
A GUIDE TO RESPONSIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING



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Introduction

APSEA is committed to supporting the inclusive educational environments across Atlantic Canada by ensuring responsive teaching and learning guides the education of learners who are blind or visually impaired and/or Deaf or hard of hearing through equitable, accessible, culturally and linguistically responsive, appropriate and collaborative learning opportunities.

Mission

APSEA, in collaboration with our partners, provides culturally and linguistically responsive, inclusive, equitable, and accessible educational services and supports to children and youth who are blind or visually impaired and/or Deaf or hard of hearing and their families.

Vision

The children and youth that we support reach their highest potential for an independent, self-sufficient, and fulfilling life.

Guiding Principles

APSEA is child-focused, family-centered, research-based, collaborative, and inclusive.

SCOPE

The Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority (APSEA) is an interprovincial co-operative agency established in 1975 by joint agreement among the Ministers of Education of New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island.

The Agreement provided for the creation of the Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority and authorized it to provide educational services, programs, and opportunities for persons from birth to 21 years of age with low incidence sensory impairments. This includes children and youth who are Deaf, hard of hearing, deafblind, blind, or visually impaired who are residents of Atlantic Canada.

The Agreement is the only one of its kind in Canada and, as such, may serve as a model for service delivery at a regional level. Operational costs are shared among the four provinces.

Helpful Terminology and Definition

APSEA -----	Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority
APSEA Service Delivery Team -----	A team comprised of various APSEA teachers and specialists who collaborate to inform responsive teaching and learning practices that focus on learner needs by providing equitable, accessible, and appropriate learning opportunities as they pertain to areas of the DSI-DHH and/or ECC-BVI.
APSEA Program Planning Team ---	A team comprised of APSEA Directors, Coordinators and Supervisors of Programs who support the APSEA Service Delivery Team by reviewing and responding to consultation requests and guiding the development of APSEA programs and services.
School Based Education Team ----	A team comprised of school-based educators who collaborate and focus on student learning and success in schools, by providing systematic support to classroom teachers and learners.
BVI -----	Blind or visually impaired
DHH -----	Deaf or hard of hearing
DSI – DHH -----	Developmental Skills Inventory for Learners who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing represents content areas that identify skill areas and targets that are unique needs of learners who are DHH.
ECC – BVI -----	Expanded Core Curriculum for Learners who are Blind or Visually impaired represents content areas that identify skill areas and targets that are unique needs of learners who are BVI.
ESS -----	Education Support Specialist
EST -----	Education Support Teacher
Program Plan -----	A plan for a student who requires specific and individual strategies, outcomes and educational supports that strengthen the student’s success in learning. These plans include Personalized Learning Plan (PLP) (NB), Individual Education Plan (IEP)(NL), Individual Program Plan (IPP) (NS), and Individualized Education Plan (IEP) (PEI).

Scope of Responsibilities

APSEA provides educational services, programs, and opportunities for learners who are Deaf, hard of hearing, deafblind, blind, or visually impaired. Atlantic provincial inclusive education policies must be considered and reflected in the programs and services APSEA provides for learners and their families.

Each Atlantic Province provides inclusive public education by:

- recognizing every student can learn,
- sustaining inclusive common learning environments where accessible learning opportunities support learner engagement among age-appropriate peers in their community schools,
- creating learning environments that respect learner and staff diversity where they feel safe, accepted, and valued,
- providing a continuum of supports and services that promote learners' physical, social-emotional, and behavioural well-being, and achievement.

APSEA's role is to collaborate with districts, regions and boards, school-based teams, and families to support these values and overall policy directives. This document has been developed based upon the inclusive education policies, tiered systems of support guidelines, and program planning standards outlined by Departments of Education and Early Childhood Development/Lifelong Learning of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland and Labrador.

The purpose of this document is to outline the Responsive Teaching and Learning model of service delivery for APSEA teams that provide a framework of support and programs within the inclusive education systems across the Atlantic Provinces. This document outlines this model for the school-aged learners, families, and teams.

A similar guidelines document outlines the Responsive Teaching and Learning model of service delivery for APSEA teams that provide a framework of support and programs to birth to age five learners and their families.

Tiered System of Support

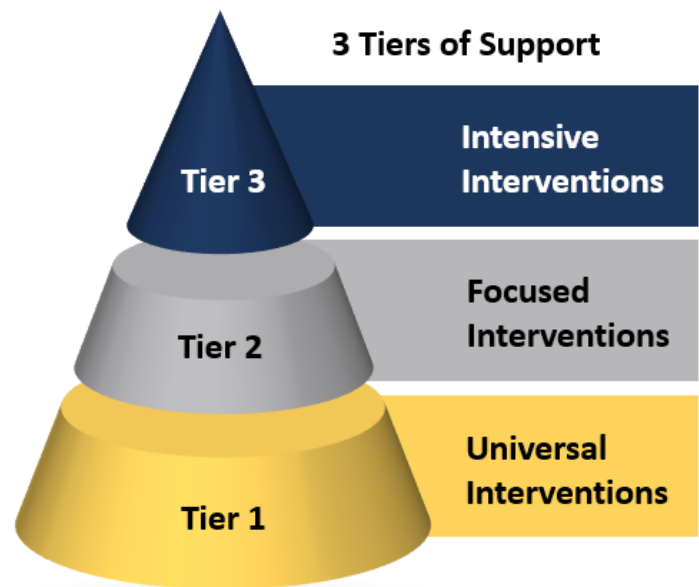
Each of the Atlantic Provinces applies a tiered system of support within their program planning structure. Responsive Teaching & Learning supports learner needs by identifying priorities which are supported through a tiered system of support. This instructional framework is used by the APSEA Service Delivery Team to develop and implement instructional practices, supports and programs that are culturally and linguistically responsive, flexible, and appropriate to the learner's strengths and needs.

This tiered system of support allows for learner movement between tiers. Progress is monitored closely and collaborative decisions about instructional needs are based on data collected through comprehensive assessment by both the APSEA Service Delivery Team and School-based Education Team. Appropriate APSEA programs and support are identified and developed through a collaborative, culturally and linguistically responsive process. As part of the School-based Education Team, the APSEA Service Delivery Team purposefully engages to empower families to inform their understanding and guide decisions around appropriate programming and supports for their child.

