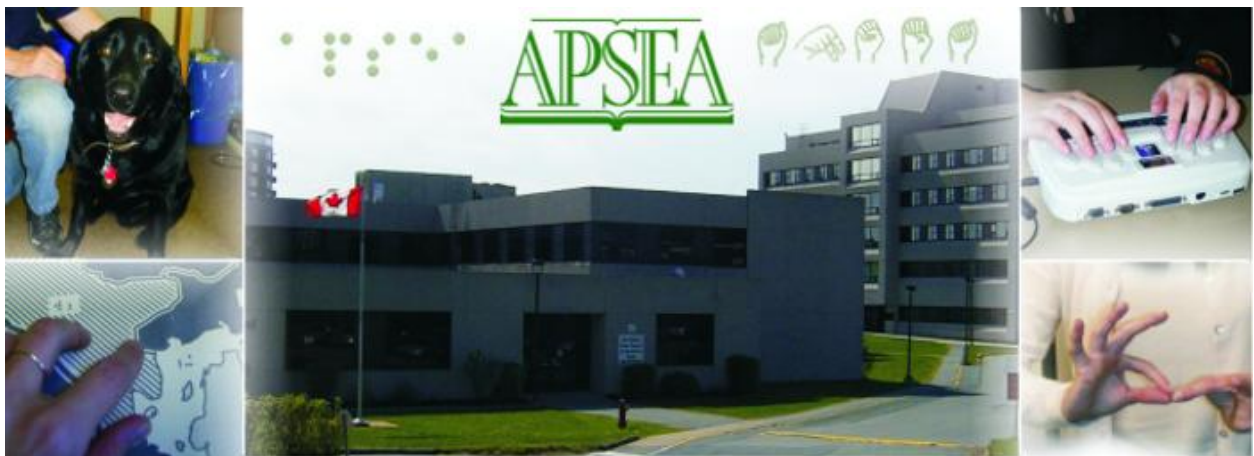




# Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority

Annual Report 2013-2014



**TWENTY-FIFTH ANNUAL REPORT**

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# Mission, Vision and Guiding Principles

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## **MISSION**

We provide educational services, in collaboration with our partners, to support children and youth from birth to 21 who are blind/visually impaired (BVI) and/or deaf/hard of hearing (DHH).

## **VISION**

We support families and the public school system in the education of children and youth who are blind/visually impaired (BVI) and/or deaf/hard of hearing (DHH). Our professional commitment focuses on providing comprehensive educational opportunities, which lead to the highest potential for independence, self-sufficiency and productive, fulfilling lives.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

Key organizational principles guide the design, implementation and evaluation of educational services. We are:

- child-focused and family-centered
- collaborative, involving the student, family, teachers and other professionals
- supportive of independence and self-advocacy
- committed to equality of educational opportunity
- research and evidence-based
- accountable for learning outcomes
- guided by provincial policies, procedures and guidelines
- future-oriented, flexible and innovative



**Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority**  
**Commission de l'enseignement spécial**  
**de provinces de l'Atlantique**  
5940 South Street, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3H 1S6  
(902) 424-8500 Voice/TTY (902) 424-7765  
Administration Fax (902) 424-0543 Assessment Fax (902) 424-6421

August 1, 2014

Chair and Board of Directors  
Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority

In accordance with the Regulation 43 of the *APSEA Act*, I submit herewith this report on the Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority (APSEA) for the school year ending July 31, 2014.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Bertram Tulk'. The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light blue horizontal line.

Bertram Tulk, EdD  
Superintendent

*Serving Children and Youth who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, DeafBlind, Blind or Visually Impaired*

# Board and Committees

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## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

### **New Brunswick**

John McLaughlin  
Deputy Minister of Education and Early  
Childhood Development

Nancy Boucher (appointed November 2013)  
Assistant Deputy Minister  
Department of Education and Early  
Childhood Development

Pam Gagnon  
Parent Representative

### **Nova Scotia**

Frank Dunn, Chair (October 2013 – April 2014)  
Acting Deputy Minister  
Department of Education and Early Childhood  
Development

Sandra McKenzie, Chair (appointed April 2014)  
Deputy Minister  
Department of Education and Early Childhood  
Development

Don Glover  
Director, Student Services  
Department of Education and Early Childhood  
Development

Ross Lloyd (appointed February 2014)  
Parent Representative

### **Newfoundland and Labrador**

Janet Vivian-Walsh  
Deputy Minister  
Department of Education

Bernie Ottenheimer (appointed Nov. 2013)  
Director, Student Support Services Division  
Department of Education

Ed Walsh  
Assistant Deputy Minister  
Department of Education

### **Prince Edward Island**

Dr. Alex (Sandy) MacDonald  
Deputy Minister  
Department of Education and Early  
Childhood Development

Julia Gaudet  
Director, Student Services  
English Language School Board

Adrian Smith (appointed November 2013)  
Special Education Policy Advisor  
Department of Education and Early Childhood  
Development

## **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

### **New Brunswick**

John McLaughlin, Vice-Chair  
Deputy Minister  
Department of Education and Early  
Childhood Development

### **Nova Scotia**

Frank Dunn, Chair (October 2013 – April 2014)  
Acting Deputy Minister  
Department of Education and Early  
Childhood Development

Sandra McKenzie, Chair (appointed April 2014)  
Deputy Minister  
Dept. of Education and Early Childhood Development

### **Newfoundland and Labrador**

Janet Vivian-Walsh, Treasurer  
Deputy Minister  
Department of Education

### **Prince Edward Island**

Dr. Alex (Sandy) MacDonald, Secretary  
Deputy Minister  
Department of Education and Early Childhood  
Development

## **PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

### **New Brunswick**

Brian Kelly  
Director, Student Services

### **Nova Scotia**

Don Glover, Chair  
Director, Student Services

Ross Lloyd  
Parent Representative - BVI

### **Newfoundland and Labrador**

Bernie Ottenheimer  
Director, Student Support Services Division

### **Prince Edward Island**

Adrian Smith  
Special Education Policy Advisor

## **FINANCIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

### **New Brunswick**

Kevin Tutt  
Assistant Director, District Financial Services

### **Nova Scotia**

Joe MacEachern, Chair  
Director, Finance Branch

### **Newfoundland and Labrador**

Don Stapleton  
Departmental Controller – Financial Services

### **Prince Edward Island**

Terry Keefe  
Senior Director, Administration and Corporate  
Services

**TRUST FUND COMMITTEE FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE DEAF, HARD OF HEARING OR DEAFBLIND**

Eve Tupper, Chair

Lori Moore, Director  
Programs for Students who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing,  
or Deafblind

Heather Conrad  
Director, Finance and Administration

**TRUST FUND COMMITTEE FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE BLIND OR VISUALLY IMPAIRED**

Heather Macpherson, Chair

Glenda Parsons, Director  
Programs for Students who are Blind or Visually  
Impaired

Heather Conrad  
Director, Finance and Administration

**SENIOR LEADERSHIP**

**Superintendent**

Dr. Bertram Tulk

**Director, Finance and Administration**

Heather Conrad

**Director, Programs for Students who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, or Deafblind**

Lori Moore

**Director, Programs for Students who are Blind or Visually Impaired**

Glenda Parsons

# Board and Committee Meetings

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## Board of Directors

The annual meeting of the APSEA Board of Directors was held on June 18, 2014. In addition to the annual meeting, the Board of Directors held the following meetings:

October 28, 2013 (special meeting)  
November 22, 2013  
May 21, 2014 (special meeting)  
June 18, 2014  
July 15, 2014 (special meeting)

The committees listed below also met during the 2013-2014 school year:

## Executive Committee

August 21 & 22, 2013  
November 21, 2013  
April 25, 2014  
June 17, 2014

## Program Advisory Committee

October 7, 2013  
December 11, 2013  
June 17, 2014

## Financial Advisory Committee

October 7, 2013  
January 30, 2014  
June 4, 2014

## Trust Fund Committee - DHH

October 18, 2013  
May 15, 2014

## Trust Fund Committee - BVI

May 16, 2014  
June 10, 2014



# History and Organizational Structure

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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.

