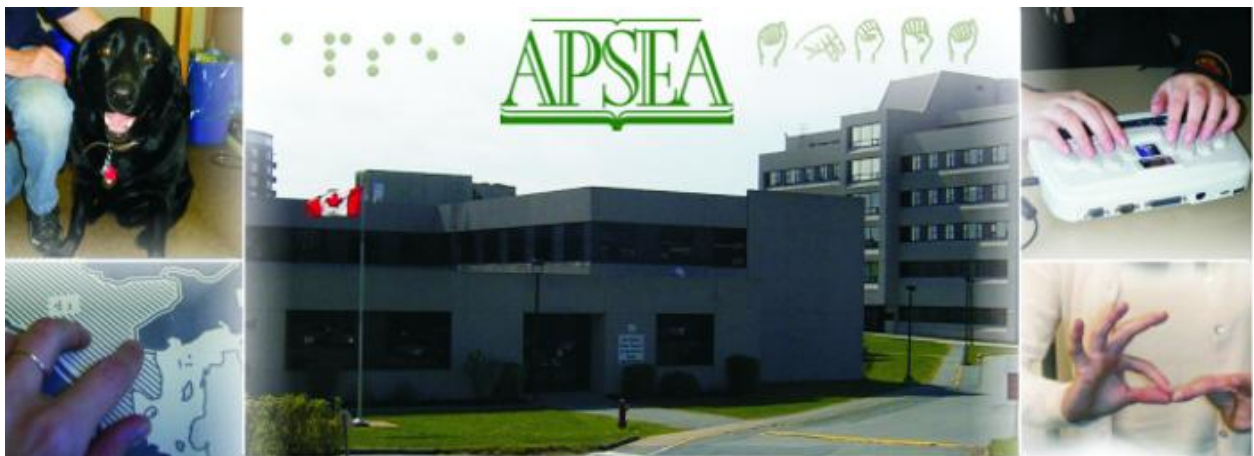




# Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority

Annual Report 2014-2015



**TWENTY-SIXTH 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 TTY 902-423-8796  
Administration Fax 902-423-8700 Assessment Fax 902-423-8703

1 August 2015

Chair and Board of Directors  
Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority

In accordance with Regulation 43 of the *APSEA Act*, I submit herewith this report on the Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority (APSEA) for the school year ending 31 July 2015.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Bertram R. Tulk'.

Bertram R. Tulk, Ed.D.  
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  
Department of Education and Early  
Childhood Development

Nancy Boucher  
Assistant Deputy Minister  
Department of Education and Early  
Childhood Development

Pam Gagnon  
Parent Representative

### **Nova Scotia**

Sandra McKenzie, Chair  
Deputy Minister  
Department of Education and Early Childhood  
Development

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

Ross Lloyd  
Parent Representative

### **Newfoundland and Labrador**

Janet Vivian-Walsh  
Deputy Minister  
Department of Education and Early Childhood  
Development

Bernie Ottenheimer  
Director, Student Support Services Division  
Dept. of Education and Early Childhood Dev.

Ed Walsh  
Assistant Deputy Minister  
Dept. of Education and Early Childhood Dev.

### **Prince Edward Island**

Dr. Alex (Sandy) MacDonald (Aug/14 – June /15)  
Deputy Minister  
Department of Education, Early Learning  
and Culture

Susan Willis (appointed 2 July 2015)  
Deputy Minister  
Department of Education, Early Learning  
and Culture

Adrian Smith  
Special Education Policy Advisor  
Department of Education, Early Learning  
and Culture

Julia Gaudet (term ended 1 Sept. 2014)  
Director, Student Services  
English Language School Board

Terri MacAdam (appointed January 2015)  
Manager of Student Services  
English Language School Board

## **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

### **New Brunswick**

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

### **Nova Scotia**

Sandra McKenzie, Chair  
Deputy Minister  
Department of Education and Early  
Childhood Development

### **Newfoundland and Labrador**

Janet Vivian-Walsh, Treasurer  
Deputy Minister  
Department of Education and Early Childhood  
Development

### **Prince Edward Island**

Dr. Alex (Sandy) MacDonald, Secretary  
Deputy Minister (Aug/14 – June /15)  
Department of Education, Early Learning  
and Culture

Susan Willis (appointed 2 July 2015)  
Deputy Minister  
Department of Education, Early Learning  
and Culture

## **PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

### **New Brunswick**

Brian Kelly  
Director, Student Services

Stephanie Warren  
Parent Representative

### **Newfoundland and Labrador**

Bernie Ottenheimer  
Director, Student Services

### **Nova Scotia**

Don Glover, Chair  
Director, Student Support Services Division

Ross Lloyd  
Parent Representative

### **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 or Hard of  
Hearing

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 or Hard of Hearing**

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 19, 2015. In addition to the annual meeting, the Board of Directors held the following meetings:

September 24, 2014  
February 13, 2015  
June 19, 2015

The committees listed below also met during the 2014-2015 school year:

