

Celebrating Success in District 1

"Program Blitz" Tackles Teacher Turnover Rate

The Labrador School Board operates 20 schools which provide a wide range of educational services to 5,200 students in 14 communities in western, coastal and central Labrador. The Board operates in a culturally-diverse jurisdiction that is committed to promoting high quality education services with a direct focus on improving student achievement. The geographical vastness of the district offers many challenges which are unique to the region, including a high teacher turnover rate on the coast of Labrador. In response, the Board has initiated **Program Blitz**.

One of the most critical challenges for program specialists is delivering services to coastal schools in a timely manner. Because there is a 40% teacher turnover rate in coastal Labrador communities, it is critical that board staff meet new teachers early in the school year to ensure they are appropriately prepared.

As part of **Program Blitz**, within the first two weeks of the school year all program specialists travel together to each coastal school. The school is closed for a day to allow the specialists to outline district initiatives, the roles and responsibilities of program staff, and to deliver in-service specific to curriculum and other teacher professional development needs. These sessions focus directly on four subject areas - language arts, mathematics, science and social studies - with a view to providing each teacher with curriculum guides, recommended resources, yearly plans and other relevant materials. There are also full group sessions on topics such as Pathways and course modifications.

Students Benefit

As a result of **Program Blitz**, teachers are provided with time lines for specific courses, are given a clear and direct focus on teaching to curriculum outcomes, and have an opportunity to work with other teachers in the district to share resources and teaching strategies. This helps ensure students are given the best possible opportunity to learn what they are expected to learn in each subject area.

By providing teachers with this professional development early in the school year, more time can be spent on identifying specific teaching strategies to meet individual student needs - which will ultimately lead to enhanced student achievement.

The Board plans to continue offering **Program Blitz** to coastal schools in Labrador which experience high teacher turnover rates. The focus for 2003-2004 is on schools in Nain, Makkovik and Natuashish.

District 1 Profile		
	2003-04	2002-03
Schools	16	19
Students	4604	4970
Teachers	357.3	384.7
Pupil-Teacher Ratio	12.4	12.5