## Organizational Structure

### Board of Directors

APSEA is governed by a Board of Directors of twelve persons, three from each province. A Deputy Minister of Education from each province is a permanent member of the Board. The two additional members from each province are appointed by the Lieutenant Governor-in-Council for two-year terms. The Board is responsible for overall planning and policy development for the organization.

### Standing Committees of the Board

- **Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee of the Board of Directors is made up of the four Deputy Ministers of Education in Atlantic Canada and is responsible for the consideration and presentation of recommendations to the Board on major matters having an overall impact on the management and operation of APSEA.

- **Program Advisory Committee**

The Program Advisory Committee, comprised of the provincial Directors of Student Services and government-appointed members from each province, is responsible for advising the Board on matters relating to programs and services for children and youth who are deaf, hard of hearing, deafblind, blind or visually impaired.

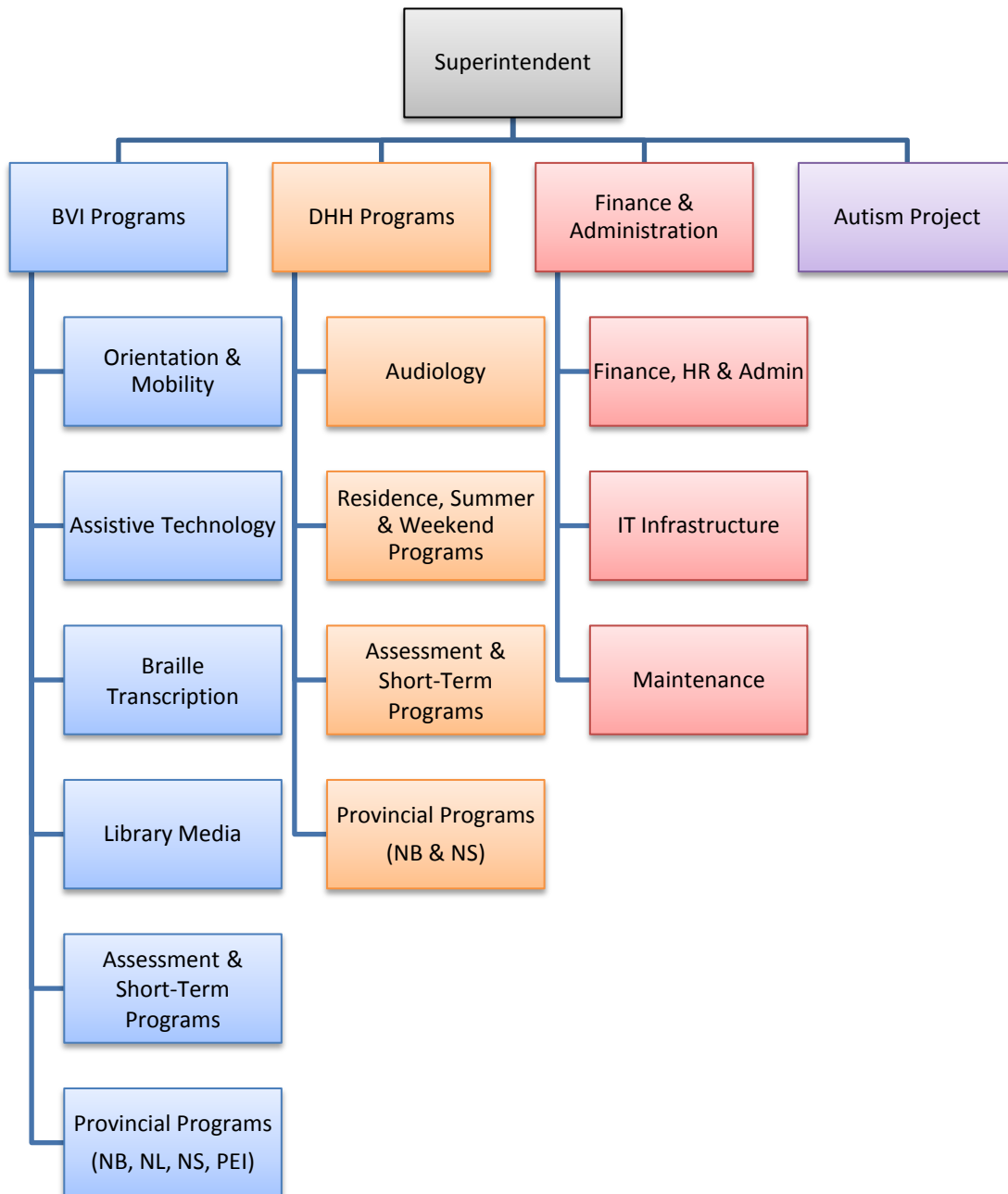
- **Financial Advisory Committee**

The Financial Advisory Committee, comprised of the Director of Finance from each Department of Education, is responsible for providing expertise and support, through the Executive Committee, to the Board of Directors in the financial management of APSEA.

▪ **Trust Fund Committees**

There are two Trust Fund Committees which determine how monies for scholarships, awards, or special projects will be distributed; one committee for the trust funds for children who are blind or visually impaired and one committee for the trust funds for children who are deaf, hard of hearing or deafblind. Each committee consists of three members; the Program Director, the Director of Finance and Administration, and an individual from the community. The APSEA Board of Directors is the final authority for the administration of trust funds.

**Organizational Chart**



# Children and Youth Served by APSEA

<b>Children and Youth Served by APSEA 2013-2014</b>			
<b>Children and Youth who are Blind or Visually Impaired (BVI)</b>			
	Preschool Age	School Age	Total
<b>New Brunswick</b>	25	98	123
<b>Newfoundland and Labrador</b>	14	110	124
<b>Nova Scotia</b>	68	213	281
<b>Prince Edward Island</b>	13	37	50
<b>Total</b>	120	458	578
<b>Children and Youth who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing (DHH)</b>			
<b>New Brunswick</b>	27	294	321
<b>Newfoundland and Labrador</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Nova Scotia</b>	81	535	616
<b>Prince Edward Island</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Total</b>	108	829	937

<b>Provincial Totals (2013-2014)</b>			
	<b>BVI</b>	<b>DHH</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>New Brunswick</b>	123	321	444
<b>Newfoundland and Labrador</b>	124	N/A	124
<b>Nova Scotia</b>	281	616	897
<b>Prince Edward Island</b>	50	N/A	50
<b>Total</b>	578	937	1515

# Programs and Services

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## **Preschool Children**

APSEA provided a preschool/parent education program designed to serve the individual needs of children who are deaf, hard of hearing, deafblind, blind or visually impaired and their families during the critical development years of birth to age five. Weekly service typically began for this population as soon as the child was diagnosed with hearing or vision loss.

Through regular home visits and support in preschool or kindergarten settings, APSEA teachers worked with the family members, care givers and other professionals to create a program plan for learning and skill development for each child.

## **School-Age Children**

Students with a diagnosed hearing loss or a diagnosed vision loss may receive either consultative or direct service, depending upon the severity of the loss and the educational implications. For all students, the itinerant teacher collaborates with the school team regarding strategies and accommodations to maximize the student's environment. Students receiving direct service also work with an itinerant teacher, typically one-to-one, up to five hours each week for students who are deaf or hard of hearing (DHH) and up to ten hours each week for students who are blind or visually impaired (BVI) for intensive support based upon outcomes outlined in the APSEA service plan.

