



# Exceptional News!

## Student Support Services Division Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

### Newsletter

May 2015

#### Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Behavioural Interventions: An Introduction for School Personnel on-line training program

As part of an interprovincial collaboration, the Council of Atlantic Deputy Ministers of Education and Training recently announced the launch of an on-line training program for school personnel. It will provide consistency in training, build capacity across all four provinces, and allow education systems to be more responsive to emerging research and needs around autism. *ASD and Behavioural Interventions: An Introduction for School Personnel* is designed for all educational personnel including teachers, school administration, student assistants, speech-language pathologists, educational psychologists, etc. The training, available in English and French, includes 40 hours of self-paced instruction, with suggested benchmarks for completion of modules, and a quiz at the end of each module to ensure mastery of critical concepts. The first cohort of NL participants began the training on April 2, 2015 and is expected to complete the program by June 22, 2015.

The ASD and Behavioural Intervention training program is composed of 10 modules designed to assist participants in developing a basic understanding of the characteristics of ASD and of a number of interventions that have been demonstrated through research to be effective for individuals with ASD.

Module 1: Introduction to ASD  
Module 2: The Impact of ASD on Learning  
Module 3: Evidence-based Practice  
Module 4: Identifying Learner Needs  
Module 5: Learning and Behaviour  
Module 6: Behavioural Teaching Approaches  
Module 7: Structuring the Classroom Environment  
Module 8: Supporting Communication Skills  
Module 9: Managing Challenging Behaviour  
Module 10: Supporting Social Skills

This program will be offered again in Fall 2015 and Spring 2016. The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD) covers all costs related to registration, technical support and program facilitation. The selection of participants is the responsibility of the school districts. If you have additional questions about this program, please contact Paulette Jackman at [paulettejackman@gov.nl.ca](mailto:paulettejackman@gov.nl.ca)





## Assistive Technology

May 15, 2015 is the deadline for applications for assistive technology, in order to ensure deployment for September 2015. Please use the application form available at [www.gov.nl.ca/edu/k12/studentsupportservices/assistive\\_tech.html](http://www.gov.nl.ca/edu/k12/studentsupportservices/assistive_tech.html)

Please also note the Guidelines for Application and the flow chart of the application process. Teachers are reminded that an individualized record of a 30 day in-school trial of the requested device or software is to accompany each application.



## Alternate Format Materials (AFM-NL)

AFM Applications are due May 15<sup>th</sup> to ensure processing for September.

Additional improvements to AFM-NL are underway. We expect these improvements to be available to schools during the Fall of 2015. They include:

- the ability for schools to assign resources to students. (Schools will still be given the option of having EECD personnel assign/update student resources.)
- the ability for schools to reset student passwords

In the fall, each school will be asked to assign an AFM Advisor, who will be provided a username and password in order to access these features. Since there will be a period of transition associated with these improvements, we encourage schools to adhere to the submission deadline of May 15<sup>th</sup> and to include student resource lists with the applications. If schools are unsure of which novels to request, they may provide this information as it becomes available by emailing [AlternateMaterials@gov.nl.ca](mailto:AlternateMaterials@gov.nl.ca), and/or adding these resources to student profiles using new system features once they are available to AFM Advisors. Online Professional Learning related to these changes will be available in September.

## Safe and Caring Schools

### Parent/Guardian Brochure

*The Safe and Caring Schools Parent/Guardian Brochure* is now available on the department website.

[www.gov.nl.ca/edu/k12/safeandcaring/parent-guardian.pdf](http://www.gov.nl.ca/edu/k12/safeandcaring/parent-guardian.pdf)

This resource provides parents/guardians with an overview of the Safe and Caring Schools Policy and how they can support schools in creating a positive school climate.

### Behaviour Management Plans

As part of developing a holistic approach for the delivery of secondary and tertiary behavioural supports, the EECD is conducting a review of Behaviour Management Plans (BMP). Updates will include:

- removing outdated terminology from the BMP and/or modifying it to reflect language used in the Service Delivery Model
- adding a section for teacher signature indicating that the parent/guardian has been informed of the behavioural interventions in the BMP

The BMP will be used until the Secondary and Tertiary Guidelines are released. More information on these guidelines will follow.



