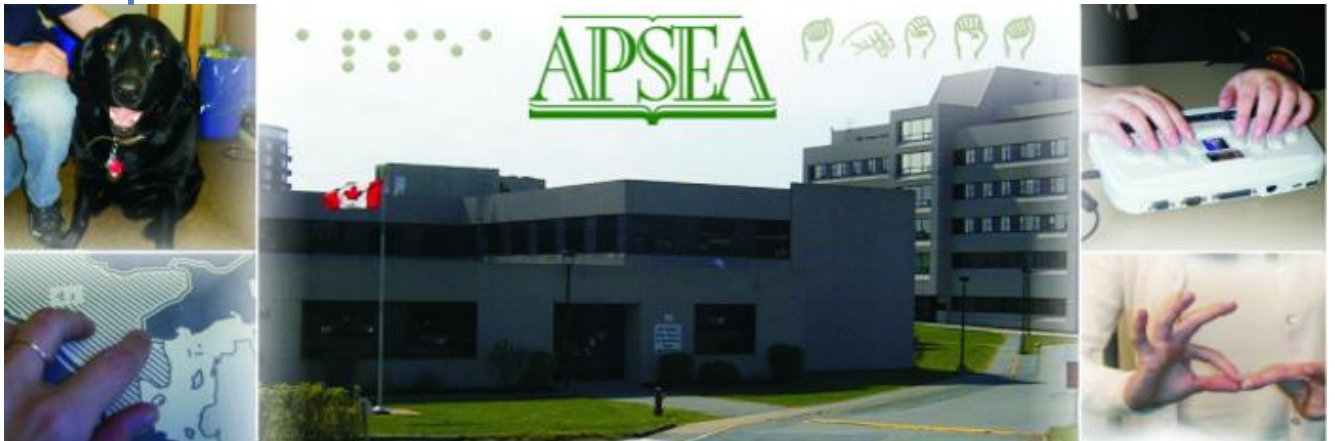




Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority

Annual Report 2015-2016



TWENTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL REPORT

Contents

Mission, Vision and Guiding Principles	3
Superintendent's Letter	4
Board and Committees	5
Board and Committee Meetings	8
History and Organizational Structure	9
Children and Youth Served by APSEA	12
Programs and Services	13
Additions to the APSEA Registry	17
Professional Learning	18
Parent Workshop	21
Consultation to Students who are Deaf with Additional Challenges	21
Interpreter Services	22
Trust Funds	24
Centre-Based Services	26
9-9 Programming	32
Summer Camps	33
Alternate Format Production and Library Services	35
Alternate Format Material: Interlibrary Loans	37
Assistive Technology	38
Special Initiatives	41
Autism in Education Partnership	42

Mission, Vision and Guiding Principles

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
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Administration Fax 902-423-8700 Assessment Fax 902-423-8703

1 August 2016

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 2016.

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

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

New Brunswick

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

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

Stephanie Warren (appointed March 2016)
Parent Representative

Nova Scotia

Sandra McKenzie
Deputy Minister
Department of Education and Early Childhood

Judy Elliot (appointed July 2016)
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

Susan Willis
Deputy Minister
Department of Education, Early Learning
and Culture

Imelda Arsenault (appointed May 2016)
Senior Director, Learning & Early Childhood
Department of Education, Early Learning
and Culture

Adrian Smith (until October 2015)
Special Education Policy Advisory
Department of Education, Early Learning
and Culture

Terri MacAdam
Manager of Student Services
English Language School Board

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

New Brunswick

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

Nova Scotia

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

Newfoundland and Labrador

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

Prince Edward Island

Susan Willis, Treasurer
Deputy Minister
Department of Education, Early Learning
and Culture

PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE

New Brunswick

Brian Kelly, Chair
Director, Student Services

Nicole Gervais (May 2016)
Executive Director, Early Childhood

Stephanie Warren
Parent Representative

Newfoundland and Labrador

Bernie Ottenheimer
Director, Student Services

Nova Scotia

Judy Elliot (July 2016)
Director, Student Support Services Division

Ross Lloyd
Parent Representative

Prince Edward Island

Adrian Smith (until October 2015)
Special Education Policy Advisory

FINANCIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

New Brunswick

Kevin Tutt, Chair
Assistant Director, District Financial Services

Newfoundland and Labrador

Don Stapleton
Departmental Controller – Financial Services

Nova Scotia

Joe MacEachern
Director, Finance Branch
Corporate

Prince Edward Island

Terry Keefe
Senior Director, Administration and 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