## **DHH Itinerant Teachers – Direct Service**

In collaboration with school personnel, APSEA itinerant teachers provided service to students in inclusive settings to promote development in the following areas: language/communication development; auditory-verbal communication skills; critical thinking skills; academic skill building strategies; social and/or emotional development; and self-advocacy skill building.

## **DHH Itinerant Teachers – Consultation Service**

Consultation continued to be a critical component of the itinerant teacher service. Consultation to school personnel included: the provision of information about program modifications; review of, and suggestions to improve, the acoustic environment of their classrooms; and teaching techniques to use with students who are deaf or hard of hearing.

In collaboration with the school-based team, the itinerant teacher monitored the student's progress, ensured the student's classroom amplification equipment was well maintained and used appropriately, and attended case conferences when appropriate.

This consultation support ensured students received the necessary support at the appropriate time, in order to prevent more intensive intervention at a later date.

### **BVI Itinerant Teachers – Direct Service**

The itinerant teacher is a member of the school-based team and worked in collaboration with all individuals to establish the necessary adaptations or strategies ensuring students can fully participate in all aspects of the Core Curriculum. Children and youth who are blind or visually impaired also require direct instruction from a teacher of students who are blind or visually impaired to address areas of the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) as identified through formal and informal assessments.

The ECC is the body of knowledge and skills that are necessary for students who are blind or visually impaired to support success from birth through adulthood. These include: Orientation and Mobility, Compensatory or Functional Academic Skills, Social Interaction Skills, Recreation and Leisure Skills, Functional Living Skills, Career Education, Assistive Technology, Sensory Efficiency Skills and Self-Determination. This curriculum will ensure students can access the core academic curriculum of the public school system and develop other skills that are critical in promoting independence. The extent to which individuals who are blind or visually impaired are empowered to become independent and active in society is correlated to the success of identifying and addressing their unique educational needs.

### **BVI Itinerant Teachers – Consultation Service**

Consultative services from an itinerant teacher provided support to the school team to ensure the appropriate accommodations and adaptations are in place for a student. The itinerant teacher may work with parents, guardians, school personnel, and other service providers to provide useful information about the child's visual impairment, the availability of specialized services, and implement strategies to support outcomes and ways parents can prepare their children to live more independently.

## Children and Youth on the APSEA Registry

Nova Scotia Children and Youth on the APSEA Registry								
	Preschool		School-Age Direct		School-Age Consultation		Total	
	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI
2013-2014	81	68	129	82	406	131	616	281
2012-2013	74	69	146	80	295	118	515	267
2011-2012	48	77	155	133	357	120	560	330
2010-2011	53	73	151	121	375	142	597	336

New Brunswick Children and Youth on the APSEA Registry								
	Preschool		School-Age Direct		School-Age Consultation		Total	
	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI
2013-2014	27	25	95	33	199	65	321	123
2012-2013	39	27	101	38	198	70	338	135
2011-2012	34	36	85	44	210	82	329	162
2010-2011	33	26	93	57	196	61	322	144

Prince Edward Island Children and Youth on the APSEA Registry								
	Preschool		School-Age Direct		School-Age Consultation		Total	
	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI
2013-2014	N/A	13	N/A	14	N/A	23	N/A	50
2012-2013	N/A	15	N/A	11	N/A	22	N/A	48
2011-2012	N/A	15	N/A	14	N/A	25	N/A	54
2010-2011	N/A	15	N/A	25	N/A	26	N/A	66

Newfoundland and Labrador Children and Youth on the APSEA Registry								
	Preschool		School-Age Direct		School-Age Consultation		Total	
	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI
2013-2014	N/A	14	N/A	45	N/A	65	N/A	124
2012-2013	N/A	12	N/A	50	N/A	72	N/A	134
2011-2012	N/A	24	N/A	50	N/A	59	N/A	133
2010-2011	N/A	12	N/A	49	N/A	66	N/A	127

## Transition Services

APSEA offers transition support to students during the period of transition from school to community. The service is highly individualized and disability specific. Transition consultation and planning provided to students who are blind, visually impaired, deaf or hard of hearing begins in grade nine. APSEA Transition Planning Facilitators work collaboratively with student support teams (including students) to augment curriculum-based occupational planning with disability specific and individualized outcomes in order to maximize preparation for successful post secondary, employment, and independent living.

Nova Scotia Youth Receiving Transition Services		
	DHH	BVI
2013-2014	48	81
2012-2013	47	75
2011-2012	8*	78
2010-2011	51	88

New Brunswick Youth Receiving Transition Services		
	DHH	BVI
2013-2014	20	27
2012-2013	28	35
2011-2012	22	38
2010-2011	29	20

Prince Edward Island Youth Receiving Transition Services		
	DHH	BVI
2013-2014	N/A	13
2012-2013	N/A	15
2011-2012	N/A	17
2010-2011	N/A	9

Newfoundland and Labrador Youth Receiving Transition Services		
	DHH	BVI
2013-2014	N/A	N/A
2012-2013	N/A	N/A
2011-2012	N/A	N/A
2010-2011	N/A	N/A

\* In Nova Scotia 51 DHH students were eligible for transition services in 2011-2012, however, due to staff illness, only 8 received service.

## Additions to the APSEA Registry

Referrals for service were made through schools or health agencies. Eye reports were required for referrals for children and youth who are blind or visually impaired and audiograms were required for service for children and youth who are deaf or hard of hearing. Once referrals for service were received at the APSEA Centre and approved by the Director of Programs as meeting APSEA criteria for service, the provincial supervisors worked with itinerant teachers to determine whether the service would be direct or consultative based upon observations and assessments. The degree of hearing loss and level of vision loss is a critical factor in determining the level and type of service students receive.

New Referrals to APSEA – Nova Scotia								
	Preschool		School-Age Direct		School-Age Consultation		Total	
	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI
2013-2014	21	17	5	2	20	1	46	20
2012-2013	24	19	6	2	33	4	63	25
2011-2012	17	18	9	2	38	1	64	21
2010-2011	23	29	7	4	34	7	64	40

New Referrals to APSEA – New Brunswick								
	Preschool		School-Age Direct		School-Age Consultation		Total	
	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI
2013-2014	5	6	3	1	24	3	32	10
2012-2013	14	8	15	1	10	4	39	13
2011-2012	13	10	2	5	25	1	40	16
2010-2011	10	7	5	1	19	3	34	11

New Referrals to APSEA - Prince Edward Island								
	Preschool		School-Age Direct		School-Age Consultation		Total	
	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI
2013-2014	N/A	1		0	N/A	2	N/A	3
2012-2013	N/A	3	N/A	0	N/A	2	N/A	5
2011-2012	N/A	1	N/A	1	N/A	1	N/A	3
2010-2011	N/A	5	N/A	1	N/A	3	N/A	9

New Referrals to APSEA - Newfoundland and Labrador								
	Preschool		School-Age Direct		School-Age Consultation		Total	
	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI
2013-2014		2		0		5		7
2012-2013	N/A	1	N/A	0	N/A	1	N/A	2
2011-2012	N/A	5	N/A	3	N/A	3	N/A	11
2010-2011	N/A	5	N/A	1	N/A	1	N/A	7



# Professional Learning

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## **Annual Interpreter Workshop**

At the 2013 interpreters' professional development in-service, experienced community interpreters and experts supported APSEA interpreters' work by discussing and providing tools. Ayoka Junaid spoke on professional development strategies and linking this to one's own skill set; Amy Parsons on supporting student self-advocacy, and Sue Smiley facilitated an excellent session on vicarious trauma. Interpreters also had the opportunity to collaborate with their colleagues on their professional development plans for the year.