## Graduating Student Awards

It is with pleasure that we recognize the efforts of **14 graduating students** from across the province for the leadership they have demonstrated in making their school communities more safe, caring and inclusive. Each student will receive a \$500 tuition voucher for attending post-secondary studies.

The names of the students and their schools are:

| Student Name          | School               |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Amber Whiteway        | Menihek High School  |
| Julia Catherine Barry | Menihek High School  |
| Mackenzie Susan Dawe  | Jane Collins Academy |

|                          |                               |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Julie Goudie</b>      | Indian River High             |
| <b>Ashley Mackeigan</b>  | Exploits Valley High          |
| <b>Hannah Hepditch</b>   | Corner Brook Regional High    |
| <b>Selina Morris</b>     | St. Mary's All Grade          |
| <b>Aimee Rideout</b>     | Gros Morne Academy            |
| <b>Randi Burke</b>       | Marystown Central High School |
| <b>Ashley Dровер</b>     | Tricentia Academy             |
| <b>Marshall Miles</b>    | John Burke High School        |
| <b>Caitlin Pike</b>      | Ascension Collegiate          |
| <b>Leah Denise Walsh</b> | St. Catherine's Academy       |
| <b>Lucas Walters</b>     | Clarenville High School       |



## Violence Awareness Week Winners

Congratulations to the four student winners of the **Find Your Voice, Not Violence Contest** held during Violence Awareness Week, 2015. Students were required to submit a poem or artwork focused on the violence prevention theme. Selected students will receive an iPod Shuffle for their personal use and a \$100 prize for their schools to support a safe, caring and inclusive schools initiative. Each student's poem or artwork will be highlighted on the

Department of Educational and Early Childhood Development website.

The names of the students and their schools are:

| Student Name           | School                        |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Emy Jesso              | St. Peter's Academy           |
| Brenda Flowers         | Amos Comenius Memorial School |
| Allana Coles           | Sandstone Academy             |
| Alice Ferguson-O'Brien | Bishop Feild Elementary       |

### Inclusive Education

The schools for Phase 7 of the Inclusive Education Initiative have been selected. Training is currently ongoing with school leadership teams to prepare and plan for September 2015 entry into the initiative. The schools entering Phase 7 are:

| Eastern Region              |                     |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| School                      | Community           |
| Acreman Elementary          | Green's Harbour     |
| Ascension Collegiate        | Bay Roberts         |
| Bishop White School         | Port Rexton         |
| Cabot Academy               | Western Bay         |
| Cowan Heights Elementary    | St. John's          |
| Dunne Memorial              | St. Mary's          |
| Holy Cross Jr. High         | St. John's          |
| Larkhall Academy            | St. John's          |
| Mt. Pearl Senior High       | Mount Pearl         |
| Paradise Elementary         | Paradise            |
| Roncalli Elementary         | St. John's          |
| Southwest Arm Academy       | Little Heart's Ease |
| St. John Bosco School       | St. John's          |
| St. Joseph's Academy        | Lamaline            |
| St. Michael's Regional High | Bell Island         |

| Central Region  |                       |
|---|-----------------------|
| A.R. Scammell Academy   | Change Islands        |
| Exploits Valley High  | Grand Falls - Windsor |
| Heritage Academy  | Greenspond            |
| J.M. Olds Collegiate  | Twillingate           |
| Pearson Academy   | Wesleyville           |
| St. Peter's Academy   | Westport              |
| St. Peter's All-Grade   | McCallum              |
| St. Stephen's All Grade   | Rencontre East        |
| Twillingate Island Elementary   | Twillingate           |
| Victoria Academy  | Gaultois              |
| Western Region  |                       |
| Elwood High School  | Deer Lake             |
| Lourdes Elementary  | Lourdes               |
| Our Lady of the Cape School   | De Grau               |
| Pasadena Academy  | Pasadena              |
| Pasadena Elementary   | Pasadena              |
| St. James All-Grade   | Lark Harbour          |
| Xavier Jr. High   | Deer Lake             |
| NB: All schools in the Labrador Region of the NLES and the CSFP School District have completed the Inclusive Education introductory year. |                       |



Since March, there have been sessions held regionally throughout the province supporting the EECD document, ***Teaching Students who are Gifted and Talented: A Handbook For Teachers***. At least one teacher per school was invited to take part in this professional learning. The focus has been on instructional strategies within the classroom to support the learning of all students, but which have

particular facility to increase the challenge or pace of learning for those who are very able or gifted and talented. Further materials are being prepared for the K12PL.nl.ca site. Find the handbook at [www.gov.nl.ca/edu/k12/studentsupportservices/publications/TeachingStudentsGiftedTalented.pdf](http://www.gov.nl.ca/edu/k12/studentsupportservices/publications/TeachingStudentsGiftedTalented.pdf). Talk to the teacher at your school who has attended these sessions for more ideas.

