



Seen and Heard



November 2013

Volume 1, Issue 1

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Superintendent's Corner

Greetings!

As temperatures continue to drop and another season rushes along, I trust you are enjoying the early stages of a new successful school year. *Seen and Heard* is an amalgam of the *Superintendent's Message* and *Scene & Heard* newsletters. This follows a recommendation from the Communication Committee to create "one original newsletter and establish a consistent time and frequency when employees can expect to receive this information". The target dates for the next issues of *Seen and Heard* are late January and late May. You are encouraged to forward submissions to Pam (Pam_Edmonds@apsea.ca).

Campus Security

We are continuing to act on recommendations from the Safety Audit. These include: additional exterior lighting and cameras, trimming of trees and hedges, changes in fire procedures and emergency management. One major improvement will be the change in access to both buildings ... from keys and keypad entry to the use of swipe cards.

The swipe-card entry system will come in effect in the near future, when ID cards will be required to access to the buildings. To ensure you are ready for the change, please carry your APSEA ID card with you at all times.

2014 Summer Camps

Mark your calendars!

Camp See-Ya (BVI) Brigadoon will be held June 29 to July 4, 2014.

APSEA/Elks Deaf Camp (DHH) will be held August 3 to 8, 2014.

Registration for both camps will begin in mid-February with a deadline of April 1. Check the website (www.apsea.ca) for further updates.



This September, the Functional Living Skills (FLS) program moved into its new space directly across from the reception desk in the lobby. This move was initiated to better address student short-term program (STP) outcomes and to create an all-inclusive programming space for students.

While the room functions primarily as the work space for specific FLS programming, there is also the opportunity

for other staff to address additional student outcomes in a functional context, e.g., reading braille recipes, building language or vocabulary.

The space includes a fully equipped kitchen and is intended to simulate a home environment. There are opportunities for students to practice cleaning, laundry and money skills through the opening of the APSEA Canteen. The Canteen will be operational when student's outcomes in-

volve meal preparation and money skills, as well as communication and social skills development. Two successful openings have already raised funds for the APSEA Playground, at the suggestion of the students.

When the Canteen is open, please come and support the students toward their programming success!

Playground Update



One of the more noticeable improvements on campus this fall is our playground. With a committee spearheaded by Karen Keats, the project is moving forward at a clipping pace.

In July, Heather Conrad, Director of Finance, along with Griffin Patterson and his mom Jamie, attended a pancake breakfast and accepted a donation from the Military Police in the amount of \$35,000.

On September 9, 2013 Peter Giffin from the Knights of Colum-

bus of Nova Scotia, presented Carol Dalrymple, Nurse and Playground Committee Member, with a \$1,000.00 donation from their Charitable Foundation (*below*). Phase 1 of the playground project (including activity panels, swings, climber and ground covering) is complete. Students have been enjoying the new equipment (left).

Phase 2, which includes the main play structure, is the focus for this school year.

Currently, we have se-

cured over \$40,000.00 for this phase (including funds from the Military Police Fund for blind children, the Knights of Columbus Charitable Foundation of NS, and additional amounts from Danny Johnson and others). Other funding opportunities have been explored and we are looking forward to positive responses.

The goal is to have the equipment ordered by December 2013, so we can be ready for a spring 2014 installation.



A year ago, the Review had just been announced and we were gearing up (steeling ourselves) for an external evaluation process, which had the potential to drastically change APSEA.

Each of us had the opportunity to participate, in varying degrees, in Dr. Fushell's consultations. We saw the findings and results of the Review in June, when her report and recommendations were presented.

The review concluded that APSEA is doing a very good job of meeting

the mandate as assigned by the provincial Departments of Education ... The quality of our programs and services were generally well-received and appreciated; our worst fears did not materialize.

The report contained 21 recommendations, ranging from program delivery to organizational structure to finance. Following the all-staff briefing in June, the Deputy Ministers met in August and considered our staff response to the report; they gave further direction as to the recommendations,

which were then further refined by our senior team.

The Program Advisory Committee (PAC) and Financial Advisory Committee (FAC) met on 7 October leading to yet more revisions to the strategic plan, in order to "deal with" recommendations from the Review. (I say "deal with", for it is the Board's prerogative to accept, reject and/or modify any and all of the recommendations). The document coming from those meetings will form the core "revised SP" which will be brought to the

Board of Directors on 22 November.