Universal – Tier 1 interventions and supports provide the foundation where classroom instructional practices enable 80-90 percent of learners to be successful without further intervention. Tier 1 instructional practices and interventions are universal and available to all learners as part of the common learning environment. Such practices may include providing Universal Design for Learning principles that benefit students who are BVI and/or DHH along with others, supporting the implementation of accommodations in a student’s learning environment, consultation with members of the School-based Education Team, classroom observations and information gathering.

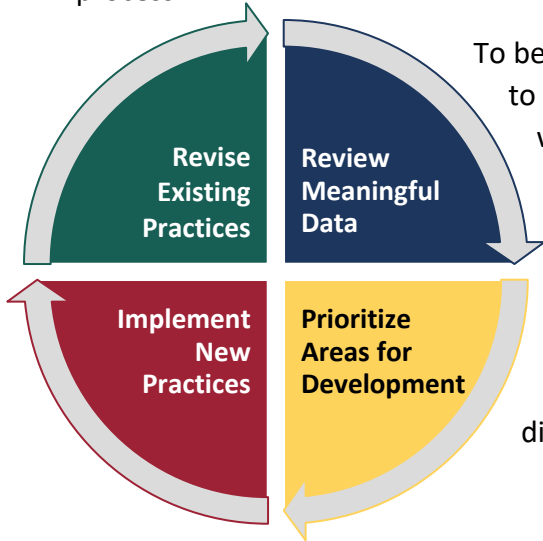
Focused – Tier 2 interventions offer provisional, small group support with specific learning outcomes. These intervention opportunities build on the Tier 1 interventions by providing focused small group learning opportunities based on learner needs and progress. Tier 2 interventions are provided in a responsive and flexible manner across fluid learning environments by members of the APSEA Service Delivery Team and/or the School-based Education Team.

Intensive – Tier 3 interventions provide programs and supports that are intensive, individualized, evidence-informed and based on the learner’s strengths and needs. Tier 3 interventions are also provided in a responsive and flexible manner across fluid learning environments by members of the APSEA Service Delivery Team and/or the School-based Education Team. These interventions can be offered within a small group and/or individualized instructional environment and extend beyond the time and intensity allocated for Tier 1 and Tier 2.



Progress Monitoring

The APSEA Service Delivery Team in collaboration with the School-based Education Team performs regular and ongoing progress monitoring which guides the Responsive Teaching and Learning process.



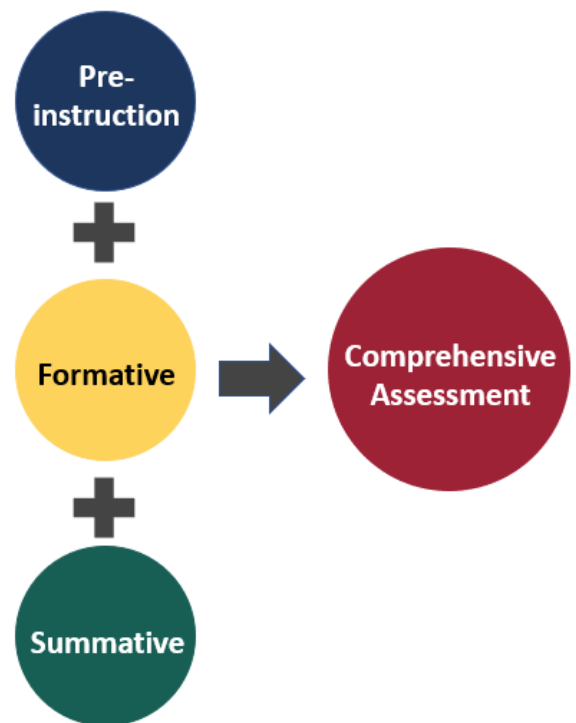
To begin this process, these Teams review meaningful data as it relates to the learner’s development and achievement. In collaboration with one another, the Teams then prioritize areas for the learner’s further development. To support these identified areas, the Teams develop strategies, and coordinate programs and resources for the learner and the Teams. These new strategies and programs are then implemented which will lead the Teams to repeat the process after an agreed upon timeframe. Program planning timelines and dates established by the district/region/board are observed and guide this process.

Comprehensive Assessment

Assessment serves a variety of purposes at different times of the learner’s progress. A comprehensive assessment consists of pre-instruction, formative, and summative assessments.

Pre-instruction assessment determines where teaching should begin and helps identify learner’s strengths and needs. This may include observation reports, writing samples, cumulative records, etc.

Formative assessment plays a vital role in the program planning process. Formative assessment is used to monitor learner improvement and development during the learning process; it is an assessment for and as learning. This process allows Teams to gather data during the teaching and learning process and inform learners of next steps. This allows Teams to adjust instruction and implement new strategies to help learner achievement and development. This may



include checklists, work samples, graphic organizers, conferencing, informal observations, and working portfolio.

Summative assessment measures a learner's ability, knowledge, or development at the end of a significant period of learning and summarizes learner achievement; it is an assessment of learning. This may include unit tests or quizzes, final portfolios, and standardized assessment tools.

When supporting the progress monitoring process, Teams will consider which aspects of a comprehensive assessment are necessary to best guide the decisions for the learner's future programming needs.