Participating teachers are reminded that they have another half day of leave available to complete the follow up activities once they return from the face to face sessions.

## **Gifted Education: Suggested Websites**



### ***Virtual Stock Exchange***

[www.virtual-stock-exchange.com/](http://www.virtual-stock-exchange.com/)

This free site allows you to register as an individual, a student, or an administrator of a class. Students can explore the working of the stock market through this simulation with virtual funds. Teachers can consult the Teacher User Guide available on the site for more details.

### ***Watch, Know, Learn***

[www.watchknowlearn.org/](http://www.watchknowlearn.org/)

This site contains a free compilation of educational videos for teachers, parents, and students. The directory and age filter help

locate an appropriate resource quickly. Topics range from scientific method to Terry Fox, and from creativity to math review Jeopardy games.

## **Differentiated Instruction Strategy**

### ***Using QR Codes to Differentiate Learning for Students***

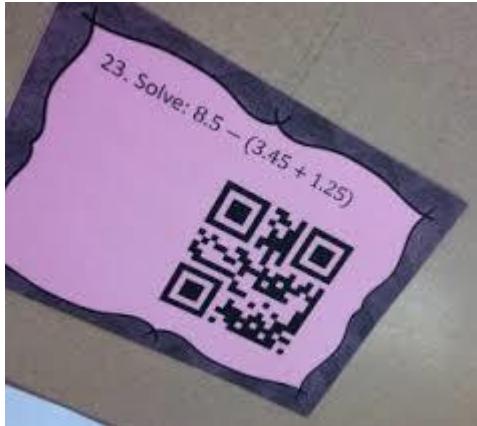
Quick Response (QR) codes are a collection of black square dots arranged in a square grid on a white background. They were originally designed by a Japanese company, Denso, to overcome the limitations of the 20 character bar codes that have been used on products to be scanned by cash registers. Because Denso kept the product as an open source code, QR codes have been adopted for many uses. One of the most common uses is to convey a web address. This might include a few sentences or paragraphs for a student to read or extend to a link or to a YouTube video. The use of a QR code saves time typing the address and eliminates the possible error of entering the address incorrectly. This is particularly useful for young children or individuals with motor challenges who find typing the web address difficult. It also adds security by taking the student directly to the web page required rather than risking visiting undesirable sites by mistake.

QR codes are easy to create and free to use. They can be part of a green classroom as they give students quick access to materials and information instead of requiring pages of handouts. Added to this is the possibility of increased interest in the content because of the use of the technology involved.



*For example, scanning this QR code will take you to the index of SSS newsletters on the department's website.*

To use QR codes in the classroom, students need a device with a camera to read them and an app to interpret the QR image the device captures.



Teachers have used QR codes in many lessons.

- They are useful labels for displays. These can be differentiated by directing students to varying websites with differing layers of information. If codes are posted by colour, students can easily be directed to scan the orange codes or the blue codes for their instructions thereby tiering the reading level, task or product requirements.
- Equipment which requires instruction such as lab materials could have a sticker affixed with a QR code. Students need only scan the code to receive instruction about the proper use or cleaning of the piece of equipment.
- Students can self-assess by scanning a QR code which leads them to a solution set after they have completed an assignment.
- Students may choose to create their own QR codes as part of a product for an assignment.
- QR codes might take students to extension activities after they have completed the introductory material.
- Learning centres can be differentiated by providing different QR codes which will take students to different sets of instructions or reference materials.
- Before taking a class on a field trip, a teacher could provide a sheet with a set of QR codes related to the field trip topics. For example, as students view

particular sites, they could scan the matching QR code for instruction information, points to notice or as review when they return to class.

- Students might create QR codes as part of their review or book talks about their favourite books. These codes might be affixed to a shelf of the class library or the book dustcover so that other learners can scan them for a peer review of the book.