## Executive Committee

August 21-22, 2014  
September 23, 2014  
February 12, 2015  
June 18, 2015

## Program Advisory Committee

September 23, 2014  
February 12, 2015  
June 18, 2015

## Financial Advisory Committee

February 9, 2015

## Trust Fund Committee - DHH

October 29, 2014  
May 20, 2015

## Trust Fund Committee - BVI

May 19, 2015  
June 4, 2015



# 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.

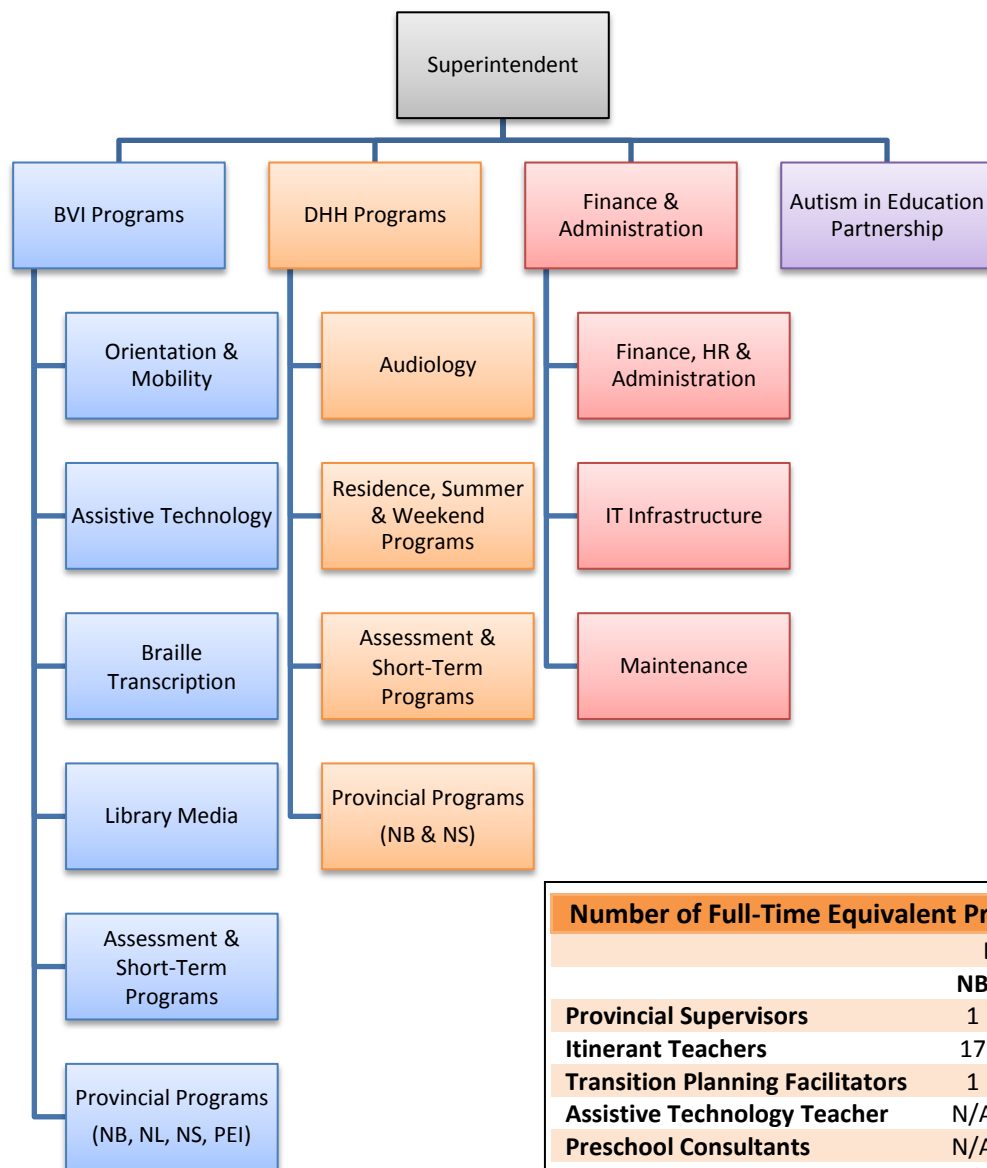
- **Financial Advisory Committee**

The Financial Advisory Committee, comprised of the Director of Finance from each provincial 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**



Number of Full-Time Equivalent Provincial Positions (2014-2015)						
	DHH		BVI			
	NB	NS	NB	NS	PEI	NL
<b>Provincial Supervisors</b>	1	1	1	1	0.6	N/A
<b>Itinerant Teachers</b>	17	25	8	17.6	2.9	N/A
<b>Transition Planning Facilitators</b>	1	1	0.7	1	0.3	N/A
<b>Assistive Technology Teacher</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	1	0.3	N/A
<b>Preschool Consultants</b>	N/A	N/A	1	1	0.2	N/A
<b>Orientation &amp; Mobility Staff</b>	N/A	N/A	1	1	0.3	0
<b>Interpreters</b>	12	17	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>EI Consultant</b>	0.5	0.5	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Student &amp; Family Counsellor</b>	1	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Consultant, Students who are Deaf with Additional Challenges</b>	0.5	0.5	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

# Children and Youth Served by APSEA

<b>Children and Youth Served by APSEA 2014-2015</b>			
<b>Children and Youth who are Blind or Visually Impaired (BVI)</b>			
	<b>Preschool Age</b>	<b>School Age</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>New Brunswick</b>	28	97	125
<b>Newfoundland and Labrador</b>	16	113	129
<b>Nova Scotia</b>	60	213	273
<b>Prince Edward Island</b>	12	24	36
<b>Total</b>	116	447	563
<b>Children and Youth who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing (DHH)</b>			
<b>New Brunswick</b>	27	304	331
<b>Newfoundland and Labrador</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Nova Scotia</b>	80	552	632
<b>Prince Edward Island</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Total</b>	107	856	963

<b>Provincial Totals (2014-2015)</b>			
	<b>BVI</b>	<b>DHH</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>New Brunswick</b>	125	331	456
<b>Newfoundland and Labrador</b>	129	N/A	129
<b>Nova Scotia</b>	273	632	905
<b>Prince Edward Island</b>	36	N/A	36
<b>Total</b>	563	963	1,526

# 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 received either consultative or direct service, depending upon the severity of the loss and the educational implications. For all students, the itinerant teacher collaborated with the school team regarding strategies and accommodations to maximize the student's environment. Students receiving direct service also worked 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 reduce the need for 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 appropriate individuals to establish the necessary adaptations or strategies to ensure students can fully participate in all aspects of the Core Curriculum. Children and youth who are blind or visually impaired also required 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 succeed from birth through adulthood. These include: Orientation and Mobility, Compensatory or Functional Academic Skills, Social Interaction Skills, Recreation and Leisure Skills, Access Skills, Career Education, Assistive Technology, Sensory Efficiency Skills and Self-Determination. This curriculum ensures 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 were in place for a student. The itinerant teacher worked with parents, guardians, school personnel, and other service providers to share 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
2014-2015	80	60	136	92	416	121	632	273
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
2014-2015	27	28	85	31	219	66	331	125
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
2014-2015	N/A	12	N/A	9	N/A	15	N/A	36
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
2014-2015	N/A	16	N/A	45	N/A	68	N/A	129
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 offered 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 worked collaboratively with student support teams (including students) to augment curriculum-based occupational planning with disability specific, individualized outcomes in order to maximize preparation for successful post secondary, employment, and independent living.