Responsive Teaching and Learning

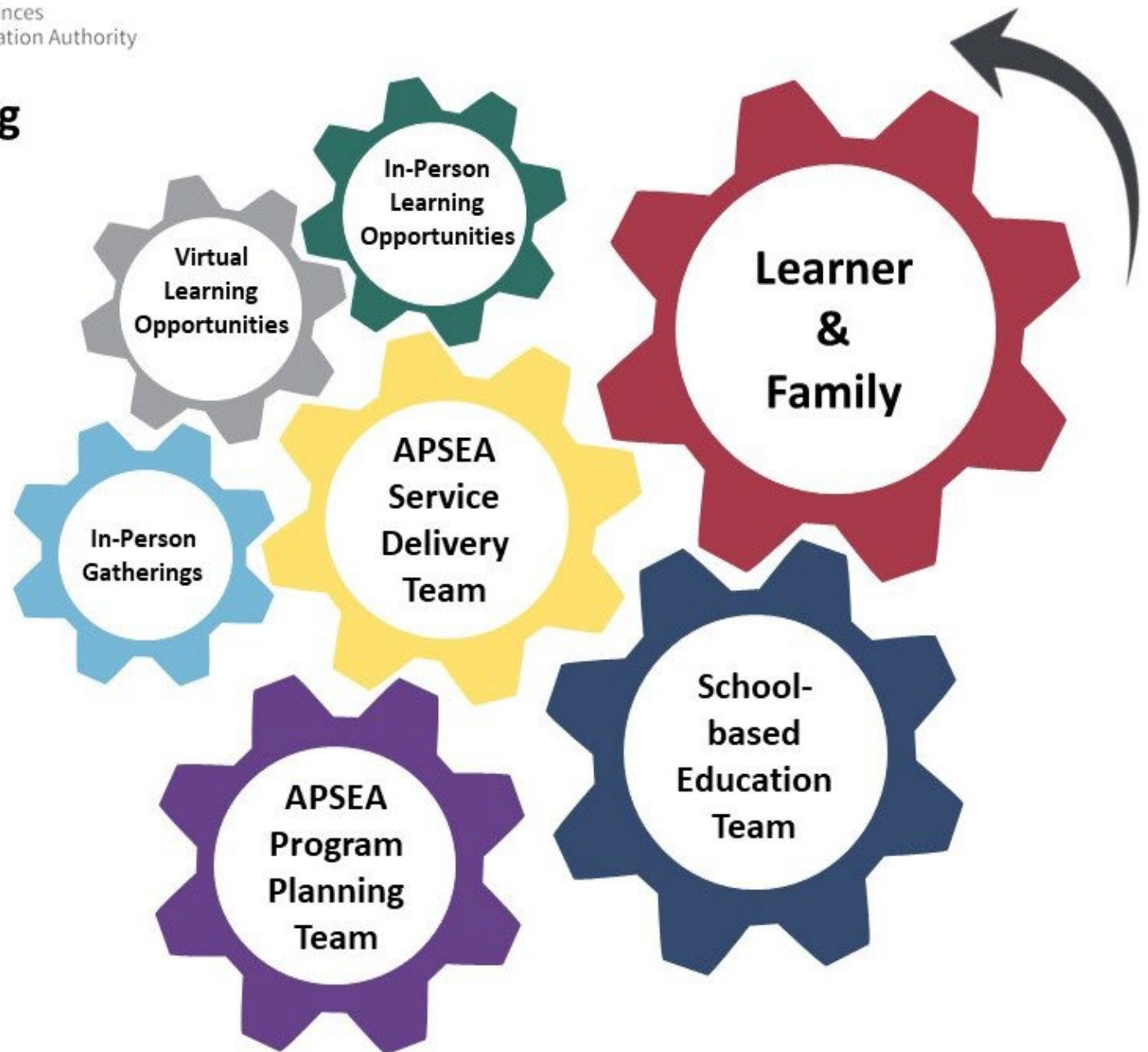
Responsive Teaching and Learning supports learners who are blind or visually impaired and/or Deaf or hard of hearing who qualify for APSEA support. Eligibility requirements can be found on the APSEA website ([Eligibility for Service | APSEA.](#))

A consistent organization-wide approach to program planning is critical to support a greater degree of success in enabling students to learn and achieve. Responsive Teaching and Learning is designed to help ensure learner success in meeting educational outcomes; the development of flexible, appropriate, culturally, and linguistically responsive programs and services; and provides a consistent process across the Atlantic Provinces.

Responsive Teaching and Learning highlights the importance of professional collaboration which involves all team members in planning, implementing, and monitoring programs for learners who are BVI and/or DHH. Collaborative consultation and teamwork ensure effective and efficient service delivery. Team members work together to share goals, but not to duplicate the efforts of others. Collaboration helps support team members and provides the opportunity to learn from other's areas of expertise while keeping the learner the central focus of the plan. The role of the various APSEA team members is to contribute their knowledge and skills to support learners who are BVI and/or DHH.

Responsive Teaching and Learning requires innovative thinking to create opportunities for consultation, co-planning, and program delivery. Professional collaboration and communication amongst the APSEA Service Delivery Team and APSEA Program Planning Team should be routinely built into employees' schedules. This provides protected time for valuable conversations, data sharing and strategic planning that will focus on learner achievement and well-being. Responsive Teaching & Learning provides a framework to ensure that APSEA programs and services are offered through a collaborative, culturally and linguistically responsive process. The learner and their family remain the focus throughout the process. Each learner is unique, with diverse strengths and needs. Through collaborative consultation and data-informed programming decisions, Responsive Teaching & Learning supports consistent, appropriate, and flexible programming that responds to the learner as they gain new skills and knowledge in the educational setting and beyond.

Responsive Teaching & Learning



APSEA Service Delivery Team

The APSEA Service Delivery Team focuses on learner needs by providing culturally and linguistically responsive, equitable, accessible, and appropriate learning opportunities as they pertain to areas of the DSI-DHH and/or ECC-BVI. While working collaboratively with the School-based Education Team, the APSEA Service Delivery Team analyzes data to inform and monitor learner achievement and development; employs tiered system of support to inform teaching and provision of APSEA programs and services; and ensures learner outcomes are being met in a responsive, flexible, culturally and linguistically responsive manner.



The APSEA Service Delivery Team collaborates with the School-based Education Team to gather comprehensive assessment information; identify and prioritize the learner's strengths and needs; and make recommendations for and delivers appropriate APSEA programs and services. The APSEA Service Delivery Team provides data and information on identified programming needs to the APSEA Program Planning Team in order to guide the development of new or existing programs and services.

The Program Planning Document (Appendix A) and the Rubric for Program Planning (Appendix B) are resources that will support the APSEA Service Delivery Team in their work and collaboration. The APSEA Service Delivery Team supports transition processes and planning throughout the learner's educational experience while working in a collaborative, responsive, flexible, culturally and linguistically responsive manner with the School-based Education Team and family.

APSEA Program Planning Team

The APSEA Program Planning Team supports the APSEA Service Delivery Team by reviewing and responding to APSEA Service Delivery Team consultation requests; guides the development of culturally and linguistically responsive programs and services that reflect learner needs; ensures learner needs are met while avoiding duplication of service; and analyzes data to inform and monitor the development and efficacy of responsive, flexible, culturally, and linguistically responsive programs and services.



APSEA Program & Services

In-Person Learning Opportunities

In-person learning opportunities provide learners, families, and School-based Education Teams with targeted, individualized support and programming. These learning opportunities occur in a variety of learning environments where specific outcomes related to the ECC-BVI and/or DSI- DHH are addressed. Responsive Teaching & Learning guides this process through the tiered systems of support, supported by comprehensive assessment and progress monitoring. In- person learning opportunities are designed to be inclusive, equitable, accessible, culturally, and linguistically responsive. These opportunities include coaching, co-teaching, collecting comprehensive assessment data and individualized instruction.