Board of Directors

The annual meeting of the APSEA Board of Directors was held on June 10, 2016. In addition to the annual meeting, the Board of Directors held the following meetings:

December 16, 2015

March 24, 2016

June 10, 2016

The committees listed below also met during the 2015-2016 school year:

Executive Committee

January 27, 2016

March 23, 2016

May 1, 2016

June 9, 2016

Program Advisory Committee

November 3, 2015

June 9, 2016

Financial Advisory Committee

December 15, 2015

Trust Fund Committee - DHH

October 26, 2015

May 18, 2016

Trust Fund Committee - BVI

May 30, 2016

June 2, 2016

History and Organizational Structure

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.

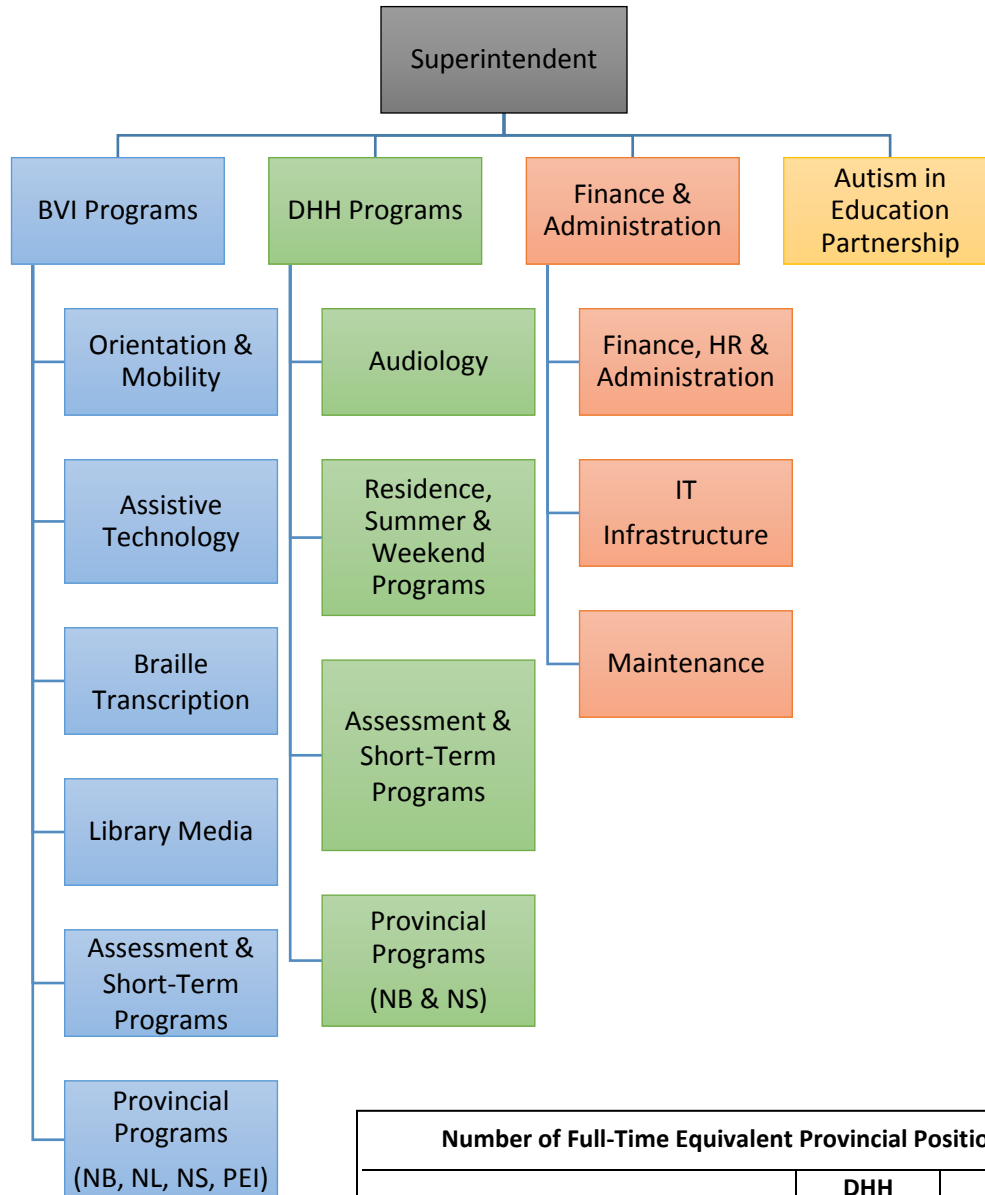
- **Financial Advisory Committee**

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 (2015-2016)						
	DHH		BVI			
	NB	NS	NB	NS	PEI	NL
Provincial Supervisors	1	1	1	1	1	N/A
Itinerant Teachers	17	25	8	17.6	3	N/A
Transition Planning Facilitators	1	*	0	1	0	N/A
Preschool Consultants	N/A	N/A	1	1	N/A	N/A
Orientation & Mobility Staff	N/A	N/A	1	1	0.3	1
Interpreters	12	17	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Educational Interpreter Consultant	0.5	0.5	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Consultant, Students who are Deaf with Additional Challenges	0.5	0.5	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Totals	32	44	11	21.6	4.3	1
*Unfilled						

Children and Youth Served by APSEA

Children and Youth Served by APSEA 2015-2016			
Children and Youth who are Blind or Visually Impaired (BVI)			
	Preschool Age	School Age	Total
New Brunswick	23	95	118
Newfoundland and Labrador	13	118	131
Nova Scotia	51	205	256
Prince Edward Island	11	28	39
Total	98	446	544
Children and Youth who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing (DHH)			
New Brunswick	32	302	334
Newfoundland and Labrador	N/A	N/A	N/A
Nova Scotia	86	612	698
Prince Edward Island	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total	118	914	1,032
Provincial Totals (2015-2016)			
	BVI	DHH	Total
New Brunswick	118	334	452
Newfoundland and Labrador	131	N/A	131
Nova Scotia	256	698	954
Prince Edward Island	39	N/A	39
Total	544	1,032	1,576

Programs and Services

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 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 Expanded Core Curriculum 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, 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 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
2015-2016	86	51	159	87	453	118	698	256
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

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
2015-2016	32	23	92	31	210	64	334	118
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