## **DHH Teachers**

The primary focus of professional development for 2013-2014 inservice sessions for teachers of students who are deaf or hard of hearing was in the areas of skill development for working with students who are deaf with additional challenges.

The October 2013 sessions included presenters Janine Boutilier, Student Services Consultant from Chignecto-Central Regional School Board; Dr. Christina Perigoe presenting live via video technology from the University of Southern Mississippi; APSEA AAC Consultant and Speech Language Pathologist Cindy Millar; Janace Daley from Phonak; and Dr. Linda Campbell, the first Deaf faculty member at Saint Mary's University. The session topics included:

- ◆ Children with Hearing Loss and Additional Challenges (Dr. Christina Perigoe)
- ◆ Working In Collaborative Teams (Janine Boutilier)
- ◆ Establishing Communication for Deaf+ (Cindy Millar)
- ◆ Case Studies – Communication Assessment for Deaf+
- ◆ On-Campus Tasks & Roger Hands-On Demo (Janace Daley)
- ◆ Needs for Different Communication Modes – Teachers Thinking Outside the Box (Dr. Linda Campbell)

The May 2014 sessions included presenters Dr. Karen Anderson, Director of Supporting Success for Children with Hearing Loss; Pat England; and Lisa Weir, APSEA Itinerant teacher. Karen Anderson's one day presentation focused on the following:

- ◆ Identifying self-advocacy needs and steps to build self-advocacy skills
- ◆ Communication repair skill identification and strategies for skill building
- ◆ Identifying and programming for self-concept development
- ◆ Identifying classroom listening challenges and problem solving for difficult situations

Other session topics included:

- ♦ Exploration of Expanded Core Curriculum
- ♦ Using the INSITE to assessment and write goals for children who are deaf with additional challenges
- ♦ Word training (Pat England)
- ♦ APSEA telepractice service delivery model pilot project (Lisa Weir)

## **BVI Teachers**

Professional development in 2013-2014 was designed to develop competencies in areas of the Expanded Core Curriculum. This included participation in the Canadian Conference for Educators, Parents and Professionals of Children and Youth who are Blind or Partially Sighted from May 4 – 7, in Halifax, NS hosted the Canadian Conference for Educators, Parents and Professionals of Children and Youth who are Blind or Partially Sighted. More than 225 delegates from Canada and the United States enjoyed Atlantic Canadian hospitality while gaining more knowledge to better understand the ability to see beyond the child's vision loss and to explore the possibilities beyond school while looking into the future.

Keynote presentations offered extensive information from all aspects of development for children and youth who are blind or partially sighted including those with additional exceptionalities.

**Robbin Keating Clark** - *Everything I Learned, I Learned Because My Parents Made Me Do It! It's Not a Choice It's a Way of Life: Let's Teach the Expanded Core Curriculum*

**Dr. Tanni Anthony** - *Stages of Infancy: Building the Foundation for a Lifetime*

**Patty Obrzut** - *From Passivity to Activity: Changing the Lives of Visually Impaired Individuals with Multiple Special Needs*

**Dr. Gordon Dutton** - *Assessing and Teaching Children with Profound Cerebral Visual Impairment; Cerebral Visual Impairment in Children: Designing Strategies to Help*

**Dr. Karen Wolffe** - *Preparing for Life Success: Relationships, Employment & Community Living*

Forty-two (42) sessions were available to delegates during breakout sessions which fit within the theme. These included:

- ♦ Unified English Braille
- ♦ Alternate Format Production
- ♦ Assistive Technology
- ♦ Orientation and Mobility
- ♦ Self-Determination
- ♦ Current Research Projects

**Opening Ceremonies** also provided delegates with a presentation from Keynote Speaker, Caelin Lloyd, a young student from Nova Scotia. Caelin is a grade three student and lives a very active life. He uses assistive technology quite effectively and also co-presented **Assistive Technology: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow in the Life of an 8-year-old Boy with Albinism**, with the APSEA Assistive Technology Specialist at the conference. His keynote at the opening ceremonies, **Caelin's Adventures** demonstrated life from the experiences of an 8 year old.

In addition to the information gained from this conference, other professional development opportunities included:

- ♦ iPad Awareness
- ♦ Braille Production: The Possibilities
- ♦ Working In Collaborative Teams
- ♦ O&M - Professional Development Program (including blindfold and low vision training)
- ♦ Cortical Visual Impairment: Assessment – Adjusting our Practice

## Interpreters

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### **Educational Interpreters (EI/OI)**

In collaboration with the classroom teacher, and under the direction of the APSEA itinerant teacher, the educational interpreter provided oral/sign interpretation between students who are deaf and persons who are hearing. Educational interpreters also provided tutorial support.

### **Language Acquisition Support Workers (LASW)**

A small number of students start school without having developed the language or communication competencies that would allow them to access the provincial curriculum. These children require intense intervention to facilitate language acquisition. Therefore, the role of the LASW is to facilitate language acquisition in the student through discussion and questions in the educational environment. The LASW strives to increase the student's vocabulary, syntax and critical thinking as it relates to language by bringing classroom activities and discourse to the student's linguistic level and building on this foundation. LASWs facilitate communication for the student during educational opportunities which happen outside the classroom.

They interact with the student to focus his/her attention on relevant information, guide appropriate responses, advise the student of social expectations as they relate to language, including but not limited to turn taking, vocalization and how language is influenced by social distance. The LASW provided educational tutorial support in collaboration with the classroom teacher and the itinerant teacher.

## Educational Interpreter/Student Assistant (EISA)

In some cases, children require the support of an educational interpreter for communication and a student assistant for personal care, behavioural management or support for the instructional program. In these cases, the EISA fulfills the roles of both educational interpreter and student assistant.

## Communication Facilitator

When a qualified educational interpreter is not available, a communication facilitator, who is a fluent user of sign language, works with students to provide sign interpretation between students who are deaf and persons who are hearing. They also provided tutorial support.

Nova Scotia Children and Youth Receiving Interpreter Services						
	EI	OI	LASW	CF	EISA	Total
2013-2014	9	2	6	0	4	21
2012-2013	11	2	8	0	2	23
2011-2012	11	3	9	1	3	27
2010-2011	11	8	0	1	5	25

New Brunswick Children and Youth Receiving Interpreter Services						
	EI	OI	LASW	CF	EISA	Total
2013-2014	6	2	7	1	0	16
2012-2013	5	3	5	1	0	14
2011-2012	7	3	6	0	0	16
2010-2011	11	6	2	0	0	19

The team of educational interpreters, language acquisition support workers and oral interpreters had a busy and fulfilling year. There are many pieces to ensuring we meet the highest standard of service delivery. These include the Sign Language Proficiency Interview, regular consultations during the school year, school district -based opportunities for professional development, and the annual August in-service.

The educational interpreter consultant worked closely with provincial supervisors and school teams this year. Future identified priorities include increased support for students' knowledge of the role of an interpreter, especially when transitioning from the school to workplace.

## **Sign Language Proficiency**

To access interpreting services, individuals require a level of proficiency in receptive and expressive sign language. Developed at the Rochester Institute of Technology, the Sign Language Proficiency Interview (SLPI) is a sign language assessment that allows us to determine a student's sign language ability and level of access to the interpreted message. An information tool rather than a pass/fail test, the SLPI provides feedback that allows the educational team to address areas of students' sign language development that may require further work. Sign Language Proficiency Interview evaluators have been hard at work, refining their skills and administering interviews. SLPI data includes information on students' receptive and expressive sign language, which informs interpreters' work in the classroom.