Virtual Learning Opportunities

Virtual learning opportunities provide learners, families, and School-based Education Teams with targeted support and programming. These learning opportunities are supported through APSEA's Zoom Health platform where specific outcomes and content areas related to the ECC- BVI and/or DSI- DHH are addressed. Virtual learning opportunities can be outcome driven and/or support various aspects of social and emotional learning. Through Responsive Teaching & Learning, Teams identify when and which virtual learning opportunities are appropriate, through the tiered systems of support, supported by comprehensive assessment and progress monitoring. Virtual learning opportunities are designed to provide learners with opportunities to connect virtually with peers as well as benefit from accessing the expertise of APSEA EST's, ESS's and others. Each virtual learning opportunity is unique in supporting targeted outcomes while encouraging thoughtful dialogue and relevant learning in an online environment to support and enrich real life experiences and experiential learning. Virtual learning opportunities include APSEA's Virtual Learning Series, APSEA Connect, virtual instruction supported by APSEA EST's and ESS's, virtual social gatherings and presentations.



In-Person Gatherings

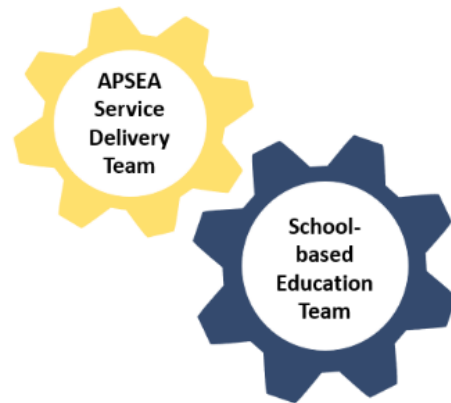
In-person gatherings provide learners and their families with opportunities to meet one another and share their common experiences. These gatherings occur in a variety of settings where learners and families can meet both regionally and beyond. Shared experiences have a significant impact on social emotional health and in turn enhance each person's individual experience. Learners who are blind or visually impaired and/or Deaf or hard of hearing have unique experiences. Sharing this lived experience with other learners, families and others can support the formation of social connections and overall well-being. In-person gatherings are designed to be inclusive, equitable, accessible, culturally, and linguistically responsive. These gatherings include regional group



gatherings for early learners and their families, learner and family social gatherings, family, and summer camps, and targeted in-person learner group gatherings.

Team Facilitation

All APSEA Service Delivery Team members ensure that appropriate programming information is shared as necessary across the APSEA Service Delivery Team and the School-based Education Team to support consistent program delivery for the learner. All members of the APSEA Service Delivery Team request team meetings as needed, contribute to team meeting notes, support the provision of interventions, communicate information to team members as required, and support the review of learner progress in partnership with the School-based Education Team. The EST-DHH or BVI is the point of contact for the APSEA Service Delivery Team and arranges meetings, sends meeting invitations and agendas as required.



Child-Focused & Family-Centered

Families are vital members of the educational team and are their child’s first educator. Families can provide Teams with an important perspective and play an integral role in the support and ongoing development of their child. As such, the learner’s success benefits from family support and involvement in both program development and delivery.



Program outcomes change throughout the year. Families contribute to the development and prioritization of their child’s program outcomes, as well as the accompanying implementation strategies. Families also play an important role in long-range educational and transition planning. As such, APSEA Service Delivery Teams play an active role in inviting and collaborating with families to ensure that the program plan is child-focused, family-centered, collaborative and inclusive.

Team Structures

	APSEA Program Planning Team	APSEA Service Delivery Team	School-based Education Team
Focus	Focus on the coordination of APSEA services and employees' involvement to ensure the best support for the learner.	Focus on learner needs by providing equitable, accessible, and appropriate learning opportunities as they pertain to areas of the DSI-DHH and/or ECC- BVI.	Focus on student learning and success in schools, by providing systematic support to classroom teachers and learners.
Who are the members?	Consists of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APSEA Supervisors of Programs • APSEA Directors of Programs, as required. 	Consists of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EST-DHH and/or EST-BVI • ESS as required. • EI, EDI, EOI as required. • Other APSEA programming employees as required 	As outlined by the specific province.
How often do they meet?	At least every two months or as required	At least every two months or as required	As outlined by the specific province.
What do they do?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and respond to APSEA Service Delivery Team consultation requests. • Guide the development of programs and services that reflect learner needs by being flexible, culturally and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze data to inform and monitor learner achievement and development. • Employ tiered system of support to inform teaching and provision of APSEA programs and services. • Ensure learner outcomes are being met in a responsible, flexible, culturally and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides coaching, mentoring, training, and support for classroom teachers in meeting learner needs and to support learner success in learning. • Coordinate support resources for learners.

	APSEA Program Planning Team	APSEA Service Delivery Team	School-based Education Team
	<p>linguistically responsive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure learner needs are met while avoiding duplication of service. • Analyze data to inform and monitor programs and services. • Engage in professional learning to inform educator practice. 	<p>linguistically responsive manner.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supports transition processes and planning while working in a collaborative, responsive, flexible, culturally and linguistically responsive manner with the School-based Education Team and family. • Engage in professional learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze data to inform and monitor teaching/learning of curricular outcomes.
What is their role?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide leadership to the APSEA Service Delivery Team, and School-based Education Team are required. • Develop and support responsive and flexible programs and services through a collaborative, culturally and linguistically responsive process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide collaborative leadership in the assessment, development, implementation, evaluation, and continuous improvement of inclusive programs and practices at the school level for learners who BVI and/or DHH. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide and implement instructional and/or management strategies and to coordinate support resources for learners with diverse needs.

References

[Comprehensive Assessment - Education \(NL\)](#)

[Guidelines and Standards Educational Planning for Students with Diverse Learning Needs \(NB\)](#)

[IEP Planning Standards and Guidelines \(PE\)](#)

[Inclusive Education \(NB\)](#)

[Inclusive Education Policy \(NS\)](#)

[Inclusive schools - Education \(NL\)](#)

[Moving Forward Policy 322 \(NB\)](#)

[MTSS Quick Guide \(NS\)](#)

[Policy 322 Inclusive Education \(NB\)](#)

[Response To Intervention for Behaviour \(NB\)](#)

[Responsive Teaching and Learning Policy \(NL\)](#)

[Supporting Inclusive and Engaging Learning \(NS\)](#)

[The Program Planning Process \(NS\)](#)

Appendix A: Program Planning Document

Student:

Date:

EST:

When developing a student's program plan, consideration of the following questions can provide the team with information regarding the most appropriate learning environment for the student to learn a particular skill.

