



Superintendent's Message December 2012



Contents:

Introduction	Page 1
Board News	Page 1
APSEA Display at SHANS Expo	Page 3
Teachers Make a Difference	Page 3
Playground Donation	Page 3
Retirement Banquet 2012	Page 4
Remembrance Day Ceremony	Page 5
Looking Ahead	Page 5

Introduction

Season's Greetings!

As 2012 draws to a close and we are caught up in the hustle and bustle of the season, it's an opportune time to glance back over the past couple of months. This issue of the *Superintendent's Message* is intended to bring you up-to-date on "APSEA happenings", to acknowledge individual accomplishments and to turn our thoughts to the months ahead.

Board News

APSEA Review

The October issue provided information about the upcoming Review, including its focus, the key questions and the general time-frame for the study. Following the recent Board of Directors' meeting, further details have been determined.



The request for proposals (RFP) process, which will be used to select who will conduct the Review, can be viewed at: http://www.apsea.ca/BLOG/files/10147/Request%20for%20Proposal_APSEA_Review.pdf

The objectives of the review are to:

- Ascertain the extent to which APSEA programs and services meet the needs of children in each of the four Atlantic Provinces.
- Assess the degree to which each Atlantic Province accesses APSEA programs and services.
- Determine the capacity of the Atlantic Provinces to meet the needs of children who are blind/visually impaired and/or deaf/hard of hearing in the absence of APSEA.
- Analyze the equity of the current cost-sharing formulas used by the Provinces.
- Examine the pros and cons of alternative staffing models, specifically having staff employed by APSEA versus the individual Provinces.

The deadline for submissions is 19 December 2012, following which the Executive Committee (comprised of the Deputy Minister from each Province) will select the successful applicant. The consultation/information-gathering phase will take place between 1 February and 31 March, with the final report due by 10 May 2013. In the event more time is required for the Review, the possibility of a four-month extension has been built into the process.

Although APSEA has undergone several reviews and studies over the years, each evaluation brings heightened awareness and anxiety ... to feel otherwise would not be normal! At such times, it is important to recognize the value and quality of the work we do. The past three years have shown improvements in effectiveness and efficiency ... aimed at preserving and enhancing the quality of programs and services to the children and youth we serve. I regard the upcoming Review as an opportunity to analyze our strengths/challenges and then identify paths to effect further improvements.

Strategic Plan

The strategic plan, as shared in the last *Message*, has been approved by the Board and will set our direction for the next three years. However, in view of the emphasis on the Review in the early months of 2013, the Board has acknowledged the necessity of revising the schedule for its implementation. Since the Board committees and senior staff will be engaged in providing support to the Review process, the establishment of new strategic plan committees may be postponed in the interim.



APSEA Display at SHANS Expo



Reg discussing hearing loss during the Expo.

APSEA provided a display at the Speech and Hearing Association of Nova Scotia (SHANS) Expo which was held at the Dartmouth Sportsplex on November 3.

Reg Dunphy, Audiologist, and Cindy Millar, Augmentative and Alternative Communication Consultant, were at the display that day. Sign language cards and braille cards were handed out to interested people. A number of people dropped by the booth; including parents of current and former APSEA students.

Teachers Make a Difference

Kate McCara, DHH Itinerant Teacher, was recently recognized as one of the ten recipients of the NSTU Teachers Make a Difference program. She was nominated by student(s) for her work, and will receive a \$300 donation toward the library. As Kate embodies the finest qualities of an APSEA itinerant teacher, we are extremely proud of her worthy recognition. Congratulations Kate!



Kate McCara

Playground Donation



Karen and Peter Giffin of the Knights of Columbus

The fund-raising efforts of the Playground committee continue, with appreciation for support from the community.

Karen Keats, Classroom Teacher, accepted a \$500 donation from Peter Giffin, Knights of Columbus representative, for the APSEA playground on November 7.

Retirement Banquet 2012

During the Fall Inservice, APSEA staff celebrated the retirement of Mary MacLeod, BVI Itinerant Teacher, at the banquet held on October 24. Of the several staff members who retired in 2012, Mary was the only retiree able to attend. It was a wonderful evening with a Greek theme to the decorations and menu. Several BVI staff members serenaded Mary while wearing vision simulation goggles, much to the delight of the crowd. Mary herself then provided more entertainment by singing her own “Ode to APSEA”, with her husband, Lawrie, on guitar.



Reading lyrics while wearing vision simulation goggles was a challenge!



Mary and Lawrie serenading staff.



Bert Tulk with staff who received certificates for 25 years of service; Leslie Soulsby, Louise MacGillivray and Mary MacLeod.



Remembrance Day Ceremony

On November 9, APSEA staff and students were joined by Petty Officers Vinnie Gouthro and Yves Clement for a Remembrance Day Ceremony. Petty Officers Gouthro and Clement are serving members of the Royal Canadian Navy and veterans of the counter insurgency operations in Afghanistan. They are Clearance Divers (Navy Frogmen) from the Fleet Diving Unit (Atlantic). During the ceremony, In Flanders Fields was read and participants sang Amazing Grace and God Save the Queen. Wreaths were laid and the service concluded with a student presentation of gifts to the veterans.



Students with Petty Officers Gouthro (left) and Clement (right) following the Remembrance Day ceremony.

Looking Ahead

On behalf of the APSEA Board, the Directors and myself, I extend warmest wishes to you and yours for the holidays ... may 2013 bring you health, happiness and prosperity!



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bertram Tulk".

Bertram Tulk, EdD
Superintendent