



## Superintendent's Message June 2009

---

### Introduction

Flurries of activity form the backdrop for this year-end message. Our usual routines continue to be affected by the process of strategic planning; the Board approval, information sessions and preliminary preparations for implementation have all taken place since early June! Your participation in this challenging process over the past year was critical to the development of our "road-map" for the next three years and is much appreciated. We are confident the course we have designed collectively will result in APSEA becoming even better positioned to meet our mandate well into the future.

### Braille Get-Together

*- Joey Baird, BVI Itinerant Teacher*



We had our Braille get - together day. Jackie Kelly (BVI Itinerant Teacher), Charity Turner (BVI Preschool Consultant) and I planned a Braille get-together day for some of the children and mums to meet and get to know each other. We held it in May at my house in Pocologan - at the seaside. We had a good turn out and it went much longer than expected!

**Figure 1** Having fun at Joey's!

We had coffee and muffins and treats when people arrived, then a treasure hunt with Sidney reading the Braille clues and the sighted children helping to find the next clues... the "treasure" was buckets and shovels and we were all off to the beach at low tide! Shells, rocks, and sea glass were found and collected. Then back for lunch and talk, talk, talk!!! The mums were all delighted and the children had a good time. Everyone wants to do it again. We are making a phone list for each of the mums so they can call each other and continue the friendships that have begun!

It was a lot of work but well worth it. It was to be from 10 to 1:30 and the last person left at 4:20!!

## Trip to Camp Mush-A-Mush

- by *Bernie Power, BVI Itinerant Teacher, and Betty Strugnell, BVI Transition Planning Facilitator*

It was the last weekend of May we packed up armed with fly dope and sunscreen (being hopeful) and headed for Camp Mush-A-Mush in Middle Cornwall just above Bridgewater. Twenty children and twelve volunteer staff piled on to the bus with one stop at exit 5 on highway 103 where everyone had an opportunity to get their junk food stash for the weekend.

The camp schedule was full and had the kids and staff busy with field games, scavenger hunt, crafts, canoeing and the dreaded word "work"! We actually had work crews for a variety of things like meal setup; clean-up, etc. and not one negative comment. It was also very nice to see the older kids helping and playing with the younger ones. We had a range from primary to grade eleven.

These camps are a wonderful time for both staff and students. For the staff it allows you to see the student in another much more relaxed environment where you have the opportunity to observe them in a large variety of everyday situations that you would not normally experience. For the students it provides them with an opportunity to have fun with a peer group that has no expectations of them and they are comfortable to share their thoughts with. Oh, to be a bug on the wall in those cabins after lights out.



**Figure 2 Mary and Anik at Camp.**

There were a couple of comments that were passed along that were made by students " This is just like having an extended family," "It is nice being with other kids like me," "This is more fun than school," "APSEA is a fun place to be," "I've never been in a canoe before, I guess that it's not that bad, actually it is fun."



We are hoping to run another camp in the next school year depending on camp availability.

OH...! OH.....! Did I mention how wet everybody got in the water fights and how do you know if they are enjoying it? When they come up to you and say "It is okay if I get wet because I have another set of dry clothes."

**Figure 2 Gabrielle and Zoey at Camp.**

## **Staffing Update 2009-10**

Below is an update on staffing changes for the coming school year.

Myretta Farrell – BVI Provincial Supervisor (Prince Edward Island)

Ann Power – Director of Resource and Assessment Services (APSEA)

Laura Nillo – Residence Counsellor (APSEA)

Jodi Crowell – Braille Technician (APSEA)

Christy Everett – DHH Coordinator of Assessment (APSEA)

David MacLean – DHH Itinerant Teacher (Antigonish, NS)

Rachel Birkby – DHH Itinerant Teacher (Halifax, NS)

Cheryl Perry – DHH Itinerant Teacher (Saint John, NB)

Sarah Callahan – BVI Itinerant Teacher (Miramichi, NB)

Melissa Rohloff – BVI Itinerant Teacher (Saint John, NB)

Vicki Morrow – BVI Itinerant Teacher/Assistive Technology Consultant (PEI)

Heather Churchill – BVI Itinerant Teacher (Annapolis Valley, NS)

Brenda Honkoop – 0.5 BVI Itinerant Teacher (Charlottetown, PEI)

Karen Umphrey – BVI Provincial Supervisor (Nova Scotia)

Annette Manuel – BVI Assistive Technology Consultant (Nova Scotia)

Karen Keats – Classroom Teacher (APSEA)

Glenda Parsons – Consultant for Assistive Technology (APSEA)

Nancy Bradley – BVI Itinerant Teacher (Moncton, NB)

Jim Parsons – BVI Itinerant Teacher (Halifax, NS)

Susan McIntosh – DHH Itinerant Teacher (Truro, NS)

Nadina Richards – DHH Itinerant Teacher (Sydney, NS)

Leslie Soulsby – BVI Itinerant Teacher (Halifax, NS)

Dana MacLeod – DHH Itinerant Teacher (Halifax, NS)

## **Board Items**

### Autism Study

Dr. Susan Bryson highlighted her preliminary findings in a meeting with the Executive Committee on 24 June. Her final report is expected shortly, which will be followed by another meeting with the Deputy Ministers over the summer.

### Possible Sale of Building

Charles Ritcey, Architect with the NS Department of Education, continues to work with Senior Management to refine the educational specifications. When completed and vetted through APSEA staff and the Board, these specifications will form the basis of any re-design and/or re-development of the property.

## **Looking Ahead**

Our upcoming calendar of events include: Sign Language Immersion (27-31 July); DHH Summer Camp (9-14 August); Interpreter Workshop (17-19 August); and the annual Fall Inservice (26-30 October).

While we look ahead to the challenges and opportunities of a new school year, let's try and ensure that we also afford ourselves a fair measure of rest and relaxation during July and August.

Have a great summer,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bertram Tulk". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a horizontal line.

Bertram Tulk, EdD  
Superintendent