Guiding Questions

What is the skill the student needs to learn?

Does the student have the **foundational skills** for learning this skill?

Can instruction of this skill be **embedded** within the regular class routines? Under what circumstances? Where, when, with whom?

What is the **level of reinforcement** required for the student to learn this skill? Can that level of reinforcement be provided within the classroom environment?

What is the **intensity of instruction** required for the student to learn this skill? Can these opportunities for practice be provided within the classroom context?

What is the **natural context** in which other students use the skill? Once the student learns this skill, how frequently and in what contexts will they use this skill?

How will the instructional environment (including location and staff ratio) affect the student's **rate of progress**?

What opportunities exist for the student to be **grouped** with others who share similar interests or needs?

What type of APSEA **learning opportunities** would best support the student in learning this skill?

Comments:

Describe the data and sources of information included in this decision-making process:

If a variation to the common learning environment is deemed necessary:

- What is the mastered skill in the alternative context?
- What is the plan to move the new skill into the common learning environment and other environments?
- In which parts of the classroom schedule could they practice generalizing this skill?
- How will the Teams make sure that the student has enough opportunities to use the skill in the natural context?

Appendix B: APSEA Service Delivery Team Minutes

Student:

Date:

EST:

Team Members:

When developing a student's program plan, consideration of the following areas will provide the APSEA Service Delivery Team with information for the identification of learning priorities which are then supported through a tiered system of support. Appendix A: Program Planning Document will support the team's identification of the student's identified areas for development. This form provides a summary of data and decisions as they relate to the student's program plan.

Comprehensive Assessment

Assessment Type (Pre- Instruction, Formative, Summative)	Date	Assessor	Data shared with:	Summary of Results/Data

Identified Areas for Development

Areas for Development	Date	Assessment(s) Used To Support This Identification	Team Members Supporting this Area

Existing Practices that Support the Identified Areas for Development

Interventions (all 3 tiers)	Time (mins)	Frequency x/week	Duration # of week	Given by:

New Practices that Support the Identified Areas for Development

Interventions (all 3 tiers)	Time (mins)	Frequency x/week	Duration # of week	Given by:	Summary of Results/Data

Post-Intervention Meeting

Date	Meeting Type	Outcome	Actions/Notes	Student/Family Present

Comments:

Appendix C: Roles & Responsibilities

Education Support Teacher (EST)- DHH or BVI

The EST-DHH & EST-BVI provides leadership in the assessment, development, implementation, evaluation, and continuous improvement of inclusive programs and practices at the school level for learners who are blind or visually impaired (BVI) and/or Deaf or hard of hearing (DHH). EST – DHH & EST – BVI’s require specialized knowledge and skills to develop and support personalizing programming for these learners with these diverse needs.

- Provides Tier 1, 2, and 3 to educational teams to support learners who are Deaf or hard of hearing and/or blind or visually impaired and are eligible to receive APSEA services.
- Collaborates and supports the classroom teacher and other educational team members regarding inclusive instructional practices related to learners who are BVI and/or DHH.
- Maintains knowledge of use and limitations of assessment instruments to conduct formal and informal assessments related to learners who are BVI and/or DHH.
- Assesses, recommends, and provides adaptive and assistive equipment and alternate format materials that allow for access, active participation, and self- determination/self-advocacy.
- Selects, adapts, and uses evidence-informed instructional strategies and materials to address the unique needs of learners who are BVI and/or DHH by utilizing tiered systems of support and program monitoring principles.
- Supports processes to create a safe, equitable, positive, and supportive learning environment in which diversities are valued.
- Fosters respectful, collaborative relationships between families and professionals.
- Participates in ongoing professional learning.

Education Support Teacher – Early Learning (DHH) (BVI)

The EST - Early Learning consults and provides leadership toward the delivery of inclusive programs and services for early learners who are blind or visually impaired and/or Deaf or hard of hearing within the school-based setting up to and including age 5. They work collaboratively with families, educational teams, and APSEA employees utilizing specialized knowledge and skills to support personalized programming.

- Collaborates with the EST-DHH and/or EST-BVI, APSEA employees, and educational teams to support Tier 1, 2, 3 inclusive programming for learners who are Deaf or hard of hearing and/or blind or visually impaired who are eligible to receive APSEA services.
- Supports the EST and APSEA employees to align the programs and services to the provincial curriculum and programs.
- Assists EST to conduct specialized assessments to guide programming.
- Maintains regular contact with the EST as needed to support the individual needs of the child and family within the school-based programming context.
- Engages and participates in transition processes, including the school entry process.
- Fosters respectful, collaborative relationships between families and professionals.
- Selects, adapts, and uses evidence-informed instructional strategies and materials to address the unique needs of learners who are BVI and/or DHH by utilizing tiered systems of support and program monitoring principles.
- Encourages and offers relevant professional learning for APSEA colleagues and school-based teams relating to early learners.
- Supports processes to create a safe, equitable, positive, and supportive learning environment in which diversities are valued.
- Participates in ongoing professional learning.

Program Specialist – BVI or DHH

The Program Specialist – BVI or DHH supports and guides APSEA teachers and specialists to develop and implement programs and an environment that is developmentally and culturally appropriate. They focus on individual and group professional learning that will expand and refine understanding about research-based effective instruction. The Program Specialist - DHH or BVI delivers instructional programming to learners in a virtual or in-person group setting in areas of the Expanded Core Curriculum (BVI) or Developmental Skills Inventory (DHH).

- Collaborates with the EST-DHH and/or EST-BVI, APSEA employees, and educational teams to support Tier 1, 2, 3 inclusive programming for learners who are Deaf or hard of hearing and/or blind or visually impaired who are eligible to receive APSEA services.
- Provides coaching, modeling, instructing and collaborative support that is responsive to the identified needs of APSEA employees in their department.
- Conducts observations and provides appropriate coaching, modeling, and feedback on the implementation of instruction that supports learner progress.
- Provides leadership and support to employees within their department through professional learning, identification of research-based resources, instructional strategies and progress monitoring techniques.
- Provides supportive feedback on caseload management and assessment practices. Assists APSEA employees with maintaining student data and preparing pertinent reports to document program impact as requested.
- Serves on the APSEA Service Delivery Team and the APSEA Program Planning Team.
- Assists APSEA Service Delivery Teams and school-based education Teams in the implementation and monitoring of effective instructional and comprehensive assessment practices.
- Fosters respectful, collaborative relationships between families and professionals.
- Supports processes to create a safe, equitable, positive, and supportive learning environment in which diversities are valued.
- Participates in ongoing professional learning.