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
2015-2016	N/A	11	N/A	8	N/A	20	N/A	39
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

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
2015-2016	N/A	13	N/A	49	N/A	69	N/A	131
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

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, individualized outcomes in order to maximize preparation for successful post-secondary, employment, and independent living.

Nova Scotia Youth Receiving Transition Services		
	DHH	BVI
2015-2016	*	73
2014-2015	44	73
2013-2014	48	81
2012-2013	47	75
2011-2012	8	78

New Brunswick Youth Receiving Transition Services		
	DHH	BVI
2015-2016	21	35
2014-2015	24	17
2013-2014	20	27
2012-2013	28	35
2011-2012	22	38

Prince Edward Island Youth Receiving Transition Services		
	DHH	BVI
2015-2016	N/A	3
2014-2015	N/A	8
2013-2014	N/A	13
2012-2013	N/A	15
2011-2012	N/A	17

Newfoundland and Labrador Youth Receiving Transition Services		
	DHH	BVI
2015-2016	N/A	N/A
2014-2015	N/A	N/A
2013-2014	N/A	N/A
2012-2013	N/A	N/A
2011-2012	N/A	N/A

* In Nova Scotia 42 DHH students were eligible for transition services in 2015-2016, however, due to staff shortage, only 4 Dual service students received service through the BVI transition facilitator.

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
2015-2016	24	14	17	3	39	6	80	23
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

New Referrals to APSEA - New Brunswick								
	Preschool		School-Age Direct		School-Age Consultation		Total	
	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI
2015-2016	14	4	9	2	10	3	33	9
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

New Referrals to APSEA - Prince Edward Island								
	Preschool		School-Age Direct		School-Age Consultation		Total	
	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI
2015-2016	N/A	3	N/A	0	N/A	4	N/A	7
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

New Referrals to APSEA - Newfoundland and Labrador

	Preschool		School-Age Direct		School-Age Consultation		Total	
	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI
2015-2016	N/A	4	N/A	0	N/A	2	N/A	6
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

Professional Learning

Educational Interpreting Services

With support from APSEA senior leadership and identified community partners, the educational interpreter consultant facilitated seven small group professional development sessions in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Sessions were conducted face to face and via distance using videoconferencing technology. Topics included supporting student independence, grade and subject-specific interpreting strategies, Demand Control Schema and cognitive processing. Themes that emerged from these discussions continued in regular weekly messages.