Nova Scotia Youth Receiving Transition Services		
	DHH	BVI
2014-2015	44	73
2013-2014	48	81
2012-2013	47	75
2011-2012	8*	78
2010-2011	51	88

New Brunswick Youth Receiving Transition Services		
	DHH	BVI
2014-2015	24	17
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
2014-2015	N/A	8
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
2014-2015	N/A	N/A
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
2014-2015	29	24	9	2	47	3	85	29
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
2014-2015	13	8	1	0	22	1	36	9
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
2014-2015	N/A	3	N/A	0	N/A	1	N/A	4
2013-2014	N/A	1	N/A	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
2014-2015	N/A	5	N/A	2	N/A	3	N/A	10
2013-2014	N/A	2	N/A	0	N/A	5	N/A	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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## Interpreters

The focus for the August 2014 professional development workshop for interpreters was collaboration and communication. Sue Smiley returned for an excellent talk on professional accountability, followed by an engaging session by DHH itinerant teachers Michelle Bourgeois and Peter Papoulidis that focused on student conversational competence and English and ASL language development. Janine Boutilier drew on her experiences as a student services consultant and speech-language pathologist with the Chignecto-Central School Board to foster a greater understanding of the important role educational interpreters have in supporting collaborative school teams serving deaf and hard of hearing students.

## DHH Teachers

Lisa Weir, APSEA Consultant for Students who are Deaf with Additional Challenges, and Jacqueline Saunders, NB Itinerant Teacher, facilitated three key sessions at the annual October in-service to guide itinerant teachers in enhancing their skills in supporting students who have additional challenges. The teachers were provided with opportunities to work together in groups and discuss activities/strategies to support program goals; share strategies for coaching support staff, general education teachers, daycare staff or parents in working on that goal when APSEA teachers are not with the child; and present one challenging case to their peers for feedback and teaching strategies.

The Standards of Practice for Teachers of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, which replaced Competencies for Teachers of the Deaf, were discussed in small groups, followed by a question and answer session. These Standards, based upon CEC Standards, outline essential knowledge and skills that reflect the work of teachers of the deaf and will guide individual professional learning and reflection.

The teachers also participated in a “guided tour” of library services; an interactive session seeking feedback to identify specific information and outcomes to support all staff in becoming more sensitive and skilled in making APSEA a more inclusive community; and a presentation of the draft student records policy.

## **BVI Teachers**

Professional development in 2014-2015 was designed to develop competencies in specific areas of the Expanded Core Curriculum. It also provided staff with the opportunity to gain knowledge with the provision of specialized materials to students.

The focus areas included:

- Cortical Visual Impairment and Impact on Service Delivery – Program Planning
- Alternate Format Production and Copyright
- Unified English Braille

The October session included hands-on activities to practice completing assessment components pertaining to Cortical Visual Impairment. This was facilitated by the provincial supervisors who worked closely with staff as they developed more skill with assessing and developing programs for students with a diagnosis of Cortical Visual Impairment.

Sessions during this time also focused on Unified English Braille (UEB). Given this was the first year of implementation, it was important for staff to begin learning the new code. This process began in October with a plan outlined to staff that included timelines for the completion of an online course offered through the Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children in Australia. Staff members were assigned lead mentors who facilitated the process.

# Consultation to Students who are Deaf with Additional Challenges

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## Referrals

Twenty-three (23) referrals were received by the Consultant for the 2014-2015 school year.

	Preschool	School Age	Total
<b>New Brunswick</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> <b>(6 Dual Service APSEA Students)</b>
<b>Nova Scotia</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b> <b>(3 Dual Service APSEA Students)</b>

Working in collaboration with the APSEA itinerant teacher for students who are deaf or hard of hearing and the school team, the Consultant provided information and strategies which assisted professionals in best supporting the individual child's communication needs.

The referrals received by the Consultant were primarily of two types; those seeking support in relation to the programming and implementation of various forms of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) systems; and those relating to support for the development of presymbolic communication skills. Thirteen referrals were in relation to AAC, seven relating to presymbolic communication and three that related to both the development of presymbolic communication skills and AAC.

Service varied on a referral-by-referral basis, depending on the needs of the team at the school level. Three referrals remained at the tier one level, meaning service was provided to the itinerant teacher only in order to build her/his capacity in a particular area. The remaining referrals were at the tier two level and included combinations of on-site visits, observations, assessments, recommendations and other support as requested by the team.

## Team Capacity Building

The goal of the Consultant's service delivery was to increase skills and knowledge relating to communication development for students who are deaf with additional challenges. Service was developed to build capacity in both itinerant teachers and school-based teams. Information, strategies and/or tools were presented to itinerant teachers or teams in a general way, with guided practice where applicable. Teachers and teams were then encouraged to think about how new skills and information could be applied with their student.

During the 2014-2015 school year itinerant teachers, school-based teams, family members and other stakeholders received support through a various delivery options including: on-site guided observations and assessment, modeling and coaching, provision of support materials, formal team training sessions, phone consultations, Adobe Connect web meetings and email consultations.

## Interpreter Services

---

Students receiving APSEA services may access educational interpreting services, including language acquisition support, ASL/English interpretation or oral transliteration services. These services support students in accessing their educational environments while promoting their independence and self-advocacy. APSEA is a leader in advancing the accepted standard of service delivery in the field of educational interpreting and the only Canadian jurisdiction that facilitates the provision of two Educational Interpreter Performance Assessments (EIPA) for each trained interpreter. APSEA also provided regular school-based consultations to support interpreter professional development planning, hosted a professional development in-service for all interpreting staff annually in August, and made regular use of the Sign Language Proficiency Interview (SLPI) student language assessment to ensure students are able to access interpreting services. Of particular note this year, the APSEA Educational Interpreter Standards of Practice were developed in response to changing student populations, advances in educational technology, and the professionalization of the interpreting field<sup>1</sup>, to promote, guide and direct professional interpreting practice within APSEA.