Education Support Teacher – Counsellor (BVI) (DHH)

Education Support Teacher – Social Worker (BVI)

The EST - Counsellor or EST - Social Worker provides personal and career counseling to learners who are blind or visually impaired and/or Deaf or hard of hearing. The EST - Counsellor or EST - Social Worker provides consultative support to learners, school employees and families, and liaises with community agencies.

- Fosters a shared understanding of the family, educational team, and relevant community partners with respect to the social, emotional, and behavioural needs of learners who are DHH or BVI.
- Collaborates with school-based counselors as required.
- Develops and delivers workshops for learners, families, APSEA employees, and school teams related to vision and healthy social, emotional, behavioural, and career development related to the DSI-DHH and/or ECC-BVI.
- Supports school teams with transition and providing access to guidance-related curriculum.
- Collaborates with the EST-DHH and/or EST-BVI, APSEA employees, and educational teams to support Tier 1, 2, 3 inclusive programming for learners who are Deaf or hard of hearing and/or blind or visually impaired who are eligible to receive APSEA services.
- Develops and delivers educational programs regarding social, emotional, and behavioural wellness for families and learners who are BVI and/or DHH.
- Provides group counselling for learners who are BVI and/or DHH or families in areas related to psycho-social development.
- Connects families and school teams to additional supports/resources and provides referrals to community agencies/partners as needed.
- Supports processes to create a safe, equitable, positive, and supportive learning environment in which diversities are valued.
- Participates in ongoing professional learning.

Education Support Teacher – Access Technology (AT)

The EST-AT (Access Technology) is responsible for coordinating the provision of top quality, relevant, and up to date access technology programs and services for learners who are supported by APSEA. As a member of the APSEA Service Delivery Team, the EST-AT promotes active learner participation to encourage optimal access to relevant technology and improving access to the learning environment.

- Engages in collaborative practice; working with learners and their families, as well as APSEA employees, educational teams, and community partners to recommend appropriate assessment (Student, Environment, Task, Tools, Training - SET3) strategies related to access technology within the context of program planning for learners who are blind or visually impaired in each of the Atlantic Provinces.
- Consults and provides professional learning and resources to APSEA staff and educational teams related to access technology for learners who receive supports from APSEA.
- Collaborates with learners, their families, the APSEA Service Delivery Team, and educational team members regarding inclusive practices to support skill development, actualization, and successful use of access technology for learners who are BVI and/or DHH.
- Assesses, selects, adapts, and uses evidence-informed strategies and materials/technology to address the unique access needs of learners who are BVI and/or DHH by utilizing UDL and RTI principles in conjunction with current best practices in the field of access technology.
- Supports processes to create a safe, equitable, positive, and supportive learning environment in which diversities are valued.
- Fosters respectful, collaborative relationships between families and professionals.
- Participates in ongoing professional learning.

Education Support Specialist – Orientation & Mobility (O&M)

The ESS – O&M is responsible for the delivery of responsive Orientation and Mobility(O&M) programs for learners supported by APSEA who are blind or visually impaired. The ESS - O&M provides leadership in the development and implementation of individualized programs which optimize learner potential in areas of independent orientation, movement, and travel.

- Provides Tier 1, 2, and 3 support to learners supported by APSEA and their educational teams to facilitate independent orientation, movement, and travel.
- Supports the classroom teacher and other educational team members regarding collaborative instructional practices related to the delivery of O&M programs.
- Promotes learner learning and development by conducting and facilitating O&M assessments and ongoing formal and informal evaluation.
- Implements evidence-informed instructional strategies and resources to support the development of O&M skills and concepts.
- Supports processes to create a safe, equitable, positive, and supportive learning environment in which diversities are valued.
- Fosters respectful, collaborative relationships between families and professionals.
- Participates in ongoing professional learning.

Education Support Specialist - American Sign Language (ASL)

The ESS – ASL provides leadership in the assessment, evaluation, and development of American Sign Language (ASL) for learners who are Deaf or hard of hearing (DHH). The ESS - ASL is responsible for providing ASL assessment and consultation services to families, learners, APSEA employees, and educational teams. They work collaboratively with families, educational teams, and APSEA employees utilizing specialized knowledge and skills to support personalized programming.

- Collaborates with families, APSEA employees, and educational teams to support the development of learner outcomes and language development priorities as they relate to ASL development for learners who are Deaf or hard of hearing using ASL, who are eligible to receive APSEA services.
- Conducts sign language assessments and checklists to support the development of learner outcomes; provides summative reports to school teams as required.
- Collaborates with the Supervisors of Educational Interpreting Services, Educational Interpreters (EI's) and Educational Deaf Interpreters (EDI's) to provide appropriate language modelling and/or interpreting styles based on learner assessment results to support the learner's continued language development.
- Supports the EST and APSEA employees as it relates to sign language development and understanding of the value of Deaf culture.
- Conducts school visits and consults in person or via digital platforms as required to identify and model language and language acquisition strategies.
- Develops and delivers programs, both online and in person, in collaboration with other APSEA team members.
- Identifies and recommends services, resources, and community contacts for families, APSEA team members, and educational team(s) to support the learner's ASL language development.
- Supports processes to create a safe, equitable, positive, and supportive learning environment in which diversities are valued.
- Fosters respectful, collaborative relationships between families and professionals.
- Participates in professional learning.

Education Support Specialist - Deaf Mentor

The ESS - Deaf Mentor provides information, models, and supports the development of visual communication, sign language, and Deaf culture with children and youth, families and educational teams. Working with learners, families, APSEA employees, and educational teams, the ESS - Deaf Mentor brings lived experience to support the understanding of Deaf cultural values and acts as a cultural role model and facilitator to the local Deaf community for the child and family through both virtual and in-person sessions.