Source: *Using QR Codes to Differentiate Learning for Gifted and Talented Students* by Del Siegle in **Gifted Child Today**, Vol. 38, no. 1

### **The “Working Together to Support Student Achievement” Pilot at Amos Comenius Memorial School in Hopedale, Labrador**

Amos Comenius Memorial School (ACMS) is situated in Hopedale, a small Inuit community on Labrador's Northeast coast. It is a K-12 school with a population of about 150 students and 26 staff.



ACMS prides itself on its inclusionary practices and with helping students to feel welcome and safe in the classroom. The “Working Together to Support Student Achievement” initiative provides teachers with a means to further support that inclusive philosophy. The pilot program, introduced to staff this winter, delivers a prevention-focused framework for interdisciplinary collaboration in reading and

writing education. It partners with existing guidelines within the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's Primary Curricula and the "Service Delivery Model for Students with Exceptionalities".



Teachers at ACMS have been sharing some wonderful success stories with their district staff, and have kindly agreed to share a few of them in this newsletter. The department thanks them for this, as we can all do with a little good news.



*Inuksuk, Hopedale*

## **Ms. Flowers**

Ms. Flowers notes that the service model outlined in "Working Together to Support Student Achievement" supports students within their classroom environment. In the Kindergarten classroom at ACMS, Ms. Flowers has organized a supplementary small group consisting of 2 students. The group began in early January, 2015. Since that time, the small group receives 10 minutes per day working on the Kindergarten Language Arts Outcome 4.5 -

demonstrate letter shapes, naming letters, associating letters with their sounds and forming letters for writing.

The 2 students working in the supplementary small group receive support from their classroom teacher, an aboriginal teacher, and their classmates. They are now meeting outcomes such as naming letters, stating a letter sound, and printing letters. Within 2 months, both individuals have mastered the letter names. They can now print more than 20 of the letters and, where once they refused to make letters sounds, they can now state more than 16 sounds. Their successes have allowed these 2 students to become more engaged in their guided reading lessons. As of March, they are reading 15-27 sight words and one of the students completed a running record at Level B nonfiction at 93%.



*Rosie Piercy, Vice Principal; Dean Coombs, Principal; and Wendy Flood, Regional Implementation Team Lead*

## **Ms. Cobb**

Ms. Cobb shares a story about a little boy that came to grade 2 in September 2014 reading at an A level. His self-esteem was negatively impacted because of his struggles in school, and as a result of his frustrations, he exhibited concerning behaviour.

His teacher began working with him in short one-on-one sessions where they read easy PM books and focused on letters and words that he knew. As his confidence grew she began introducing harder books with more words.

With lots of encouragement, he began to blossom and his behavioural concerns diminished. Every day is a learning experience for this child. He continues to amaze himself and all of the primary teachers who previously taught him. He often makes comments about the length of books he can now read and all the words he knows. This March, his teacher tested him at a G level. He has 90% accuracy and his comprehension is good. With his new found confidence and continued support, predictions are that he will experience continued success.

### **Ms. Legge**

The story Ms. Legge shares is about a little boy that came to grade three in September 2014 reading at a C level. He had no confidence with his reading or writing. When completing journal writing, he would often only get a few sentences down. The teacher would have to sit next to him and prompt him the whole time in order for him to get anything on paper. His teacher has seen gradual improvement since September, but has noticed significant improvement this winter. The little boy went from writing between 2-4 sentences with prompting and assistance to writing a whole page independently.

This student receives intensive reading and writing help in a one-on-one session every day with the IRT. He also gets between 4 and 5 hours a week in a small group setting with his classroom teacher. His teachers are so proud of the gains he has made since the beginning of the year, but what pleases them most is his confidence. He is proud of himself - a reward that cannot be measured.

### **Feedback**

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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.

Contact us at:

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*Kayla Legge, Grade 3; Brittany Higdon, Grade 1; Pearl Cobb, Grade 2; and Valerie Flowers, Kindergarten*

Congratulations to the students and staff at ACMS. You are positively impacting students and changing lives. Thank you.



*Labrador's Regional Implementation Team:  
Marcus Gosse, Fiona Frawley, Faron Sheppard, Janet Wiseman, Jenna Buckle, Wendy Marsh, Desmond Sellars*

