level Communication Builder.
- High Tech: Systems typically requiring an electronic power source and having a dynamic (changing—i.e., computerized LCD screen) display e.g. DynaVox Maestro or an iPad (with an appropriate AAC app).

WILL USING AAC PREVENT A STUDENT FROM USING OR DEVELOPING NATURAL SPEECH?

- The research says no. It may actually improve speech.
- Two articles (Millar, Light, & Schlosser, 2006, and Schlosser & Wendt, 2008) reviewed all of the previously-published research that had investigated speech production before, during, and after AAC intervention. None of the individuals involved in any of the studies demonstrated decreases in speech production as a result of AAC intervention. The majority demonstrated at least modest gains in speech.

If you have any questions regarding a student and the use of AAC, please contact your school's Speech-Language Pathologist.

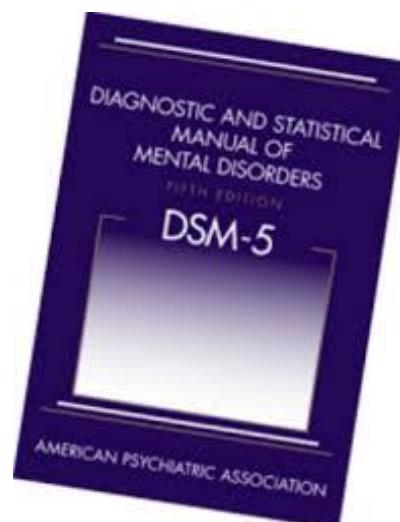
This information was adapted from the resource *AAC Basics and Implementation: How to Teach Students who “Talk with Technology”* by Paul Visvader, MA, CCC-SLP.

District DSM-5 Consultation Group

With the release of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, 5th Edition, (DSM-5), the Department of Education is reviewing the criteria for its exceptionalities. The Department is particularly interested in better understanding the DSM-5's criteria for specific learning disorder and intellectual disability, two diagnoses frequently made by educational personnel.

Department officials are currently working with a number of associations and organizations on potential revisions to these exceptionalities. Specifically the:

- Association of Psychology in Newfoundland and Labrador (APNL)
- Newfoundland and Labrador Counsellors' and Psychologists Association (NLCPA)
- Newfoundland and Labrador Psychology Board (NLPB)
- Learning Disabilities Association of Newfoundland (LDANL)
- Faculty of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland
- Janeway Hospital (pediatricians, psychiatrists, and psychologists)
- Newfoundland and Labrador English School District
- Conseil Scolaire Francophone



The plan is to provide representatives of the various organizations and associations with some common learning and an opportunity for sharing and discussion. The eventual goal is a common provincial understanding of specific learning disorder and intellectual disability. This common understanding will be reflected in the Department of Education's criteria for the exceptionality. We expect to have this review completed for the 2014-15 school year.

District membership on the panel is as follows:

- Lori McNeill, Educational Psychologist, Mealy Mountain Collegiate, Labrador Region
- Denise Penney, Program Specialist Student Support Services, Nova Central Region
- Dan Smith, Program Specialist Student Support Services, Western Region
- Peggy Hann, Educational Psychologist, Eastern Region

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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