- Provides Tier 1, 2, and 3 support for learners, families, APSEA employees, and educational teams.
- In collaboration with employees and families, supports the development and implementation of outcomes for children, youth, and families as they relate to ASL development, Deaf culture, self-advocacy, social skills, and post-secondary career and education options.
- Monitors and documents the child's ASL language development with the family, EST-DHH, and ASL specialist.
- Provides exposure to and information regarding the local Deaf community and Deaf culture to children, youth, families, employees, and educational teams.
- Works closely with children and youth, in one-on-one and group settings, to develop strategies to enhance self-advocacy and success in school in a variety of settings.
- Acts as a language model for the Deaf child by interacting in ways that take advantage of their visual environment and provides strategies to support ASL development.
- Models' opportunities and strategies to bridge auditory experiences into visual communication and ASL, and vice versa.
- Acts as a positive role model with respect to professionalism and involvement with families, children, and youth.
- Supports processes to create a safe, equitable, positive, and supportive learning environment in which diversities are valued.
- Fosters respectful, collaborative relationships between families and professionals.
- Participates in professional learning.

Education Support Specialist – Mentor (BVI)

The ESS - Mentor (BVI) provides information, as well as acting as a role model and support for children and youth, their families, and educational teams as they navigate experiences of living with vision loss.

- Collaborates with families and educational teams to support the development and implementation of programs for children, youth, and families as they relate to educational opportunities and in the areas of the Expanded Core Curriculum.
- Facilitates and delivers programs regarding adjustment to blindness for children and youth and their families.
- Acts as a role model for children or youth who are blind or visually impaired by interacting in ways that demonstrate how to build empowerment, foster independence, and self-efficacy.
- Supports families to navigate and understand the programs and services available from community partners and at school, and how to access these supports.
- Works closely with children and youth, in one-on-one and group settings (in-person and/or virtual), to develop strategies to enhance self-advocacy and success in school and other settings.
- Works with families, educational teams, and APSEA employees to enhance competencies and independence of children and youth who are blind or visually impaired in preparation for life in the adult world.
- Supports processes to create a safe, equitable, positive, and supportive learning environment in which diversities are valued.
- Fosters respectful, collaborative relationships between families and professionals.
- Participates in ongoing professional learning.

Education Support Specialist – Speech Language Pathologist (SLP)

The ESS-SLP provides speech and language support, including augmentative and alternative communication (AAC), to children and youth who are blind or visually impaired and/or Deaf or hard of hearing who are eligible to receive APSEA services.

- Engages in collaborative practice, working with children, youth and their families, as well as APSEA employees, educational teams, and community partners to ensure appropriate strategies and recommends related to speech, language, and communication development within the context of program planning for learners who are blind or visually impaired and/or Deaf or hard of hearing in each of the Atlantic Provinces.
- Consults and provides professional learning and resources to APSEA employees, families, educational teams, and community partners related to speech, language, and communication development for children and youth who receive supports from APSEA.
- Collaborates with the APSEA Service Delivery Team and field based educational team members regarding inclusive practices to support speech, language, and communication development in learners who are BVI and/or DHH.
- Assesses, recommends, and provides evidence-informed strategies and materials that allow for access, active participation, and self-determination/self-advocacy.
- Selects, adapts, and uses evidence-informed strategies and materials to address the unique needs of learners who are BVI and/or DHH.
- Supports processes to create a safe, equitable, positive, and supportive learning environment in which diversities are valued.
- Fosters respectful, collaborative relationships between families and professionals.
- Participates in ongoing professional learning.

Educational Audiologist

The Educational Audiologist provides audiological evaluation and consultation services to enhance communication access and learning for learners who are Deaf or hard of hearing in educational environments.

- Participates as needed in APSEA Service Delivery Team meetings to provide expertise regarding the effects of hearing, listening and speechreading on the ability of learners to access communication and learning.
- Supports the ordering, maintenance, and repair of hearing assistance technology.
- Consults with clinical audiologists, and/or families regarding the amplification needs of learners who qualify for APSEA service.
- Develops resources to support assistive technology options and use for learners.
- Provides consultative outreach service to educational teams and families in collaboration with the ESS - DHH.
- Remains current with advances in new amplification technology.
- Supports processes to create a safe, equitable, positive, and supportive learning environment in which diversities are valued.
- Fosters respectful, collaborative relationships between families and professionals.
- Participates in ongoing professional learning.

Educational Interpreter (EI)

The EI is responsible for providing a culturally and linguistically equivalent message in both American Sign Language (ASL) and English for all classroom participants. The EI aims to produce the most linguistically and culturally relevant message possible for all participants, considering and adapting to cultural and linguistic knowledge gaps by reframing and clarifying the message.

- Provides interpreting support to learners who are Deaf or hard of hearing and school-based employees in the classroom.
- Works collaboratively as part of the APSEA Service Delivery Team and education team as required.
- Prepares for all lessons, which includes pre-conferencing and preparation time with materials and the teacher, clarifications and interruptions during the lesson, and post-conferencing with the teachers and learners to ensure the content is clear and accessible.
- Fosters learner independence and advocacy during classroom instruction, discussions, and classroom evaluations.
- Maintains currency and follows ethical standards and up to date on current educational interpreting research and standards/theories.
- Remains current with Department of Education curriculum documents and the APSEA DSI - DHH, as well as additional DHH-specific curriculums being used by classroom teachers and ESTs.
- Offers insight on the interpreter process, as well as providing support, knowledge, and engages in the development of strategies to support learner success in the classroom.
- Supports processes to create a safe, equitable, positive, and supportive learning environment in which diversities are valued.
- Fosters respectful, collaborative relationships between families and professionals.
- Participates in ongoing professional learning.

Educational Deaf Interpreter (EDI)

The EDI is responsible for American Sign Language (ASL) linguistic modelling and support to Deaf signing learners, along with facilitating the learning of Deaf culture in various educational settings, and the understanding of how to navigate an environment where both ASL and English are the predominate languages.

- Works collaboratively as part of the APSEA Service Delivery Team and education team as required.
- Supports the learner with the transition from EDI to Educational Interpreter; the EDI develops the necessary linguistic and cultural foundation within the Deaf learner so they can successfully work with an Educational Interpreter.
- In collaboration with the classroom teacher, the EDI follows school curriculum/lesson plans for the day to develop ASL with the learner, as well as supporting learning opportunities and strategies for connections to the English language.
- Fosters learner independence and advocacy during classroom instruction, discussions, and classroom evaluations as well as the development of their Deaf identity.
- Communicates with the classroom teacher to share learner progress, identifies challenging areas develop strategies for learner success.
- Maintains currency and follows ethical standards and up to date on current educational interpreting research and standards/theories.
- Remains current with Department of Education curriculum documents and the APSEA DSI - DHH, as well as additional DHH-specific curriculums being used by classroom teachers and ESTs.
- Supports processes to create a safe, equitable, positive, and supportive learning environment in which diversities are valued.
- Fosters respectful, collaborative relationships between families and professionals.
- Participates in ongoing professional learning.