It was APSEA's pleasure to host Dr. Robyn Dean, a leading scholar and researcher in the field of sign language interpreting, to the August 2015 in-service. Dr. Dean gave presentations on the Demand Control Schema and decision-making using this holistic and structured paradigm that acknowledges that the presence of an interpreter and their decisions greatly influence communication success and access.

Identified future priorities include increased support for student knowledge of the role of an interpreter when transitioning from the school to workplace and community and standards for interpreter education and training.

DHH Teachers

Considerable research over the last twenty years has shown that many deaf children experience problems in their theory of mind development and that this is related to their language acquisition in either spoken or signed language. The fall in-service for DHH staff, presented by Dr. Peter de Villiers from Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts, addressed the nature of theory of mind development in typically-hearing and in deaf children, how it is assessed, the factors that contribute to its development, and techniques to facilitate its acquisition. Dr. de Villiers discussed the reciprocal relationships between children's language

skills and their understanding of their own and other people's mental states and offered techniques for intervention to facilitate children's development of both theory of mind understanding and language pragmatics in both conversational interaction and extended discourse such as narratives.

Spring 2016 professional development and training sessions for teachers of the deaf offered opportunities for staff to engage in both theoretical and practical sessions to support their work through participation in the following sessions at the APSEA Centre which provided a balance between core and technical competencies required by teachers of the deaf:

- Foundations of Collaboration
- Collaborative Problem Solving
- Identification of Vestibular Processing Challenges with DHH Preschool/Early School Aged Population
- Audiology Troubleshooting
- SMART board technology

BVI Teachers

A critical role for the teacher of students who are blind or visually impaired is to complete Functional Vision and Learning Media assessments to determine how a child is using his/her vision, establish the most appropriate tools to access information and suggest accommodations and adaptations. This enables the school team to arrange the school environment effectively and support the use of devices that optimizes access to information for the student. Further, it provides information to families so that they can integrate similar strategies in the home environment and have the knowledge to advocate for their child's needs. A comprehensive investigation to determine the key focus areas of the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) is also necessary when developing a program plan for the school year.

Professional development in 2015-2016 was designed to build competency with completing essential assessments to establish reliable measures for student success. Specific topics included:

- Developing Standards
- Effective Instructional Continuum
- Essential Assessments
 - Functional Vision Assessments (FVA)
 - Learning Media Assessments (LMA)
 - ECC Needs Assessment
- Visual Fields
- Contrast Sensitivity

This process was facilitated by Dr. Karen E. Blankenship. Dr. Blankenship has been a certified teacher of students who are blind or visually impaired (TVI) for 37 years. She has been teaching in the Program for Visual Disabilities (PVD) at Vanderbilt University for five years. Prior to joining the faculty at Vanderbilt she worked at the Iowa Department of Education as their consultant for visual disabilities for 8 years and as a TVI with the Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools for over 20 years. She has developed a competency-based evaluation system for fieldwork and student teaching that is aligned with the latest CEC standards for visually impaired. Dr. Blankenship's research has been in the area of ECC and effective instruction in the ECC content areas and transition for young adults who are blind or visually impaired.

Other areas of focus included:

- Grand Rounds: Retinopathy of Prematurity; Contrast Sensitivity
- Moving Forward with Cortical Visual Impairment
- Unified English Braille



Staff demonstrating how to complete a functional vision field test.

Parent Workshop

APSEA staff members Peter Parsons, Janice Gavin, Brian Yee, Lynn Seymour-Lalonde, Sally Cameron and Cindy Millar were joined by Dr. Steve Aiken from Dalhousie University, Patrick Gilbert from Bishop Wealth Management and staff from CNIB on Saturday, May 28 to share information and facilitate explorations and discussions with thirty parents at the annual APSEA Parent Workshop. The theme, *Inspiring Minds*, included the following sessions:

- Inspiring Success
- Parenting: Inspiring the Journey
- Inspiring Opportunities
- Inspiring Education through Technology

While parents participated in workshop sessions, their children spent the day meeting new friends and reconnecting with old ones in the Children’s Program. This program provides children who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind or visually impaired the opportunity to connect with peers who understand their challenges and who are just like them. For many children, this is their first encounter with other children with the same sensory loss, and close bonds are quickly and firmly established.