Benchmarks have now been established for almost all students who receive sign language interpreting services in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. It is anticipated that students will be evaluated several times during their formative years to monitor the progress of their sign language communication.

## **Trust Funds**

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Two Trust Fund Committees determine the allocation of funds from the various trust funds using specific criteria. Trust funds are used for student awards and scholarships, research, and staff development.

### **DHH Trust Funds**

The Interprovincial School Development Association (ISDA) Committee meets twice each year. The Committee's mandate is to distribute monies from the trust fund to eligible candidates. The Committee members are Eve Tupper (Chair), Heather Conrad and Lori Moore.

### **BVI Trust Funds**

The APSEA Trust Funds for students who are blind or visually impaired operate on a continuous intake process with an in-person meeting of the committee in the spring of each year. This committee considers various requests that can support academic needs as well as social, recreation and leisure activities. The Committee members are Heather MacPherson (Chair), Heather Conrad and Glenda Parsons.

Nova Scotia Trust Funds				
	Less than \$500.00		More than \$500.00	
	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI
2013-2014	18	19	25	4
2012-2013	28	20	24	0
2011-2012	32	47	20	3
2010-2011	37	38	16	3

New Brunswick Trust Funds						
	Less than \$500.00			More than \$500.00		
	DHH	BVI		DHH	BVI	
		Anglophone	Francophone		Anglophone	Francophone
2013-2014	9	9	23	6	1	0
2012-2013	21	14	22	11	1	1
2011-2012	22	14	31	11	1	3
2010-2011	16	12	32	10	0	2

Prince Edward Island Trust Funds				
	Less than \$500.00		More than \$500.00	
	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI
2013-2014	5	10	1	0
2012-2013	5	18	3	0
2011-2012	4	20	0	1
2010-2011	2	7	0	2

Newfoundland and Labrador Trust Funds				
	Less than \$500.00		More than \$500.00	
	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI
2013-2014	0	18	1	3
2012-2013	0	25	1	2
2011-2012	0	21	0	1
2010-2011	0	35	0	2

# Centre-Based Services

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## **Assessment**

Two assessment teams based at the Centre in Halifax, provide assessments for students who are blind or visually impaired, or deaf or hard of hearing. When assessing students with dual sensory loss, these teams work collaboratively.

All assessments for students who are deaf or hard of hearing include a core team comprised of an audiologist, psychologist and an academic language evaluator who complete psycho-educational assessments on preschool and school-age students. In addition, the school team may identify further areas to be assessed which may include: career assessor, augmentative and alternative communication consultant and/or occupational therapist.

Most assessments are completed at the centre in Halifax, however, this year the core team travelled to l'Hospital Regional Chaleur (Audiology Clinic) in Bathurst, New Brunswick to complete three assessments.

All assessments for students who are blind or visually impaired include a core team comprised of a psychologist and a functional vision/braille evaluator who complete psycho-educational assessments for students. In addition, the school team may identify further areas to be assessed which may include: career assessor, orientation and mobility specialist, occupational therapist, and assistive technology specialist.

## **Assessments for Students with Vision or Hearing Loss and Additional Challenges**

Assessments for students with additional challenges require an approach that evaluates students, in collaboration with families, educators and other professionals, to more effectively support students in their local functional programming.

This process addresses questions raised by families and school team members based on key principles which include extended up-front planning and follow-up; collaborative efforts aimed at gaining a holistic picture of the student, within their local context; and, an integrated report to provide targeted programming suggestions.

Assessments – Nova Scotia								
	Preschool		School-Age Direct		School-Age Consultation		Total	
	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI
2013-2014	6	0	20	14	3	6	29	20
2012-2013	2	0	18	10	1	4	21	14
2011-2012	1	0	27	18	7	0	35	18
2010-2011	2	0	38	8	3	1	43	9

Assessments – New Brunswick								
	Preschool		School-Age Direct		School-Age Consultation		Total	
	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI
2013-2014	2	0	15	3	2	2	19	5
2012-2013	3	0	6	4	3	0	12	4
2011-2012	4	0	13	6	1	1	18	7
2010-2011	4	0	6	7	1	3	11	10

Assessments- Prince Edward Island								
	Preschool		School-Age Direct		School-Age Consultation		Total	
	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI
2013-2014	0	0	2	3	1	1	3	4
2012-2013	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	2
2011-2012	1	0	0	3	0	1	1	4
2010-2011	0	0	2	4	1	0	3	4

Assessments– Newfoundland and Labrador								
	Preschool		School-Age Direct		School-Age Consultation		Total	
	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI
2013-2014	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	2
2012-2013	0	0	0	6	0	1	0	7
2011-2012	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	2
2010-2011	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Other: 2012-2013: Innu = 1 DHH assessment  
 2010-2011: Innu = 1 DHH assessment



## Short-Term Programs (STP)

APSEA short-term programs are developed to provide intense, individualized programming to meet each student's identified needs. Referrals are received from school-based teams in the Fall and Spring of each school year. This collaborative process involves extensive pre-planning and discussion to address the individual outcomes identified in the Referral for Centre-Based Services.

Individualized programs are developed based on referred needs and can range from one student to small groups of students. Programs varied in duration from two to five days per week, and for up to three consecutive weeks.

Areas of instruction within each program are based on the unique needs of students with sensory loss. For students who are blind or visually impaired, this may include; Assistive Technology, Braille, Career Explorations, Functional Living Skills, Orientation and Mobility, Social Skills, Self-Determination and Self-Advocacy. For students who are deaf or hard of hearing, this may include; Communication (spoken or signed), Audition, Self-Determination, Self-Advocacy, Career Education, Audiology and Functional Life Skills.

Support was also provided by APSEA staff to students and their educational teams. STP teachers provided extensive program information, including pictures, experience books and comprehensive reports to facilitate follow up at the school. The AAC Consultant provided support via distance to several school teams for purposes of implementing strategies to work on the student's communication skills. It is anticipated that Centre-based support will continue to expand in terms of format, topic, and audience as we work toward supporting the needs students and schools regionally.



**DHH students attending a short-term program in April 2014 on a community outing to Pizza Delight to reinforce and practice program outcomes in functional living and self-advocacy.**

The following figures represent the number of individual Short-Term Program plans developed and implemented. For any student who attended more than one STP, an individual program plan was developed for each STP.

Short-Term Programs – Nova Scotia						
	School-Age Direct		School-Age Consultation		Total	
	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI
2013-2014	89	41	2	2	91	43
2012-2013	82	51	1	0	83	51
2011-2012	53	46	1	3	54	49
2010-2011	18	45	0	9	18	54

Short-Term Programs – New Brunswick						
	School-Age Direct		School-Age Consultation		Total	
	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI
2013-2014	12	5	1	0	13	5
2012-2013	5	8	0	0	5	8
2011-2012	3	7	1	0	4	7
2010-2011	5	37	0	0	4	37

Short-Term Programs - Prince Edward Island						
	School-Age Direct		School-Age Consultation		Total	
	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI
2013-2014	5	3	3	0	8	3
2012-2013	6	4	0	0	6	4
2011-2012	0	9	0	0	0	9
2010-2011	0	10	0	0	0	10

Short-Term Programs – Newfoundland and Labrador						
	School-Age Direct		School-Age Consultation		Total	
	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI
2013-2014	NA	11	NA	3	NA	14
2012-2013	NA	18	NA	3	NA	21
2011-2012	NA	9	NA	0	NA	9
2010-2011	NA	11	NA	0	NA	11

Other: During years 2011-2012, 2012-2013 and 2013-2014, two (2) students from Nunavut participated in a short-term program each school year. One (1) student from the Innu Community in Labrador participated in 10 short-term programs in 2012-2013 and 6 short-term programs in 2011-2012.