Educational Oral Interpreters (EOI)

The EOI is responsible for providing an oral interpretation in the educational environment with a focus on rate of speech, enunciation, articulation, and orally accessible language/phrasal choices. This process includes rephrasing and reorganizing content to make it more easily speech readable.

- Works collaboratively as part of the APSEA Service Delivery Team and education team as required.
- Prepares for all lessons, which includes pre-conferencing and preparation time with materials and the teacher, clarifications and interruptions during the lesson, and post-conferencing with the teachers and learners to ensure the content is clear and accessible.
- Remains current and follows ethical standards, up to date on current interpreting research and standards/theories.
- Fosters learner independence and advocacy during classroom instruction, discussions, and classroom evaluations.
- Works to develop word and phrase recognition with the learner as they access more of the curriculum. When appropriate, the OI incorporates supporting gestures, visual cues and signs to aid in oral language recognition.
- Remains current with Department of Education curriculum documents and the APSEA DSI - DHH, as well as additional DHH-specific curriculums being used by classroom teachers and ESTs.
- Offers insight on the interpreter process, as well as providing support, knowledge, and engages in the development of strategies to support learner success in the classroom.
- Supports processes to create a safe, equitable, positive, and supportive learning environment in which diversities are valued.
- Fosters respectful, collaborative relationships between families and professionals.
- Participates in ongoing professional learning.

Program Consultant – BVI or DHH

The Program Consultant – Blind & Visually Impaired (BVI) or Deaf & Hard of Hearing (DHH) is responsible for providing leadership and direction on a broad range of issues and initiatives that support implementation of the APSEA Responsive Teaching and Learning model in the Atlantic Provinces. The Program Consultant promotes alignment across APSEA programs and services for children and youth and their families by coaching and guiding employees, collaborating with educational partners and organizing professional learning.

- Facilitates the implementation of the Responsive Teaching and Learning model by providing supportive leadership and coaching to APSEA employees and educational partners.
- Assists APSEA employees and school-based teams in the implementation and monitoring of effective instructional and assessment practices for learners receiving services from APSEA, supporting both in-person and virtual learning opportunities.
- Identifies, plans, and facilitates relevant professional learning opportunities for employees, families, and educational partners as it relates to all aspects of the Responsive Teaching and Learning model. Individual program planning, virtual learning and in-person gatherings are included in the scope of responsibilities.
- Collaborates with APSEA employees/departments to strategically develop organization-wide programs, professional learning, and special projects.
- Develops effective relationships with related external agencies, organizations, and /or partners.
- Provides educational support and leadership to employees in the implementation of all related policies, procedures and initiatives pertaining to the Responsive Teaching and Learning model.
- Serves on the APSEA Program Planning Team.
- Assists the APSEA Service Delivery Teams in the implementation and monitoring of effective instructional and comprehensive assessment practices.
- Supports processes to create a safe, equitable, positive, and supportive learning environment in which diversities are valued.
- Fosters respectful, collaborative relationships between families and professionals.
- Participates in ongoing professional learning.

Supervisor of Programs – BVI or DHH

The Supervisor of Programs – BVI or DHH is responsible for coordinating the provision, quality, and daily management of programs. The Supervisor of Programs is also responsible to provide supportive leadership to APSEA employees, translating priorities and vision into operational programs and initiatives that benefit learners who are BVI and/or DHH and their families.

- Provides leadership in the development, implementation, and evaluation of services to learners who are BVI and/or DHH.
- Supports and provides leadership to employees in their designated department to align programs and services to the provincial curriculum and programs.
- Actively engages in and facilitates APSEA Program Planning teams.
- Collaborates with other Supervisors of Programs to further the development and improvement of APSEA programs and services.
- Fosters respectful, collaborative, and effective relationships between educational and community partners.
- Encourages and offers relevant professional learning for APSEA employees, educational and community partners.
- Supports processes to create a safe, equitable, positive, and supportive learning environment in which diversities are valued.
- Engages in ongoing professional learning.

Coordinator of Programs – BVI or DHH (Atlantic Provinces)

The Coordinator of Programs - BVI or DHH is responsible for providing supportive leadership as it relates to the coordination, development and implementation of programs and services for learners, families, and school teams across the Atlantic provinces. The Coordinator of Programs promotes collaborative alignment across APSEA programs and services through a network of interconnected resources supporting children and youth who receive APSEA services and their families.

- Provides leadership in the development, provision and evaluation of programs and services that support children and youth who are BVI and/or DHH that align with Atlantic provincial policies and standards.
- Collaborates with APSEA Directors and Supervisors of Programs to assess learner needs, analyze target population trends and profiles to recommend programs and service changes.
- Represents APSEA on provincial and/or interprovincial teams and committees.
- Liaises with educational and community partners on a wide range of initiatives, including in-person gatherings and APSEA Connect.
- Actively engages with APSEA Program Planning teams as required in the implementation and monitoring of effective instructional and comprehensive assessment practices.
- Fosters respectful, collaborative and effective relationships between educational and community partners.
- Encourages and offers relevant professional learning for APSEA employees, educational and community partners.
- Supports processes to create a safe, equitable, positive, and supportive learning environment in which diversities are valued.
- Engages in ongoing professional learning.

Director of Programs – BVI or DHH

The Director of Programs – BVI or DHH is responsible for the efficient and effective delivery of programs and services for learners who are BVI or DHH. The Directors of Programs maintain a strong understanding and experience in the specialized knowledge area and skills required to develop and deliver programs and services for these learners who are BVI and/or DHH with diverse needs.

- Oversees the development, implementation and evaluation of consistent programs and services for learners who are BVI or DHH.
- Supports the Coordinators of Programs, Supervisors of Programs and APSEA employees to align the programs and services to the provincial curriculum and programs.
- Oversees consistent application of processes and procedures related to assessment and evaluation to ensure best practices are reflected within APSEA programs and services.
- Maintains regular contact with the Coordinators of Programs and Supervisors of Programs to support the organizational needs of learners who are BVI and/or DHH and their families across the Atlantic Provinces.
- Actively engages with APSEA Program Planning teams as required in the implementation and monitoring of effective instructional and comprehensive assessment practices.
- Fosters respectful, collaborative, and effective relationships between educational and community partners.
- Encourages and offers relevant professional learning for APSEA employees, educational and community partners.
- Supports processes to create a safe, equitable, positive, and supportive learning environment in which diversities are valued.
- Engages in ongoing professional learning.