We will then be charged with implementing the plan, as approved by the Board. That implementation will again require an organizational response and commitment to improvement. Pending the approval of the strategic plan, we will be seeking volunteers for various committees in the coming months.



Library News

Summer Update - The Library had help from two students (Daniel and Charlotte) who worked very hard over the summer on two big projects – amalgamating the Braille non-fiction collection and amalgamating the professional and student

regular print collections. This has already helped library staff and others locate items more quickly – come take a look!

A Request – As you can imagine, the consumable collection in

the Library is well used. Library staff members have a tracking mechanism in place (for inventory purposes) for this collection. Therefore, please see a library staff member when you take items from the consumable shelves.

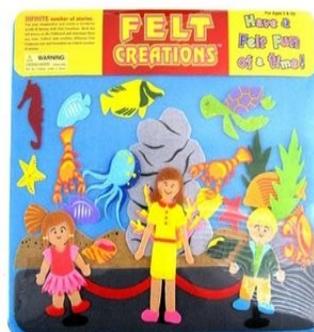
New Toys in the Library!

Eye Spies give the world a fascinating twist! Hape's Eye Spies have two different kaleidoscope views (star and square) (ages 3 and up).



Aquarium Felt Creations Storyboard - Make your own exciting stories with a felt storyboard. The board provides the background for your imagination. The felt pieces cling to the board and can be moved around to tell a story.

* For more storyboards, search the database using "storyboard" in the subject heading box.



What Can My Student Read?

With just a few questions we can provide some suggestions for your student and provide reading material they will enjoy in a suitable format.

We're here for you!

August 2013 Interpreter's Inservice

Volume 1, Issue 1

- by Amy Parsons
EI Consultant

The annual professional development workshop was held August 19-21. Thirty-three sign language and oral interpreters, and language acquisition support workers from Nova Scotia and New Brunswick gathered at APSEA for a full three days of professional learning, sharing and collaboration.

Ayoka Junaid, a community sign language interpreter and trainer, facilitated a session on reaching within to one's skill inventory and provided strategies for applying these to our work. A favourite component of this session was the panel of past APSEA students discussing their experiences using educational interpreters.

There were also sessions on the interpreter's role in supporting student self-advocacy, an update on the Sign Language Proficiency Interview and how it can be built into interpreters' work and professional development. Opportunities were provided for staff working in the same school districts to meet and choose days during the year to collaborate

on professional development. The week ended with a fabulous presentation on compassion fatigue and vicarious trauma by Sue Smiley.

Ideas, input and feedback on professional development offerings for K-12 interpreters are always welcome. Please contact me with suggestions and your input.

(amy_parsons@apsea.ca)



Youth of Excellence Awards

The First Annual Youth of Excellence Awards was held Saturday, May 25, 2013 at NSCC Dartmouth Waterfront. It was a very special, unique and inspiring event in the Deaf Community in Nova Scotia where 12 youth received awards. Seeing lots of red/white balloons and stars and

their names on the banner, made them feel like they were in Hollywood! Youth and parents really enjoyed their time together. It was amazing to see unique youth with various skills, individual strengths and achievements.

After the ceremony, everyone

enjoyed chatting, meeting new and old friends, and eating pizza provided by Boston Pizza.

The complete May – September 2013 DYA newsletter can be found on the DYA website (www.dyans.ca) in the newsletter section.



Academic Award Sponsored by APSEA:
(L-R) Leanne Gallant, MacKenzie Colp,
Dominic Crawford, and Amy Parsons

Assistive Technology: Tech Terms You May Encounter

- by Lynn Seymour-Lalonde
Assistive Technology Supervisor

The use of technology in schools is growing rapidly. There are many terms now being used in relation to assistive technology. Here are definitions of some terms you may encounter.

PART I: Terms used in Educational Technology

21st Century Learning: There are many interpretations of 21st century learning, all which emphasize student learning of the core curriculum on a global platform with “today’s tools”. Students must also learn the essential skills for success in today’s world, such as critical thinking, problem solving, communication and collaboration.