Consultation to Students who are Deaf with Additional Challenges

Referrals

New Brunswick	Preschool	Carry-over from Previous Year	School Age	Carry-over from Previous Year	Total
2015-2016	1	1	1	11	14
2014-2015	1	N/A	16	N/A	17 (6 Dual Service Students)

Nova Scotia	Preschool	Carry-over from Previous Year	School Age	Carry-over from Previous Year	Total
2015-2016	5	3	4	0	12
2014-2015	3	N/A	3	N/A	6
					(3 Dual Service Students)

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 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 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.

Building on the recognition that the interpreting profession is seventy years young, APSEA continued to strive to broadly advance the accepted standard of service delivery in 2015-16.

The educational interpreter consultant and provincial supervisors continued to make frequent joint visits to schools; observations and discussions with interpreters & students greatly informed future planning and the development of the *Guidelines for Educational Interpreters*.

Combined with the standards of practice, performance management and updated professional planning documents, APSEA educational interpreters now have many resources available as they continue to support deaf and hard of hearing students navigating their education using interpreting services.

Five students were identified as requiring Sign Language Proficiency Interviews, to better inform service delivery and program planning.

Educational Interpreters/Oral 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.

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
2015-2016	10	3	2	0	3	18
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
2015-2016	5	1	5	0	0	11
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

Trust Funds

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.

BVI Trust Funds

The APSEA Trust Funds for students who are blind or visually impaired operated on a continuous intake process with meetings 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.

Trust Fund Awards in Nova Scotia				
	Less than \$500.00		More than \$500.00	
	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI
2015-2016	45	18	18	18
2014-2015	11	25	23	3
2013-2014	18	19	25	4
2012-2013	28	20	24	0
2011-2012	32	47	20	3

Trust Fund Awards in New Brunswick						
	Less than \$500.00			More than \$500.00		
	DHH	BVI		DHH	BVI	
		Anglophone	Francophone		Anglophone	Francophone
2015-2016	17	11	30	15	4	2
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

Trust Fund Awards in Prince Edward Island				
	Less than \$500.00		More than \$500.00	
	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI
2015-2016	2	9	2	0
2014-2015	2	11	6	2
2013-2014	5	10	1	0
2012-2013	5	18	3	0
2011-2012	4	20	0	1

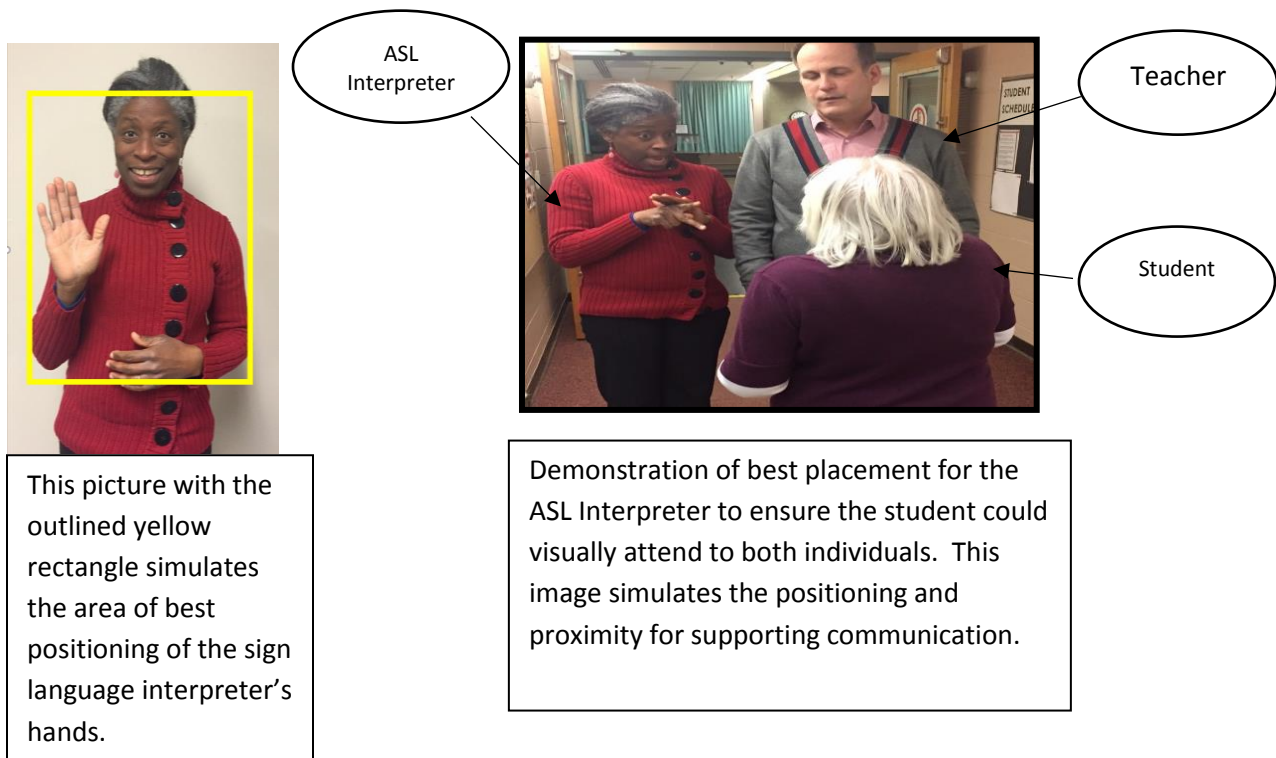
Trust Fund Awards in Newfoundland and Labrador				
	Less than \$500.00		More than \$500.00	
	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI
2015-2016	0	37	1	4
2014-2015	0	18	1	0
2013-2014	0	18	1	3
2012-2013	0	25	1	2
2011-2012	0	21	0	1