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

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

<sup>1</sup> As of 2006, the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf requires a four-year baccalaureate program in any discipline, plus a minimum score of 4.0 on the Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment for national recognition certification as an educational interpreter (Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, *Ed: K-12 certification*, 2015). In Canada, the Association of Visual Language Interpreters of Canada has an Educational Interpreter Issues Committee that is currently exploring increased professional development opportunities nation-wide.

## Language Acquisition Support Workers (LASW)

A small number of students started school without having developed the language or communication competencies that allow them to access the provincial curriculum. These children required intense intervention to facilitate language acquisition. The role of the LASW was to facilitate language acquisition in the student through discussion and questions in the educational environment.

The LASW worked 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 also facilitated communication for the student during educational opportunities which happen outside the classroom.

LASWs worked with the student to focus his/her attention on relevant information, guided appropriate responses, advised the student of social expectations as they related 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 required the support of an educational interpreter for communication and a student assistant for behavioural management, personal care or support for the instructional program. In these cases, the EISA fulfilled the roles of both educational interpreter and student assistant.

Nova Scotia Children and Youth Receiving Interpreter Services						
	EI	OI	LASW	CF	EISA	Total
2014-2015	7	5	2	0	3	17
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
2014-2015	5	1	6	0	0	12
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

## **Educational Interpreter Standards of Practice**

Based on the rationale that an educational interpreter must be trained to work and perform competently in K-12 settings, the APSEA Educational Interpreter Standards of Practice, developed by the Educational Interpreter Consultant, articulate the knowledge and experience required to work as a competent, qualified and ethical educational interpreter, including knowledge of the many factors that influence the academic and social success of deaf children accessing their education via sign language or oral interpreting services.

With far-reaching implications for the educational interpreting field, the Standards of Practice convey a collective vision of experience and professionalism that guide daily practice, and are applicable to all interpreting positions – oral transliterators, language acquisition support workers and sign language interpreters.

The Educational Interpreter Consultant also worked closely with provincial supervisors, transition facilitators and community groups. Twenty-two joint visits were made with APSEA provincial supervisors to interpreters in schools, with a focus on identifying individual and organizational professional growth opportunities. A total of 29 interpreters had the opportunity for observation and feedback on their language fluency, interpreting skill and the application of their professional growth plans.

## **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 used 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 data includes information on students' receptive and expressive sign language, which informs interpreters' work in the classroom, as well as programming decisions and recommendations that allow the educational team to address areas of students' sign language development that may need attention. This year 13 students from NB, NS and PEI completed a Sign Language Proficiency Interview.

# Trust Funds

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

## DHH Trust Funds

The Interprovincial School Development Association (ISDA) Committee met twice during the 2014-2015 school year. The Committee is mandated to distribute monies from the trust fund to eligible candidates. The Committee members were Eve Tupper (Chair), Heather Conrad and Lori Moore.

## BVI Trust Funds

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

Trust Fund Awards in Nova Scotia				
	Less than \$500.00		More than \$500.00	
	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI
2014-2015	11	25	23	3
2013-2014	18	19	25	4
2012-2013	28	20	24	0
2011-2012	32	47	20	3
2010-2011	37	38	16	3

Trust Fund Awards in New Brunswick						
	Less than \$500.00			More than \$500.00		
	DHH	BVI		DHH	BVI	
		Anglophone	Francophone		Anglophone	Francophone
2014-2015	13	8	24	17	0	1
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

Trust Fund Awards in Prince Edward Island				
	Less than \$500.00		More than \$500.00	
	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI
2014-2015	2	11	6	2
2013-2014	5	10	1	0
2012-2013	5	18	3	0
2011-2012	4	20	0	1
2010-2011	2	7	0	2

Trust Fund Awards in Newfoundland and Labrador				
	Less than \$500.00		More than \$500.00	
	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI
2014-2015	0	18	1	0
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 provided assessments for students who are blind or visually impaired, or deaf or hard of hearing. When assessing students with dual sensory loss, these teams worked collaboratively.

All assessments for students who are deaf or hard of hearing included a core team comprised of an audiologist, psychologist and an academic language evaluator who completed psycho-educational assessments on preschool and school-age students. In addition, the school team identified further areas to be assessed including; career, augmentative and alternative communication and/or occupational therapy.

All assessments for students who are blind or visually impaired included a core team comprised of a psychologist and a functional vision/braille evaluator who completed psycho-educational assessments for students.



In addition, the school team identified if there were additional areas to be assessed including; career, orientation and mobility, assistive technology and augmentative/alternative communication. As APSEA does not duplicate services available in home communities, an occupational therapist may have consulted on questions regarding proper positioning or tactile discrimination regarding braille reading and writing.

Assessments for students with additional challenges require extensive collaboration with families, educators and other professionals, to more effectively support students in their local functional programming. These assessments included: 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.

*“I had three preschoolers attend assessments since March so I had lots and lots of conversations with the team...as usual, a tremendous effort was made by everyone to provide families with such a positive experience while they were at the Centre. All three families were impressed by the professionalism and care that they received and schools have once again commented on the comprehensive reports that followed assessments.” – DHH itinerant teacher*



A student working with the Multi-Disciplinary Team (BVI)

Assessments - Nova Scotia								
	Preschool		School-Age Direct		School-Age Consultation		Total	
	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI
2014-2015	7	0	25	17	2	1	34	18
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
2014-2015	4	0	11	8	5	1	20	9
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
2014-2015	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1
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
2014-2015	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	3
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