## **Cancellation of Short-Term Programs and Assessments**

There were nine short-term program cancellations and three assessment cancellations, by parent requests due to illness, or family scheduling difficulties for students who are deaf or hard of hearing. Sixteen (16) short-term programs and 10 assessments were cancelled by parent requests due to illness or family scheduling difficulties for students who are blind or visually impaired.

## **Alternate Format Production and Library Services**

APSEA Library and Braille Service is responsible for the provision of Alternate Format materials to support the instructional needs of students who are blind or visually impaired in Atlantic Canada. The APSEA Library also supplies APSEA staff with professional materials.

This includes:

- facilitating the production of alternate format materials for APSEA staff and students in accordance with the Braille Authority of North American (BANA) guidelines, Braille Literacy Canada, International Music Standards, and the National Information Standards Organization;
- being an active member of the Canadian Association of Educational Resource Centres for Alternate Format Materials (CAER) which includes sharing of resource materials;
- ensuring Canadian Copyright laws are followed and clearly communicated to all staff;
- assisting with specialized Braille production enquiries from itinerant teachers;
- providing support to professionals and staff by accessing journals, specialized materials in the collection and research assistance;
- maintaining a diverse library collection that supports educational curriculums and professional development;
- supporting students in the classroom through access to low vision aids and supplies.

Three full-time Library Technicians, seven full-time Braille Transcribers and one Braille Supervisor work together to provide students and staff with the necessary tools to support student success.

The following are highlights from the 2013-2014 school year.

- The APSEA Tactile Illustrator was recognized for her contribution as a member of the Canadian Braille Authority-Braille Authority of North America (BANA) Joint Committee on Tactile Graphics which was the recipient of the BANA Braille Excellence award.
- CAER PUB tool using Google Drive was created by the library staff which was adopted by CAER members as a tool to facilitate transparency with the production of titles in Unified English Braille (as an attempt to avoid duplication of production).

- The Supervisor of Braille Transcription, was appointed as a member of the BANA Braille Formats Committee which is tasked to bring the North American production of braille standards in line with Unified English Braille standards.
- Journal use by staff was reviewed and access will be improved through electronic subscriptions renewals.
- Braille transcription staff trained in the new Unified English Braille code.
- Braille transcription staff marked submissions from APSEA students who entered the Braille Challenge® coordinated by the Braille Institute.

Alternate Format Materials are provided in several formats. **Accessible PDF** (Portable Document Format) provides students with the ability view a file using specialized software or equipment; **Enlarged Print** is provided to students with low vision as print enlargement on paper bound as books; **Braille** is produced in Standard English Braille and Nemeth; **Tactile Graphics** are images that use raised surfaces to convey non-textual information such as maps, paintings, graphs and diagrams; **E-Text** (electronic text, documents that are available in digital format) prepared with standardized formatting of a word processing file, with tags added to identify text changes, and page chapter sequencing as they appear in printed format – using guidelines as set by the Canadian Braille Authority.

Alternate Format Materials Produced for Students in Nova Scotia						
	Students using Alternate Format Material	PDF	Large Print	Braille	Tactile	E-text
2013-2014	36	10441	1768	13852	2624	1746
2012-2013	32	5862	2183	7465	1032	2805

Alternate Format Materials Produced for Students in New Brunswick						
	Students using Alternate Format Material	PDF	Large Print	Braille	Tactile	E-text
2013-2014	17	3122	614	3831	690	0
2012-2013	14	1162	3175	4842	1045	1

Alternate Format Materials Produced for Students in Newfoundland and Labrador						
	Students using Alternate Format Material	PDF	Large Print	Braille	Tactile	E-text
2013-2014	16	1812	3473	2644	612	404
2012-2013	21	702	2812	2932	1542	2142

Alternate Format Materials Produced for Students in Prince Edward Island						
	Students using Alternate Format Material	PDF	Large Print	Braille	Tactile	E-text
2013-2014	3	0	486	2094	601	500
2012-2013	5	460	88	1618	597	1178

## Canadian Association of Educational Resource Centres for Alternate Format Materials (CAER)

The Canadian Association of Educational Resource Centres for Alternate Format Materials (CAER) is comprised of members representing alternate format production facilities throughout Canada. Members of CAER agree to a common set of protocols and business practices that ensure validation of users and responsible use of the materials in accordance with the Canadian Copyright Act. To maximize efficiencies and minimize costs it is essential that alternate formats produced by one Canadian educational institution are shared through interlibrary loan with other trusted partners so that production costs are minimized.

### Alternate Formats on Loan from CAER Members

	Braille	Large Print	PDF	E-text	Print	Total
Nova Scotia	15	8	1	2	2	28
New Brunswick	2	5	0	0	0	7
Prince Edward Island	2	4	0	0	0	6
Newfoundland and Labrador	2	32	0	0	0	34

Interlibrary loans (ILL) savings have been calculated using an average page count of 200 for the 70 ILL titles borrowed at an approximate cost of \$6/page. The estimated savings for APSEA derived from ILL for the past year is \$90 000.

### Alternate Formats on Loan to CAER Members

Resource Centre	Large Print	Braille	E-text	Total
Alberta	2	0	0	2
Manitoba	0	2	0	2
British Columbia	15	16	2	33
Saskatchewan	3	1	0	4
Ontario	20	3	0	23
Total	40	22	2	64

# Assistive Technology

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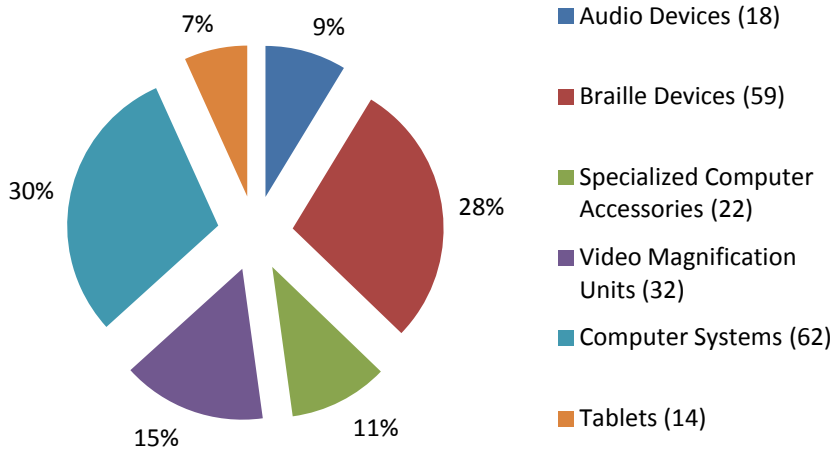
Assistive technology has become an important component of the APSEA organization. For students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing or Blind or Visually Impaired, regular use of various assistive technology devices is essential in providing support as efforts are made to access the school curriculum. Appropriate training to ensure a student becomes competent and independent with the use of a device is essential. This may include direct training to a student, as well as additional training to other members of the student's team, ensuring the process is collaborative.

During the 2013-2014 school year, the Assistive Technology Department continued to implement the **Student, Environment, Task, Tools and Training (SET3)** model for the provision of assistive technology to students. This model facilitates considerations of individual student needs, the student's environment, the student's tasks and training for the student and the student's team. Additionally, the Assistive Technology staff connects remotely with staff and students for in-service training, online instruction, and participation in meetings with educational teams.