Centre-Based Services

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.

As illustrated below, assessments provided to a student with dual sensory loss who communicates primarily via sign language, BVI and DHH assessment team members worked collaboratively to organize and plan the assessment which ensured appropriate accommodations were in place, including an interpreter trained in assessment procedures.



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. For younger children (Grade 2 and lower), the assessment battery includes a screening of fine motor and sensory motor skills. This is in response to research undertaken by the occupational therapist, which indicates that deaf or hard of hearing children have a higher incidence of vestibular dysfunction and can benefit from recommended intervention.

All assessments for students who are blind or visually impaired included a core team comprised of a psychologist and a functional vision/braille assessor 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 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. Further support for community-based schools was also provided on a consultative basis as determined in collaboration with the school team.

Assessments - Nova Scotia								
	Preschool		School-Age Direct		School-Age Consultation		Total	
	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI
2015-2016	8	0	19	10	7	3	34	13
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

Assessments - New Brunswick								
	Preschool		School-Age Direct		School-Age Consultation		Total	
	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI
2015-2016	3	1	12	4	2	0	17	5
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

Assessments - Prince Edward Island								
	Preschool		School-Age Direct		School-Age Consultation		Total	
	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI
2015-2016	0	1	1	1	1	1	3	3
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

Assessments - Newfoundland and Labrador								
	Preschool		School-Age Direct		School-Age Consultation		Total	
	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI
2015-2016	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	4
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

Other: 2012-2013: Innu = 1 DHH assessment

Short-Term Programs (STP)

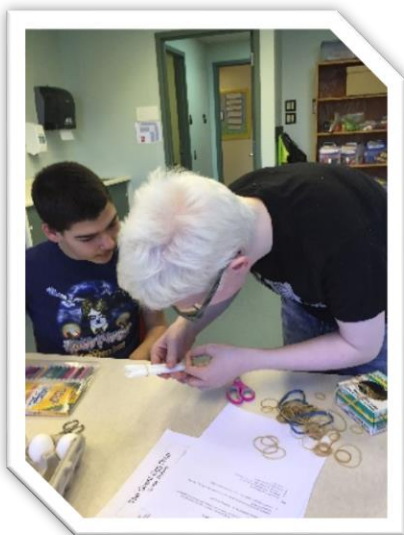
APSEA short-term programs were developed to provide intense, individualized programming to meet each student's identified needs. Referrals were received from school-based teams in the Fall and Spring. This collaborative process involved extensive pre-planning and discussion to address the individual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

Due to ongoing staffing shortages in DHH programs, a Short-Term Program teacher was not available for the 2015-16 school year. Six programs were offered, thanks to the efforts of two retired teachers who came to APSEA and provided programming to meet outcomes in self-advocacy, sexual health, career exploration, communication pragmatics and intensive language. The skills required for Tactile Exploration were included in programming and introduced as a way of planning orientation and mobility outings and accessing school curriculum. Common

curricular outcomes in tactile exploration were developed so students could expand their exploration of tactile graphics within functional activities integrated into their school, home and community. As well, self-determination and self-advocacy outcomes were built into each student's placement (BVI).