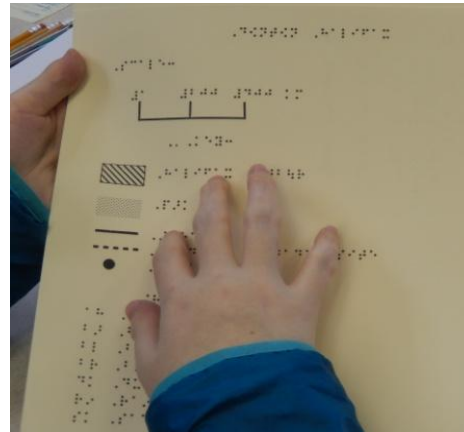
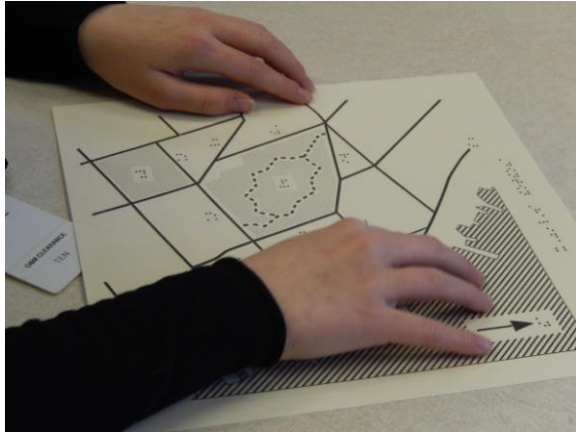
### Short-Term Programs (STP)

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

Individualized programs were developed based on referred needs and ranged 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.

Self-determination/self-advocacy was built into each student's placement (BVI).

Tactile graphics were introduced as a way of planning orientation & mobility outings and accessing school curriculum.



**Students explore tactile graphics.**

***"Thank you so much for the pictures. I really appreciate being able to see what David did as well as being able to share them with David and have a discussion. These APSEA workshops are invaluable, thank you."  
(quote from a DHH Parent)***

***"Thank you so much for everything you have done for Emilia over these past four weeks. It was an incredible experience for her and I know one she will remember for a very long time."  
(quote from a DHH Parent)***

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 included: Assistive Technology, Braille and Tactile Graphics, 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 included: Self-Advocacy, Career Exploration, Functional Life Skills, Sexual Health and Intensive Language. The AAC Consultant provided in-class support for short-term programs with DHH students.

***"Spent the last two days at APSEA and just want to say we had an awesome experience. They were great with Abby and gave us more insight and info."  
(quote from a BVI Parent)***



**BVI students prepare lunch prior to utilizing O&M skills to visit the new Halifax Central Library in April 2015 during a short-term program.**



**DHH students take part in a scavenger hunt on the new APSEA Playground.**



**DHH Students discuss and prepare for a smoothie bar, where they sold smoothies to staff at APSEA.**

Support was also provided by APSEA centre-based staff to students and their educational teams. STP teachers provided extensive program information, including pictures, PowerPoint presentations, experience books and comprehensive reports to facilitate follow-up at the school.

Common curricular outcomes in tactile graphics were developed so students could expand their exploration of tactile graphics within their school, home and community.

The following figures represent the number of individual Short-Term Programs developed and implemented.

Short-Term Programs - Nova Scotia						
	School-Age Direct		School-Age Consultation		Total	
	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI
2014-2015	75	42	1	2	76	44
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
2014-2015	13	3	0	1	13	4
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
2014-2015	2	4	0	0	2	4
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
2014-2015	NA	12	NA	1	NA	13
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:** 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. During years 2011-2012, 2012-2013, 2013-2014, and 2014-2015 two (2) students from Nunavut participated in a short-term program each school year.

## Cancellation of Short-Term Programs and Assessments

There were eight short-term program cancellations and two assessment cancellations, by parent request, due to illness or family scheduling difficulties for students who are deaf or hard of hearing. Fourteen short-term programs and three assessments were cancelled, by parent request, due to illness or family scheduling difficulties for students who are blind or visually impaired.

## Playground Opening

Following years of planning, fundraising and construction, APSEA hosted an opening ceremony for the new playground on September 24, 2014. A committee under the direction of Karen Keats, APSEA Teacher, undertook the task of raising funds to build a new playground. The original one was built in the 1980's and much of the equipment had been removed due to safety concerns. Approximately three-quarters of the \$200,000 required had already been donated at the time of the opening. Many of these donors were able to join APSEA staff, students and members of the Board of Directors at the ribbon-cutting ceremony and barbecue lunch.



Trident News photo (used with permission)

## 9-9 Programming

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9 – 9 programming is a collaborative process which extended the learning hours to make the most efficient use of time and reinforce outcomes taught during the school day.

This year, a pilot project which included a series of checklists was implemented for students who are blind or visually impaired as a means of providing BVI itinerant teachers and parents with more information about the skills demonstrated by students while staying in residence.

For students who are deaf or hard of hearing, information on evening activities which support classroom programming was provided to DHH itinerant teachers and parents in the format of a PowerPoint presentation.

# Alternate Format Production and Library Services

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APSEA Library and Braille Services are 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 supplied APSEA staff with professional materials.

This included:

- facilitating the production of alternate format materials for APSEA staff and students;
- being an active member of the Canadian Association of Educational Resource Centres for Alternate Format Materials (CAER) which includes sharing 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 worked together to provide students and staff with the necessary tools to support student success.

The following are highlights from the 2014-2015 school year.

- As part of the implementation of the Unified English Braille (UEB) Code, the collection underwent major weeding and many Standard English Braille titles were sent to Rwanda (Blessings School for the Blind) (approximately 401 boxes).
- Database records were updated and provided additional access points and more complete information about student resources in a variety of formats.
- Implementation of Canada Post Express Post tool for blind post materials.
- Online tactile catalogue was implemented and accessible to staff.
- Many of the titles from the VHS collection were upgraded to DVD to make a more accessible media collection.
- A focus on Alternate Format Production for Students with CVI and Canadian Copyright was presented to APSEA teachers by library staff.
- The Supervisor of Braille Transcription and the APSEA Tactile Illustrator worked on international committees to align various resources with UEB.

Alternate Format Materials were provided in several formats: **Accessible PDF** (Portable Document Format) provided students with the ability to view a file using specialized software or equipment; **Enlarged Print** was provided to students with low vision as print enlargement on paper bound as books; **Braille** was produced in Unified English Braille (with some exceptions); **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) was 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
2014-2015	25	8307	2561	8427	1650	1476
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
2014-2015	11	2544	558	3156	1193	0
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
2014-2015	15	1685	2577	1733	550	356
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
2014-2015	3	234	542	37	330	883
2013-2014	3	0	486	2094	601	500
2012-2013	5	460	88	1618	597	1178



# Alternate Format Material: Interlibrary Loans

## 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 alternate formats produced by one Canadian educational institution are shared through interlibrary loan with other trusted partners so production costs are minimized.