Universal Design for Learning (UDL): The term Universal Design for Learning means a scientifically valid framework for guiding educational practice that: (A) provides flexibility in the ways information is presented, in the ways students respond or demonstrate knowledge and skills, and in the ways students are engaged; and (B) reduces barriers in instruction, provides appropriate accommodations, supports, and challenges, and maintains high achievement expectations

for all students, including students with disabilities and students who are limited-English proficient.

Educational Technology is an important component of UDL.

Bring Your Own Device (BYOD): BYOD refers to a school technology model where students bring a personally-owned device for the purpose of learning, any technology device brought into the school and owned by a student (or the student’s family), staff or guests. (Alberta Department of Education)

Flipped Instruction/Flipped Learning: The Flipped Classroom Model inverts traditional teaching methods, delivering instruction online outside of the class and moving “homework” into the classroom.

Educational Technology and activity learning are the two key components of the flipped classroom model. Students watch lectures at home at their own pace, communicating with peers and teachers via online discussions. Concept engagement takes place in the classroom, with the help of the instructor. (www.Knewton.com/flippedclassroom/)

Blended Learning: “The blending of face-to-face instruction with various types of non-classroom technology-mediated delivery”.

(Educause Centre for Applied Research, 2004)

Blended learning is also often referred to as “hybrid education”, where a number of web-based and online activities are included in the delivery of the curriculum. This educational model has a range in which 25% to 70% of the curriculum is presented online and out of the traditional face-to-face type lecture format.

“Unlike e-learning classes where students are physically separate from their teacher and classmates, blended learning occurs within a face-to-face class that happens at a specific place and time. Blended learning combines the support of classroom learning with the flexibility of e-learning”. (Government of Ontario Education) <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/elearning/blend.html>

PART II: A Few “Tech” Terms you are likely to hear

Coding: Is the slang definition for “writing Code” or computer programming.

Assistive Technology: Tech Terms (continued)

iOS (Internal Operating System): Is the term for the Mobile Operating System used by Apple Products. On Apple Computers the system is called Mac OS X and on PC computers it is Windows.
(www.techterms.com)

Hotspot: A site that offers Internet access over a wireless local area network. Hotspots typically use Wi-Fi technology. Hotspots may be found in coffee shops and various other public establishments in many developed urban areas throughout the world.
(Wikipedia)

QR Codes (Quick Response Codes): Consist of a pattern of black and white squares which can be read by a mobile phone, computer, etc., and is used as a label to provide further information about something including a website, PDF file, etc.
(MacMillan Dictionary)

PDF (Portable Document Format): Is a file format used to represent documents in a manner independent of [application software](#), [hardware](#), and [operating systems](#).
(Wikipedia) A PDF file captures document text, fonts, images, and even formatting of documents from a variety of applications.

Accessible PDF: A tagged PDF improves the accessibility of the document, providing a mechanism to indicate the precise reading order and improve navigation, particularly for longer, more complex documents. It is possible to add alternate text descriptions (alt text) to graphics appearing in tagged PDF documents. Tagging PDF files enables content reflow (resizes the text to fit the page) for large type display without the content disappearing from the edges of the documents. Tagging also allows PDF files to be presented on smaller devices, such as personal digital assistants (PDAs) and cellular telephones.
(www.adobe.com)

URL: The address of a specific Web site or file on the Internet. It cannot have spaces or certain other characters and uses forward slashes to denote different directories.

Closed Caption (CC): A text version of the spoken part of a television, movie or computer presentation.

Hashtag: Was coined by Twitter and combines the word "hash" (another name for the number symbol) and "tag." Twitter automatically turns hashtagged words into links to a dynamic feed. This feed is updated in real-time and lists all recent tweets containing the same hashtag.

Described Video (DV or DVS): Makes media more accessible to blind and visually impaired audiences. DVS uses an additional audio track to verbally describe the visual elements of a program in the pauses between dialogs.
(www.wikipedia.com)



Telepractice Tales: Episode 1

Volume 1, Issue 1

- by Lisa Weir
DHH Itinerant Teacher

As I was dreaming about the warm sunny days of summer ahead, I was feeling fairly comfortable (or as comfortable as one gets in this ever-evolving field). After being with APSEA since 2009, I had finally attained a permanent position, taking the Bathurst job and a subsequent leave of absence from that position to cover a term position in Saint John. No worries, I thought. I would be in my home area again. I knew the kids. I knew the schools. I knew the teachers. I had a JOB! Finally a summer of not worrying about what the fall would bring.

