



Exceptional News!

**Student Support Services Division
Department of Education
Newsletter**

June 2010

Primary Literacy Initiative



An interdivisional committee has been struck with representation from both the Department of Education and the various school districts. The committee will make recommendations

to the Department of Education regarding the development of an inclusive and preventative approach to literacy learning and teaching in Kindergarten to Grade 3. The framework will engage all students and enable them to reach their potential.

As part of the committee's work, primary classroom and special education teachers will be asked to complete an online survey on English literacy assessment tools and instructional resources provided by the Department of Education. The committee encourages all primary teachers involved in English literacy instruction to complete the survey. The experience of front line teachers is vital to formulating good recommendations.



Differentiated Instruction Strategy

Clipboard Cruising

Clipboard Cruising is a type of informal assessment to use in your classroom. Basically take a clipboard with a sheet of labels or sticky notes with the date and name of each student. "Cruise" about your class with a specific objective in mind of what you are observing or assessing. While your students are working alone, in pairs or in groups make anecdotal records of how the student is working through a problem or assigned worked. Then you can take the information and just like any other assessment use it to shape instruction. The notes/observations can be removed from the clipboard and placed in the child's folder to track progress over time. Some teachers use specific checklists while observing. Other teachers look for one specific objective such as, "Are my students using capital letters consistently at the beginning of each sentence?" If a teacher notices that half of the class is not using capital letters at the beginning of their sentences, then some reteaching may need to occur.

(From Martha Kaufeldt, 2005)

Student Support Services (SSS) Database

The SSS replacement database has been introduced throughout the province. Training and support have been available to schools and districts as they use the system to update student assistant profiles and other support services. The response to the system has been mostly positive. The fact that the schools do not see student names has caused some disapproval. A complete year of using the system will show the true merit.

The new SSS database is being used by school and districts to update student records of student support services and to profile for student assistant support. Schools have a period for updating and adding new student files. Districts review and validate and/or approve for student assistant support. A baseline allocation is provided by the system. Districts use their knowledge of student/school needs to adjust the baseline allocation.

Public Exams Accommodations Policy

The Public Exams Adaptations/Accommodations Policy has been revised. It is available on the Department of Education website at www.gov.nl.ca/edu/k12/studentsupportservices/publications/accommodationpolicy.pdf.

Revisions have been made to the guidelines on viewing, extra time, dictation of responses, reading of the exam, transcribing, use of word processing software, and application process. The guidelines on listening have been removed from the policy and guidelines on clarification of instruction and accommodations for English language learners have been added. A Scribe information sheet is also provided.

iPod Touch and Proloquo2GO

The Department of Education has provided all speech-language pathologists (S-LP) with an iPod Touch and Proloquo2Go software. This device and software is used to assist students with severe communication disorders who have difficulty speaking. It contains a vocabulary of more than 7000 items and uses natural text-to-speech voices. Associated training for S-LPs took place on June 10, 2010. An introductory video is at the following link: www.proloquo2go.com/resources/article/introductory-videos.

Please contact your school S-LP if you would like additional information.



Upcoming Events – Summer Institutes

Inclusive Education Practice: Effective Leadership for Schools and Communities

This institute will take place at Memorial University in St. John's from August 1 to 3, 2010. The NLTA and Department of Education are co-sponsors along with Newfoundland and Labrador Association for Community Living and Inclusion Canada. Notices were sent to all schools with the last newsletter in April, and some funding for teacher attendance was allotted to each district.

For further information, please contact: kaylanippard@nf.aibn.com

Autism Summer Institute 2010

The Department of Education will sponsor a two day summer institute on August 9 and

10 for 200 principals and classroom teachers from throughout the province. Training sessions will focus on structured teaching and transitions, and will be presented by the Geneva Centre for Autism, an international leader in the development and delivery of clinical intervention services and training.

Details are available through the school districts.

Phase 2 Inclusion Schools

The phase 2 schools for the Inclusive Education Initiative have been selected and initial professional learning has been provided.

By the end of the school year, all phase 2 schools (except those in Labrador District) will have received introductory sessions on inclusive culture, policies and practices, as well as collaborative teaching models and differentiated instruction. Training for Labrador phase 2 schools is scheduled for September 2010.

The schools entering phase 2 are :

Eastern School District

Eastern Region:

Baltimore Complex, Ferryland
Beaconsfield Jr. High, St. John's
Goulds Elementary, St. John's
Bishop Feild Elementary, St. John's
Upper Gullies Elementary, Conception Bay South
Bishops College, St. John's
Villanova Junior High, Conception Bay South
Mary Queen of Peace, St. John's

West Region:

Roncalli Central High, Avondale
Davis Elementary, Carbonear
St. Francis School, Harbour Grace
Amalgamated Academy, Bay Roberts

Burin Region:

Fortune Bay Academy, St. Bernard's-Jacques Fontaine
Lake Academy, Fortune

Vista Region:

Balbo Elementary, Shoal Harbour
Tricentia Academy, Arnold's Cove

Western School District

New K-12 School Labrador Straits - L'anse au Loup
Elwood Elementary - Deer Lake
Humber Elementary - Corner Brook
St. James Elementary - Port aux Basque
St. Peter's Academy - Benoit's Cove
Templeton Academy - Meadows
Long Range Academy - Cow Head
Main River Academy - Pollards Point

Nova Central School District

Baie Verte Academy, Baie Verte
Gander Academy, Gander
Gill Memorial Academy, Musgrave Harbour
Green Bay South Academy, Robert's Arm
Lakeside Academy, Buchans
Lewisporte Intermediate, Lewisporte
St. Joseph's Elementary, Harbour Breton
Woodland Primary, Grand Falls-Windsor

Labrador School District

Jen Haven Primary, Nain

French School District

École Ste. Anne, La Grand' Terre
Centre éducatif l'ENVOL, Labrador City

Alternate Format Materials

As mentioned in a previous newsletter, the Department of Education has been working to improve the provision of alternate format materials. In early May, the Department of Education's alternate format materials library was given membership into CAER, the Canadian Association of Educational Resource Centres for Alternate Formats.

This is a group of educational resource centres whose mandates include promoting the sharing of resources through inter-library loans, encouraging the use of new technology, particularly in relation to alternate format production, and extending and sharing this knowledge with all CAER members. Other mandates of CAER include advocating to the federal government on changes to the copyright legislation and working with the major publishers of textbooks to ensure that they simultaneously produce the printed and alternate formats versions of any new textbooks.

Being a part of this association will increase the number of resources we have available to offer our students. Using an inter-library loan system among the CAER libraries, we will be able to request a copy of titles we don't have in our collection from another library that already has that title converted into digital audio or digital text files.



Collaborative Teaching Models

Collaborative teaching is defined as two qualified professional teachers working in the same physical space. There are several theorists who advance a range of models for collaborative teaching. In working with schools involved in the inclusion initiative, we focus on the work of Friend and Cook. They advance six models: one teach, one observe; one teach, one drift; parallel teaching; station teaching; alternative teaching; parallel teaching; and team teaching.

We will focus on these various models in the next several editions of this newsletter.

The first is **One Teach, One Observe**. One of the advantages of co-teaching is that

there is more opportunity for detailed observation of students during the learning process. When one professional teaches and the other observes, the teachers should decide in advance what types of information are to be gathered and what method is to be used to gather the data. Afterward, the teachers will analyze the information together. Observation should be a deliberate part of the lesson and not just incidental checks of student activity. Examples might include:

- What does Fred do when he is confused during an assignment?
- Which students do or do not begin assigned tasks promptly?
- Which students initiate conversations in cooperative learning groups?

(Adapted from Friend & Cook, 2004)



Online Databases through Public Libraries

Introduce your students to the Literature Resources Centre. This Cengage database will help you find up-to-date biographical information, full-text literary criticism, and reviews on more than 130,000 writers.

Searching this database can help students learn about the author, what he or she has published, overviews and reviews of their work, as well as many critical literary articles. These articles are full-text and can be bookmarked, sent via email, and will include the proper way to cite that resource.

All your students need is their library card and the following URL:

www.nlpl.ca/eresources

Top 10 Reasons Gifted and Talented Students Require Differentiation

10. Ten to twenty percent of high school drop outs test in the gifted range. Almost inevitably, gifted drop outs are underachievers; talented students who are unguided, uncounselled, and unchallenged. (Sylvia Rimm 1995)

9. Although all children have strengths and weaknesses, some have extreme strengths in one or more areas. Extreme giftedness creates a special education need the same way that a learning disability does.

8. If a student does not experience challenge, he or she may learn that achievement is effortless. As curriculum becomes more challenging, the student who has not learned to meet a challenge may either discover or invent reasons he or she cannot achieve. This may result in the student becoming an underachiever or refusing to attempt tasks which he or she perceive as having impossible expectations.

7. The gifted and talented students are the ones who learn least in the run of a year – much of the curriculum is mastered before it is presented in class.

6. Gifted and talented students deserve to learn, too. They will not just “get by fine” or serve the role of assistant teacher.

5. Meeting a child’s need by adding more challenge is no more elitist than giving another student large print handouts or extra time for task completion.

4. These are the leaders of the future. If their talents are not developed, we deprive both the student and society in general of the full benefit of their gifts.

3. When students are not challenged, they may seek to create their own stimulation and

create less than desirable behaviour patterns in the classroom.

2. If the material presented to a student is not challenging (or too difficult), the brain is not engaged, the brain chemicals for dendrite production is not triggered, and optimal learning does not take place.

1. If students are not given a challenge, they may not learn many valuable lessons such as the satisfaction of a challenge met, pride in a job well done, or the recognition that effort equates with achievement.



Feedback

Please share your thoughts regarding this newsletter including any suggestions for future articles. Our hope is to facilitate better communication with student support services teams throughout the province and ensure a uniform message to all. Contact us at:

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