### Alternate Formats on Loan from CAER Members

	Braille	Large Print	PDF	E-text	Total
<b>Nova Scotia</b>	7	4	0	0	11
<b>New Brunswick</b>	7	10	0	0	17
<b>Prince Edward Island</b>	0	1	0	0	1
<b>Newfoundland and Labrador</b>	1	12	1	4	18
<b>Total</b>	15	27	1	4	47

Interlibrary loan (ILL) savings have been calculated using an average page count of 200 for the 46 ILL titles borrowed at an approximate cost of \$6/page. The estimated savings for APSEA derived from ILL for the past year is \$55,200.

### Alternate Formats on Loan to CAER Members

Resource Centre	Braille	Large Print	PDF	E-text	Total
<b>Alberta</b>	2	1	0	0	3
<b>British Columbia</b>	2	7	0	0	9
<b>Manitoba</b>	1	24	1	0	26
<b>Ontario</b>	2	7	1	0	10
<b>Saskatchewan</b>	1	0	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	8	39	2	0	49

# Assistive Technology

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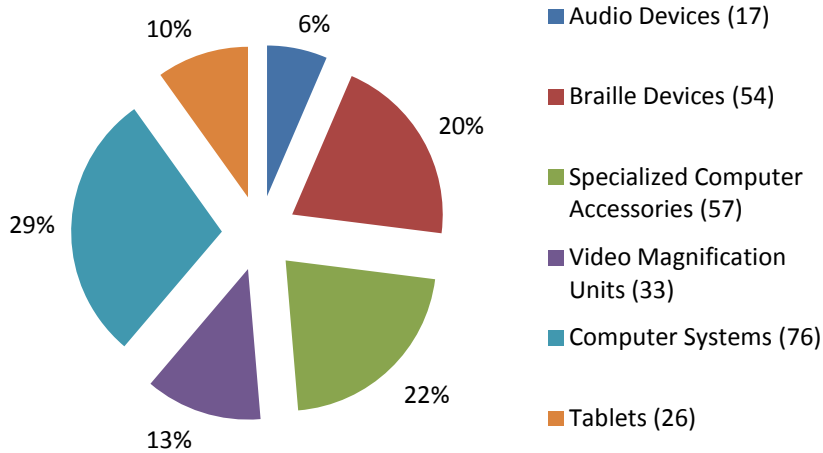
Assistive Technology (AT) is an important component of the APSEA organization. During the 2014-2015 school year, strategies for providing improved assessment of student's AT skills, including individualized and group training for technology devices, were provided both onsite, offsite and online to staff and students.

Extensive focus during this year resulted in the development of a clear process regarding the SET<sup>3</sup> procedure and protocol for access and support in the areas of AT and Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC).

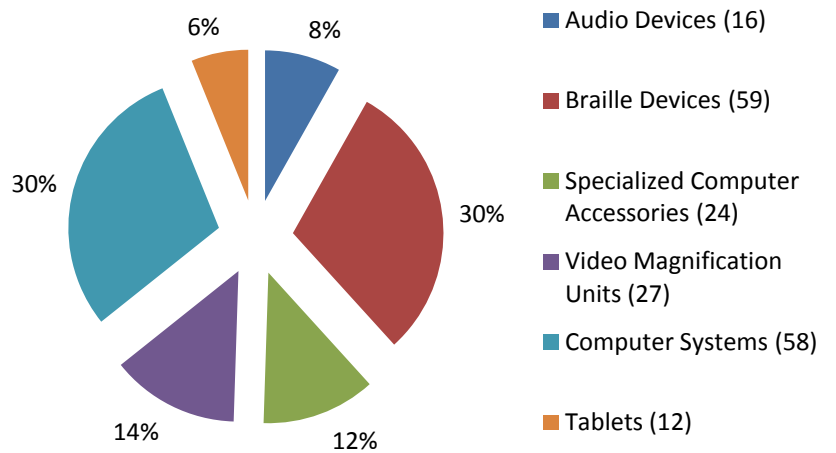
The following are highlights from 2014-2015:

- Exploration with the use of the COSMO Electronic Braille (eBraille) and Braille Education Remote Training (BERT) software to provide real time braille instruction for students in remote areas of the Atlantic Provinces was initiated in March 2015.
- Collaboration with the Nova Scotia Library Association concerning access and implementation of the NNELS (National Network for Equitable Library Services) to support the ability to provide access for students using screen magnification, screen reading software, and braille devices.
- Communication with the Information Technology (IT) support teams of Newfoundland and Labrador and of New Brunswick to support the integration of APSEA AT devices with the educational programming and IT infrastructure.
- AAC Consultant participation within the Professional Learning Community of Speech and Language Pathologists who provide support to students using AAC. This includes individuals from Nova Scotia Hearing and Speech Centres and the IWK Health Centre.
- Collaborative program development both onsite and online with students and educational teams from Newfoundland and Labrador, and support agencies including the CNIB and Janeway Children's Health and Rehabilitation Centre.
- Participation on the APSEA multi-disciplinary team (specifically regarding AAC) to provide assessment for students with multiple needs.
- Continued communication with New Brunswick Library Services to provide increased access to students using CELA (Centre for Equitable Library Access) and Bookshare.