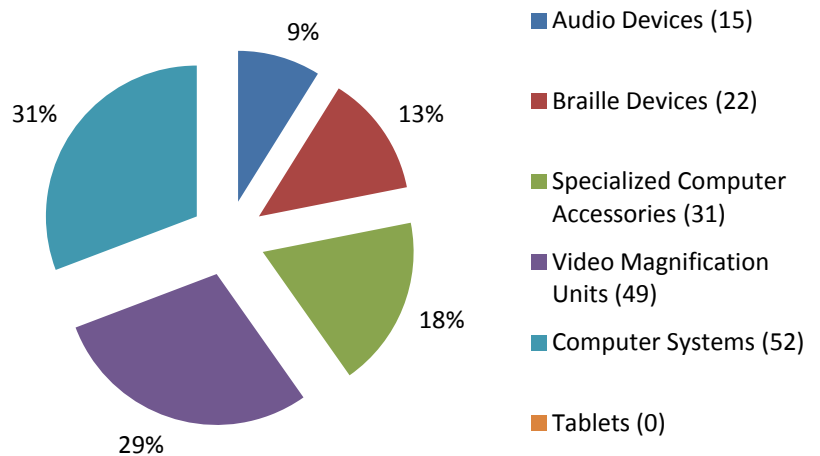
## **2013-2014 Highlights**

- A Remote JAWS Tandem session for a student in Fredericton, New Brunswick enabled staff to work online with a student who is blind as he used a screen reader to create an Excel Spreadsheet.
- Online professional development sessions with staff from Newfoundland and Labrador regarding the use of the iPad and the discussion of specific apps with students who are blind and visually impaired, and the SET3 model.
- The provision of confidential assessment services for students and educational teams in various areas of Atlantic Canada was accomplished with the use of Telehealth.
- Collaboration with the New Brunswick Department of Education Information Technology (IT) staff regarding the use of APSEA student technology and internet access requirements within school to develop a procedure to enhance internet access for APSEA Students in New Brunswick Schools.
- The Assistive Technology Specialists and the Augmentative Alternative Communications Specialist presented at the Canadian Conference for Educators, Parents and Professionals of Children and Youth who are Blind or Partially Sighted: May 2014, Halifax, Nova Scotia

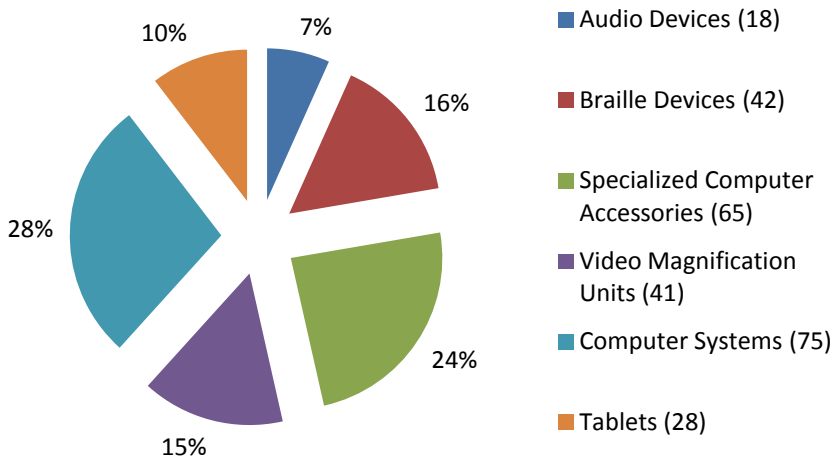
### Student Use of AT Devices - NB

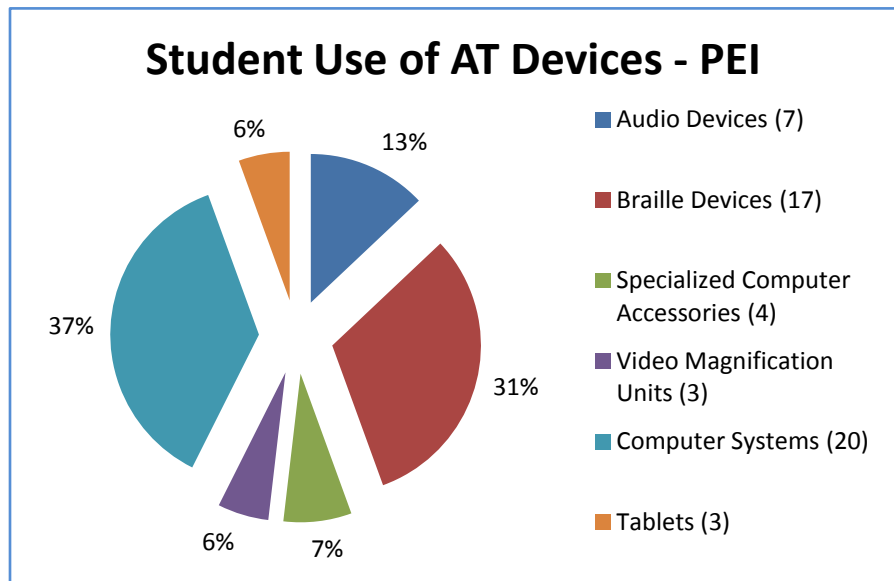


### Student Use of AT Devices - NL



### Student Use of AT Devices - NS





**Assistive Technology Devices include the following:**

Audio Devices	Audio Calculators, Electronic Dictionary, Electronic Text Readers, Audio Recording and Playback Systems
Braille Devices	Braille Embosser, Mechanical Braille Writer, Electronic Braille Writer, Braille Note Taker
Specialized Computer Accessories	Computer Specialized Accessories, Specialty Mouse, Specialty Software, Specialty Keyboard
Video Magnification Units	Desktop Video Magnification Units, Distance Video Magnification Units, Portable Video Magnification Units
Computer Systems	Desktop Computers, Laptop Computers, Large Screen Monitors, Printers, Scanners
Tablets	

## Summer Camps

Summer camps offer students experiences within a breadth of program options to develop their interests, skills and confidence in an inclusive environment. Being with peers who understand the experience of living with a sensory loss provides a supportive environment that promotes self-esteem, self-confidence, self-advocacy and independence.

### APSEA/Elks Deaf Camp Magaguadavic

Sixty-three (63) campers and junior counselors took part in a very successful camp during the week of August 4-9, 2013. The camp provided an opportunity for children and youth (7-15 years) who are deaf or hard of hearing to be together in a natural and supportive environment with their deaf or hard of hearing peers.



<b>APSEA/Elks Camp August 2013 Campers and Junior Counselors</b>			
	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Nova Scotia</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>New Brunswick</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Prince Edward Island</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Newfoundland and Labrador</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>63</b>



This was the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Elks Deaf Camp and was celebrated at the end of the week with an array of fireworks; a grand finale enjoyed by all. While at camp, 46 campers completed surveys. Ratings in almost all areas were in the “good” to “great” range. Ninety-eight percent (98%) of campers indicated they had made a new friend and had fun. Six parent surveys were returned. The response from the six parents indicated the quality of programming was good to excellent, and the overall experience for their child was rated as excellent by all parents.

### **Camp See-Ya (Brigadoon)**

During the week of June 29-July 4, 2014, APSEA students who are blind or visually impaired had an opportunity to participate in a summer camp held at Brigadoon Village on Aylesford Lake, Annapolis Valley, Nova Scotia.

Thirty (30) campers aged 8-17 participated in activities such as canoeing, visual and performing arts, swimming, environmental education, cooperative games and camp fires. The campers also had opportunities to develop specific skills during pursuit (choice) activities and were able to share their talents with the camp during a talent show.