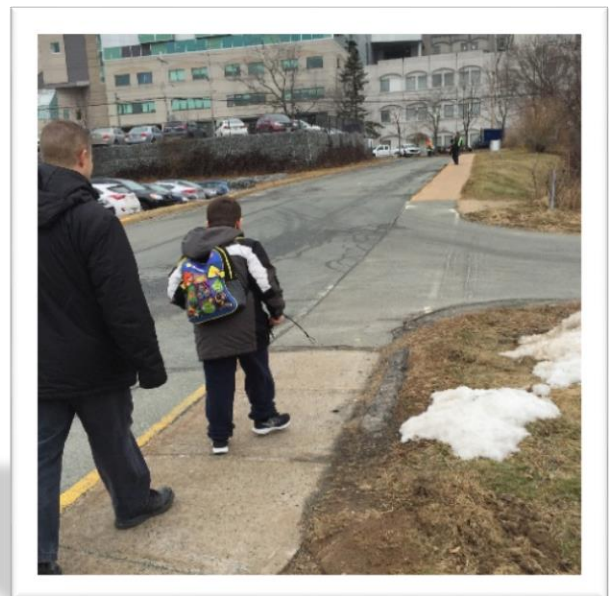
Areas of instruction within each program are based on the unique needs of students with sensory loss. For students who are blind or visually impaired, this included: Assistive Technology, Braille and Tactile Exploration, Career Exploration, Functional Living Skills, Orientation and Mobility, Social Skills, Self-Determination and Self-Advocacy. For students who are deaf or hard of hearing, this included: Self-Advocacy, Career Exploration, Sexual Health, Communication Pragmatics and Intensive Language.

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



Students participating in an activity to focus on outcomes from the Expanded Core Curriculum focus area of self-determination. Problem solving, team building, time management and communication skills (compensatory skills) are also being reinforced.

Winter travel offer additional challenges for students who are blind or visually impaired. This student is working on outcomes in the ECC focus area of Orientation and Mobility and developing confidence, safety and efficiency when travelling in the community during the winter months.





Functional Living skills are a critical component of the ECC that facilitates independence for students as they prepare to transition from school to community. Working together in groups enables students to build additional skills while learning from each other.

The following tables summarize information pertaining to Short-Term Programs.

Number of Short-Term Programs - Nova Scotia						
	School-Age Direct		School-Age Consultation		Total	
	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI
2015-2016	12	56	0	0	12	56
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

Number of Instructional Hours (Short-Term Programs) - Nova Scotia						
	School-Age Direct		School-Age Consultation		Total	
	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI
2015-2016	240	889	0	0	240	889

Number of Short-Term Programs - New Brunswick						
	School-Age Direct		School-Age Consultation		Total	
	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI
2015-2016	9	16	3	6	12	22
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

Number of Instructional Hours (Short-Term Programs) - New Brunswick						
	School-Age Direct		School-Age Consultation		Total	
	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI
2015-2016	180	294	60	95	240	389

Number of Short-Term Programs - Prince Edward Island						
	School-Age Direct		School-Age Consultation		Total	
	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI
2015-2016	0	1	1	0	1	1
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

Number of Instructional Hours (Short-Term Programs) - Prince Edward Island						
	School-Age Direct		School-Age Consultation		Total	
	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI
2015-2016	0	16	20	0	20	16

Number of Short-Term Programs - Newfoundland and Labrador						
	School-Age Direct		School-Age Consultation		Total	
	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI
2015-2016	0	10	0	0	0	10
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

Number of Instructional Hours (Short-Term Programs) - Newfoundland and Labrador						
	School-Age Direct		School-Age Consultation		Total	
	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI	DHH	BVI
2015-2016	0	143	0	0	0	143

Adjustments to Scheduled Short-Term Programs and Assessments

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

9-9 Programming

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

Evening programming is based on the unique needs of students with sensory loss. The 81 BVI short-term programs and 25 DHH short-term programs were supported by outcome-based residence activities, thus providing approximately 371 hours of additional time to practice the skills taught during the day.