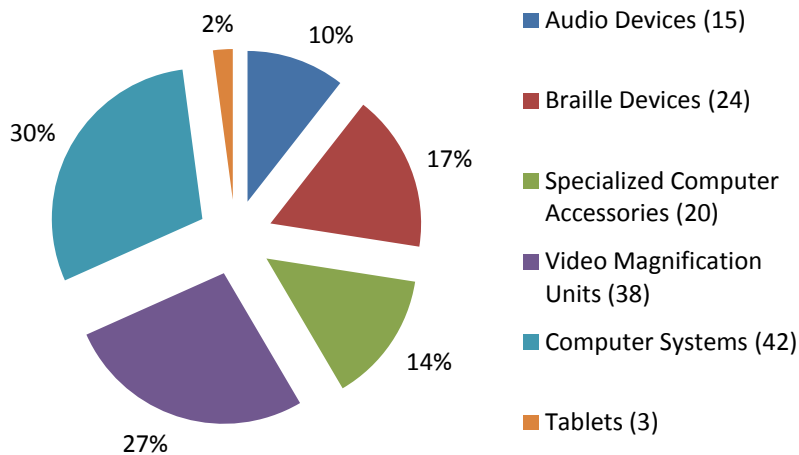
### Student Use of AT Devices - NS

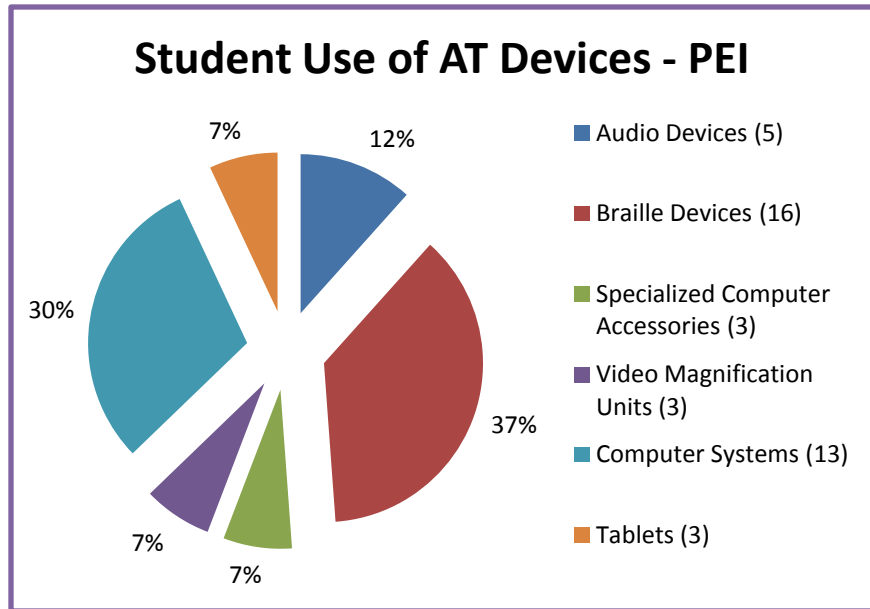


### Student Use of AT Devices - NB



### Student Use of AT Devices - NL





*Note: Most notebook computers have either Zoomtext (Screen Magnification) or JAWS (Screen Reader) installed. These installs are not included in the count of Specialized Software. Only copies of those programs on USB Drives are included in this table.*

**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

APSEA offered two summer camp programs that provided students with a variety of activities to develop their skills in communication and independent living. Being with peers who have similar experiences of living with a sensory loss provided them with an enriched environment that promoted self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-advocacy.

## APSEA/Elks Deaf Camp – Lake Magaguadavic, NB

Thirty-three (33) campers participated in camp during the week of August 3-8, 2014. In addition, two volunteer helpers and six volunteer junior leaders had an opportunity to demonstrate pre-employment skills. A two-day leadership workshop prior to camp prepared volunteer leaders for their responsibilities at camp.

The 2014 APSEA/Elks Deaf Camp opened with a Parents’ Reception, giving parents an opportunity to meet other parents, and show their appreciation to the NB/PEI Elks Association and Y’s Men for their contributions to the camp effort.



Group photo at APSEA/Elks Deaf Camp

At the end of the week, 32 participants completed surveys. Ratings in almost all areas were in the “good” to “great” range. Ninety-seven percent (97%) of participants said they “had fun at camp this year”!

APSEA/Elks Camp August 2014 Campers and Junior Leaders			
	Boys	Girls	Total
Nova Scotia	12	7	19
New Brunswick	7	6	13
Prince Edward Island	3	1	4
Newfoundland and Labrador	1	4	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>41</b>

*“I love seeing kids, teenagers, and adults sharing the same abilities and knowing that there are other people who are deaf and hard of hearing too.”  
(quote from a camper at deaf camp)*

## Camp See-Ya – Brigadoon Village, NS

Twenty-six (26) campers and six (6) junior leaders participated in a summer camp for students who are blind or visually impaired held at Brigadoon Village on Aylesford Lake, Annapolis Valley, Nova Scotia during the week of June 30-July 4, 2015. A leadership workshop for volunteer leaders was held in April to prepare the junior leaders for their responsibilities at camp.

The campers, aged 8-17, participated in activities such as canoeing, cooking, raft building, visual and performing arts, swimming, cooperative games, camp fires and Talent Night. The Junior Leaders initiated our first “Described” Talent Show which was a huge success.

*“Camp See-Ya is a place to make new friends, have fun, and feel like I belong.”  
(quote from a camper)*

Camp See-Ya July 2015 Campers and Junior Leaders			
	Boys	Girls	Total
Nova Scotia	8	14	22
New Brunswick	3	6	9
Prince Edward Island	0	1	1
Newfoundland and Labrador	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>32</b>

At the end of the week, 25 participants completed surveys. Ratings in almost all areas were in the “good” to “excellent” range. One hundred percent (100%) of participants said they “had fun at camp this year” and ninety-eight percent (98%) would go to Camp again.



# Special Initiatives

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## Implementation of Unified English Braille (UEB): Year One

Adopted in Canada in 2010, Unified English Braille (UEB) was implemented for students up to Grade 6 during the 2014-2015 school year. The transition for the students involved was very smooth. Preparation is in progress for the implementation of UEB for students in Grade 7 and above within Atlantic Canada.

The following highlights the progress of the implementation plan during this school year:

- **October 2014:** Staff began the transition process to Unified English Braille with hands-on experience with learning this new code.
- **October 2014-June 2015:** Staff completed UEB Online, a training program for sighted people to learn UEB, created by the Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children's Renwick Centre, Australia.
- Two staff members from the transcription department became fully certified in UEB.