While at camp, 24 campers completed surveys. Ratings in almost all areas were in the “good” to “great” range. Most of the campers indicated they had made a new friend, had fun and felt understood by camp counselors and staff. Surveys will be sent home to the parents for their input on this year’s camp.



<b>APSEA/Brigadoon Camp July 2014</b>			
	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Nova Scotia</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>New Brunswick</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Prince Edward Island</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Newfoundland and Labrador</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>30</b>

# Special Initiatives

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## Unified English Braille

Adopted in Canada in 2010, Unified English Braille (UEB) will be implemented from coast-to-coast in September 2014. A UEB sub-committee, comprised of Provincial Resource Managers and Provincial Educators, was established in June 2013 by the Canadian Association of Educational Resource Centres for Alternate Format Materials (CAER).



This CAER Committee was tasked with developing a plan to ensure the implementation of UEB in each province was a seamless and transparent transition. The committee acknowledged the education of children and youth is a provincial mandate and each province will have separate challenges.

CAER, whose membership reflects and represents all provinces in Canada, has facilitated this national approach which intends to support a reduction of transcription duplication and production costs, sharing of teacher training materials, coordination of implementation strategies and sharing of experiences and challenges.

In preparation for the implementation of the Unified English Braille Code in September 2014, the following highlights the progress during this year:

### January 2014

- Ten (10) APSEA staff, a combination of educators, and braille transcribers, representing all four of the Atlantic Provinces completed a five-day intensive training session to learn this code. This is the leadership team for implementation. Support, training and guidance will be provided to the other staff at APSEA for the next few years from this team.

### January – July 2014

- A sub-group (braille transcribers) from this team met on a weekly basis to consider the ability to produce braille for the students.
- All Duxbury Software programs in the braille department have been upgraded with UEB.
- All Duxbury Software programs currently in the hands of educators and students will begin upgrading – and a plan has been developed by our technology department to ensure this is a smooth process.
- Requested materials for the 2014-2015 school year, for students transitioning to the Unified English Braille Code, have already gone into production – or about to go into production.

**July 1, 2014**

- Identified staff in the braille production department transitioned to UEB and only produce materials this code.
- Other identified staff will continue to produce materials in the current braille codes while preparing to transition July 2015.
- Two staff members are producing materials from all codes and will continue to do so until the implementation process is complete.

## Autism Project

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With the mandate of advancing and disseminating knowledge of Autism Spectrum Disorder in the area of educational instruction and practices, Autism in Education (AIE) continued to build upon initiatives designed to;

- Consolidate a community of practice and evolve the related website to increasing relevance and usefulness.
- Expand the project's impact to a greater scale by extending information to a broad range of educators and related professionals through its website and professional development opportunities.
- Initiate and build connections with other professional groups and stakeholders that impact and/or are involved with the education of children with ASD.

### Interprovincial Autism Training Initiative

In April, 2013, following a recommendation by the Council of Atlantic Deputy Ministers of Education and Training (CADMET) to explore an interprovincial autism training initiative, the APSEA Autism in Education Advisory Committee was tasked with further investigating the potential for this interprovincial partnership. The feedback on the value of such a training program from key educational staff in all four provinces was extremely positive, with ninety-eight percent (98%) of those surveyed indicating that this Core Online ASD Training Program could be an important component of professional development for staff in their regions.

In January 2014, the topic of the prospective interprovincial ASD training initiative was also on the agenda of the Council of Atlantic Ministers of Education and Training (CAMET) when this group met in Fredericton, NB. In a communiqué released following that meeting, CAMET announced the "establishment of an interprovincial partnership on autism training for teachers, resource teachers, paraprofessionals, and administrators.

Building on the training program introduced in New Brunswick in 2011, the regional program will lead to consistency in training, build capacity across all four provinces through an e-learning program that promotes evidence-based practice, is responsive to emerging research and needs, as well as achieve efficiencies in delivery” (from <http://camet-camef.ca/images/2014January30FINAL.pdf>).

Since the release of the CAMET announcement, the AIE working group has been collaborating with the New Brunswick training development team on the creation of a series of e-learning modules on Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and evidence-based practice. The New Brunswick team and the AIE group have been meeting by videoconference on a weekly basis since March to develop and review content for the online training modules.

It is anticipated the training modules will be ready to pilot on a small scale in all four provinces in January 2015, with the goal of launching the interprovincial autism training program, **“ASD & Behavioural Interventions: An Introduction for School Personnel”** for the first group of educational staff, including identified resource teachers, learning centre teachers, classroom teachers, and educational/teacher assistants across the Atlantic Provinces in April 2015.

### **Autism Speaks Canada Family Services Community Grant**

In December 2012, Autism Speaks Canada awarded a 2012 Family Services Community Grant (\$22,500) to Autism in Education to organize and host advanced training for provincial and district autism specialists/itinerants in the Atlantic Provinces. Autism Speaks graciously allowed Autism in Education to carry over approximately 50% of the grant to the 2013-2014 year, allowing for three advanced training events to be hosted.

- The **Autism in Education (AIE) Professional Learning Symposium** was held at APSEA from April 9-10, 2014. Day 1 of the symposium was facilitated by Dr. Dennis Reid, Ph.D., BCBA, a world-renowned expert in the field of staff training, with particular emphasis on the implementation of evidence-based practices for individuals with ASD and challenging behaviours in educational environments. The focus of Dr. Reid’s workshop was on coaching and support strategies for consultants working in inclusive school settings, with specific emphasis on strategies for consultants working in schools in which the consultants have no supervisory authority over the school personnel. The second day of the symposium featured “AIE Talks” (in the spirit of TED Talks), in which district/board consultants representing each province shared unique or exciting aspects of their own professional practice with their colleagues from across Atlantic Canada.
- Two professional learning webinars - The first webinar was held on January 30, and featured Dr. Bob Ross of Beacon ABA Services in Massachusetts. Dr. Ross presented a workshop entitled **“Getting Out of the Interpretation Business: Taking the Guesswork Out of Determining the Function of Behaviour.”** The second webinar, entitled **“Peer Engagement of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder in Schools”** was presented by Dr. Connie Kasari, Professor of Human Development and Psychology at UCLA on May 30.

Dr. Kasari's webinar drew a record number of registrations, with one hundred and sixty-seven (167) teachers, educational assistants, speech-language pathologists, psychologists, ASD consultants, and parents registering for the 90-minute presentation.

### **Information Papers**

The fourth AIE Information Paper, *The Use of Time-out and Seclusion Procedures in Schools*, was completed in June 2014. Although the AIE group recognized that taking on the topic of time-out and seclusion would not be an easy task, given the controversial nature of the subject matter and the breadth of research and information to be examined, it was felt the issue was of significant importance across all four provinces and beyond.

The provincial ASD consultants worked diligently to develop a paper that would examine the issue of the use of time-out and seclusion procedures in schools in a responsible, ethical, and research-informed manner. The information paper will be posted in both English and French on the AIE website and will be disseminated to educational personnel and stakeholders by the provincial Student/Educational Support Services leadership in each province.

### **Website (Online Community of Practice)**

The ASD community of practice across the Atlantic Provinces continues to be supported by the ongoing development of the Autism in Education website. Since the launch of the website in the spring of 2011, the number of registered members has grown to four hundred and thirty-three (433). An exciting new feature of the AIE website is the addition of recorded and archived professional learning presentations that may be accessed by members from any location and at any time they choose. At present, this area of the website includes Dr. Reid's complete presentation from the AIE Symposium, Dr. Ross's webinar, and several of the "AIE Talks" presentations. Professional learning presentations will continue to be added to the website throughout the coming year to support ongoing professional learning for educational staff as well as any other professionals or parents/families who wish to access the information.

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