Sharon Robertson must've sensed my comfort level and as any good supervisor would, she decided to throw me a challenge to shake things up. She explained that, due to staffing issues, they wanted to try the idea of implementing a pilot project doing telepractice with the students in the Anglophone North School District. Not only would I be meeting a whole new caseload of students and teachers in a new district and visiting places I'd only heard of previously but hey, a whole new model of service delivery too. Yikes! Well as they say, flexibility is paramount in our profession and I'm pretty comfortable with technology so I agreed to give it a try. The plan would be to provide direct service to stu-

dents through telepractice and monthly trips for consults, on-site visits with the direct service students and other meetings.

The first month meant weekly visits to the area – the first couple of trips were spent in the car with Sharon mapping out plans, discussing students and preparing for meetings (along with avoiding logging trucks and head-on collisions – Highway 8, I will never forget you!). Step one was pitching the idea to principals on the first week of school. I have to give these principals credit, hearing about this whole new plan and the involvement level needed on the part of the schools on the *second* day of school would've had most people in a tailspin, however, they were willing and ready to come on board after Sharon sold them the plan. It felt a bit like we were going on that TV show *Dragon's Den* to sell our idea. Thankfully I was able to just let Sharon do the talking and we were able to close the deal!

I have to admit, at this point, I was still trying to get my own head around how this was going to work. I'm really hands-on, I thought. They're so little, I thought. But I found as we talked things through with schools, I was beginning to form an idea of what this could look like (long hours in the car picking Sharon's brain also didn't hurt!).

Since the initial plan was revealed, I have been involved in more

meetings with the resource teachers, getting to know the educational assistants with whom I will be closely working, conducting in-class observations and all the other typical first-of-year tasks we itinerants do – getting the FM systems delivered, doing inservice sessions for all of my students, both direct and consult and so on.



In addition, we had to map out best sites for the equipment in the schools, arrange for Aliant to put a dedicated line in each of the schools (a dedicated Internet line is needed to ensure optimal video quality, which can be affected if we are sharing the bandwidth with everyone in the school), set up the computers and phones in the schools and provide training to the resource teachers regarding how to connect to Adobe Connect web conferencing software, which is how we will conduct the sessions. I also spent some time familiarizing myself with the Adobe Connect program, looking at its features and operation as well as its

Telepractice Tales: Episode 1 (continued)

capabilities for sharing and using some of the programs and materials I'd developed in the past on the computer for face-to-face use.

There has been a lot of collaboration with the SLPs, audiologists and schools in terms of goal-setting to ensure we're all on the same page. Materials have been another big area we've had to explore: planning what that would look like, who would be responsible for what and so on, as I won't be there with my big bag of goodies each week to deliver the service. My plans will need to be made in advance and very detailed so school staff can prepare materials, know the goals we're working on as well as the strategies we will be using during the session. Trying to think about all of these aspects, especially with younger students, has been a challenge for me.

The more I talk to the resource teachers and we work through this new process together, however, the more comfortable all parties (including myself!) have become with how this will work. I have also had the opportunity to do reading and research into telepractice and coaching, which will hopefully serve me well in this endeavour as things unfold.

We anticipated some bumps in the road and a different start to the year, and there have been some set-up/technology issues that were out of our hands that needed to be resolved, but I am

happy to report I have successfully connected with schools for a practice run. Undoubtedly there will still be issues that arise, but I feel the time invested in developing rapport with these schools will lead to a good team approach toward problem-solving. This delivery model should lend itself to effective collaboration between all parties and involve them in all stages of the process including carryover activity idea development as it pertains to the classroom and other contexts within the school; this should lead to even greater benefit for the students in terms of their development.

The groundwork has been set and we are ready to roll, I am really looking forward to seeing how it all comes together.

Wish me luck, comrades!