## Atlantic Canada Accessible Resource Services

During the 2014-2015 school year, APSEA explored the feasibility of developing an online repository to provide approved educational resources in alternate formats to students with perceptual disabilities (as defined in the Canadian Copyright Act) in the public school system. Data was collected from alternate format production centers throughout Canada which helped develop this system, by utilizing the most common and effective practices. A Project Lead was hired to facilitate the creation of this system and is working with IT staff at APSEA to ensure the system can be easily accessed for students in Atlantic Canada and also accessed by other members of the Canadian Association of Educational Resource Centres (CAER).



# Autism in Education Partnership

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## ASD & Behavioural Interventions: An Introduction for School Personnel

April 2, 2015, marking the occasion of World Autism Awareness Day, saw the launch of the interprovincial collaborative online professional learning initiative, ***“ASD & Behavioural Interventions: An Introduction for School Personnel.”*** Prior to the launch of the first full round of training, the online course was piloted in both English and French across the four provinces from January through March 2015, with a total of 41 participants. In the first full round of training, approximately 1100 participants registered across the Atlantic region (77% English; 23% French). The interprovincial training provides classroom teachers, resource teachers, educational assistants, administrators, and other student support services staff with the opportunity to increase their knowledge and skills related to the strengths and needs of students with ASD. The 10-module online sequence addresses topics such as: ASD and its impact on learning, evidence-based practice, principles of learning and behaviour, and supporting communication and social skills development, among others.

Province	Course Registration April - June 2015	
	English Course	French Course
New Brunswick	375	240
Newfoundland & Labrador	237	0
Nova Scotia	147	5
Prince Edward Island	89	10
<b>Total Registration</b>	<b>848</b>	<b>255</b>
<b><i>Overall Course Completion Rate: 86%</i></b>		

## AIE Professional Learning Symposium, May 6-7, 2015

### Day 1: “Considerations for Ethical Professional Practice”

The first day of the symposium featured Dr. Jon Bailey, Ph.D., BCBA-D, a world-renowned expert in the field of ethical professional practice when working with individuals with ASD and challenging behaviours. Dr. Bailey, a professor at Florida State University, teaches graduate courses in Applied Behaviour Analysis, Ethics, and Performance Management and advises doctoral students pursuing studies in these areas.



Dr. Bailey is a founding director of the international Behaviour Analyst Certification Board and former editor of the Journal of Applied Behaviour Analysis and dedicates his time to addressing questions related to ethics and professional practice received from practitioners across the globe by the Association for Behaviour Analysis International and has presented at multiple national and international conferences.

**Day 2: “AIE Talks: Celebrating Atlantic Leadership and Atlantic Practice”**

Introduced at the 2014 AIE Professional Learning Symposium, Day 2 again featured “AIE Talks” in which district/board consultants graciously shared their expertise and some unique or exciting aspects of their own professional practice with their colleagues from across Atlantic Canada.

Presentations included:

- **“Bridging the Gap: Supporting Students with School to School Transition”** – Raeanne Adams, PEI
- **“Using i-Pad Technology to Support Students with ASD”** – Barry Hicks, NL
- **“Families as Partners”** – Sheri Gallant, NB
- **“Transition Planning for Students with Special Needs in Rural Communities”** - Annamarie Talbot, NS

Symposium participants commented on the value of Dr. Bailey’s presentation of a structured process for examining complex ethical problems. They also expressed appreciation for the variety and practicality of the presentations by their Atlantic colleagues, as well as the opportunity to process the information from each presentation and apply it to their own professional experiences by participating in guided discussions throughout the symposium.

**AIE Website and Webinars**

This was a year of building, development, and learning with respect to both the AIE website and webinars. The AIE Advisory Committee worked to restructure and redesign the AIE website over the course of the year, and the new website will be launched in the fall of 2015. Based on recommendations from Dr. Maich’s review of the AIE Partnership, the new website will be more dynamic and more focused, retaining key components from the current site, while removing some of the seldom-used features to further enhance the Atlantic identity of the site.



For the first time since the incorporation of the AIE webinar series in December of 2012, the demand for participation in the AIE webinars exceeded the capacity of APSEA’s webinar platform. With 254 registrants for the February 2015 webinar, ***“The Science of Making Friends for Teens and Adults with Autism: The UCLA PEERS Program,”*** presented by Dr. Elizabeth Laugeson, it was discovered not all participants in the video component of the webinar could be accommodated. All participants were able to access the audio component of the presentation along with the PowerPoint slides, and the webinar was recorded and available on the AIE website. As a result, APSEA’s IT team has begun the process of examining additional options for future webinar presentations in order to ensure all who wish to participate can have access to all of the webinar features.

<b>AIE Webinar Participants 2012 - 2015</b>		
<b>Webinar Title</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Registrations</b>
<i>Research in Early Diagnosis of ASD</i>	Dec. 2012	40
<i>Observational Learning</i>	May 2013	100
<i>Functional Behavioural Assessment</i>	Jan. 2014	81
<i>Elementary Social Skills</i>	May 2014	167
<i>The Science of Making Friends: UCLA PEERS Program</i>	Feb. 2015	254
<b>Total Webinar Registrants To Date</b>		<b>642</b>

## **AIE Information Papers**

The response to the fourth AIE Information Paper, ***“The Use of Time-out and Seclusion Procedures in Schools,”*** was overwhelmingly positive. A videoconference overview of the paper was provided for key district and department personnel in New Brunswick on April 17, and the paper was also presented at the AIE Symposium on May 7. In both cases, attendees commented on the importance of the issue and the value of clarifying the definition and purpose of time-out as behavioural procedures and of highlighting the research. They also commented on the importance of discussing time-out as a continuum rather than as a discrete strategy and of understanding that time-out and seclusion are not synonymous. The AIE symposium presentation of the paper is available in a 2-part video series on the AIE website.

The fifth AIE information paper, entitled ***“Transition to School for Learners with Autism Spectrum Disorder,”*** was released in July 2015. The purpose of this paper was to highlight important considerations for those involved in the transition process for children with ASD entering school. Key findings from the research, along with practical strategies that have been successful with children with ASD in the Atlantic Provinces are provided in this most recent offering from the Autism in Education Partnership. ***“Transition to School for Learners with Autism Spectrum Disorder,”*** is available on the AIE website, along with all of the previous AIE information papers.

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