K-12 Interpreting Resources

- by Amy Parsons
EI Consultant

The Ohio School for the Deaf, Interpreting and Sign Language Resources publishes a regular newsletter with excellent information and resources for K-12 interpreters: <http://www.ohioschoolforthe deaf.org/resources/3/ISLRNewsletter/ISLR%20Newsletter%20Autumn%2013.pdf>

The Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment is administered by Boystown National Research Hospital in Omaha, Nebraska. They've developed an excellent resource that merges the interpreter professional Code of Ethics with the realities of classroom/school interpreting: http://www.classroominterpreting.org/Interpreters/proguidelines/EIPA_guidelines.pdf

For more information or inquiries on K-12 interpreting, please contact me (amy_parsons@apsea.ca).



Summer Camps 2013

Two very successful summer camps were held in 2013. Twenty-eight (28) campers who are blind or visually impaired attended Camp Brigadoon during the first week of July. Fifty-eight (58) campers and eleven (11) junior counselors who are deaf or hard of hearing attended the Elks Deaf Camp during the first week of August. A Leadership in Training (LIT) program was offered during both camps for campers and junior counselors aged 16 years and up.

The LIT program helps campers develop leadership skills by taking part in core programming such as arts, aquatics, outdoor education and environmental education.

Information about 2014 camps and application forms will be placed on the APSEA home page.



Brigadoon 2013



ASL Immersion

- Amy Parsons, EI Consultant

The 2013 Summer ASL Immersion program was held from August 12-16 at the APSEA Centre. Melba Blunden, Matt Ayyash, Pat Mallach and Holly Lanteigne provided beginner, intermediate and advanced ASL instruction to a group of 36 community and APSEA participants.

Daily workshops included presentations on Deaf culture, the Deaflympics with fascinating information shared by two former athletes from NS and NB (www.deaflympics.com), a panel of Deaf individuals from the community, ending with a review of the information covered during daily lessons and discussion.

This year we planned to pilot a children's ASL immersion program for students and families receiving APSEA services. Unfortunately, due to low registration, this program was cancelled. Based on feedback from staff and participants, a newer and better program is in the early stages of preparation. As always, this program is free for APSEA employees. Keep your eyes peeled!



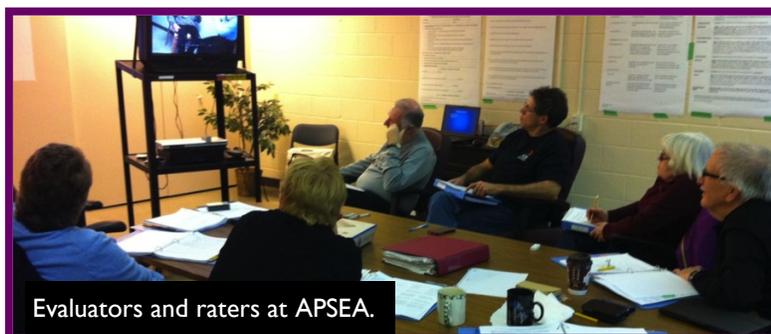
Sign Language Proficiency Interview

- Amy Parsons, EI Consultant

Beginning in the 2012 school year, APSEA reinstated the use of the Sign Language Proficiency Interview (SLPI), an assessment tool used to determine the sign language proficiency of students who currently receive visual language acquisition support or educational interpreting services.

Developed at the Rochester Institute of Technology, the SLPI provides objective data for students, families and teachers, with outcomes that may include recommendations to allow the APSEA team to address areas of students' language development that may require work.

All evaluators and raters have backgrounds in sign language instruction, language evaluation or linguistics. The SLPI interview and rating team has met twice to discuss best practices and planning. Thank you to the APSEA community for your continued support in using this tool.





APSEA

5940 South Street
Halifax, NS
B3H 1S6

Phone: 902-424-8500

Fax: 902-424-0543

E-mail: apsea@apsea.ca

www.apsea.ca



Please send

articles to

Pam Edmonds

Pam_Edmonds@apsea.ca



Communication Committee

The communication committee report was released in late June, with five broad recommendations to support effective internal communication practices at APSEA. The report has been accepted and we have begun to implement its recommendations to improve internal communication, including:

- A supervisor leadership training program has begun for 2013-14;
- Organizational information now goes directly from the superintendent;
- "Directors are regularly consulting with one another to determine how a change in one department may impact other departments";
- An APSEA newsletter will be produced three times a year; and
- We are consciously moving to "avoid the use of corporate language" ... for example, substituting "leadership" for management as in senior leadership team.