New activities built into the evening program to support outcomes this year included geocaching and blind painting. Descriptive video for the students with vision loss and closed captioning for the students with hearing loss provided opportunities for all students to access multimedia in the residence.

Summer Camps

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

APSEA/Elks Deaf Camp – Lake Magaguadavic, NB

Twenty-Nine (29) campers participated in camp during the week of August 2-7, 2015. In addition, four volunteer helpers and seven 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.

A new addition to the camp schedule was a mystery night. The campers had to locate the fugitive who stole the camp's flag. The junior leaders took on a more leadership role by hosting a camp fire, sports night and setting up for the dance.

At the end of the week, 29 campers completed surveys. Ratings in almost all areas were in the "good" to "great" range. One hundred percent (100%) of participants said they "had fun at camp this year".

APSEA/Elks Camp August 2015			
Campers, Volunteer Junior Leaders & Helpers			
	Boys	Girls	Total
Nova Scotia	8	7	15
New Brunswick	7	10	18
Prince Edward Island	1	1	2
Newfoundland/Labrador	2	3	5
Total	18	21	39



Deaf camp means a lot to me because I get to be with other deaf kids and know that they are like me. (Camper 2015)

Camp See-Ya – Brigadoon Village, NS

APSEA students who are blind or visually impaired participated in camp held at Brigadoon Village the week of July 3-8, 2016. This year we had 24 campers ages 8 thru 15 and four Leaders-in-Training (LIT) ages 15 thru 17. This year the LITs took on more responsibility in regards to assisting with camp activities.

The campers participated in activities such as canoeing, cooking, gaga ball, visual and performing arts, swimming, a dance party and a talent show. There was a theme day and carnival day as well. Also with the assistance of Janet MacVicar, Itinerant Teacher for Students who are Blind or Visually Impaired in New Brunswick, we held a goal ball game as part of one of the evening activities, which was a great success and enjoyed by everyone. This year, as part of the talent show night, campers who were unable to see the stage were paired with counselors who described what was happening on the stage.

Camp See-Ya July 2016 Campers and Junior Leaders			
	Boys	Girls	Total
Nova Scotia	8	9	17
New Brunswick	2	6	8
Prince Edward Island	0	1	1
Newfoundland and Labrador	0	2	2
Total	10	18	28

Results from the camper surveys indicated that 82% thought the pursuit activities and the counselors were excellent, and 100% said that they had fun, got along with the counselors and felt understood by all camp staff.



Camp See-Ya gives me a chance for me to get away and meet people like me. (Camper 2016)

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 the four Atlantic Provinces: New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. The APSEA Library also supplies APSEA staff with professional materials. APSEA currently employs three full-time Library Technicians, seven full-time Braille Transcribers and one Braille Supervisor to ensure the provision of alternate format material is available to students in Atlantic Canada.

This includes:

- 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.

The following are highlights from the 2015-2016 school year.

- Digital download system implemented enabling access to electronic files available for direct download from the APSEA Integrated Database.
- Unified English Braille (UEB) Collection
 - Over 300 titles from the PM Family series put into production
 - Over 700 UEB files available for download to staff and interlibrary loans

- Over 450 Print/Braille titles available for loan
- Close to 300 hard copies available for loan
- As material is made commercially available from vendors across the globe, resources have been replaced with newly updated UEB version wherever possible. This process is ongoing as each resource is evaluated for currency and suitability.
- Pro Transform Plus for Accessible PDF from Crawford Technologies is being investigated by library staff to provide fully accessible files compliant with the ISO Standard 14289, the new standard for accessible PDFs.
- File sharing between with the library and CAER members has been adapted to ensure security. Members will use the Zimbra ‘briefcase’ to access and share files which will not require the need for compressed files. and can be accessed multiple times.

APSEA staff continue to play an active role in:

- The BANA (Braille Authority of North America) Tactile Graphics Committee
- BANA Braille Formats Committee

Alternate Format Materials are provided in several formats: **Accessible PDF** (Portable Document Format) provides students with the ability to 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 2015-2016						
	Students using Alternate Format Material	PDF	Enlarged Print	Braille	Tactile	E-text
Nova Scotia	17	1823	435	6716	1868	529
New Brunswick	10	743	0	3983	1191	2227
Newfoundland and Labrador	9	352	114	1534	1595	1274
Prince Edward Island	5	0	146	222	32	889

These number reflect the actual production but do not reflect the number of Alternate Format Material accessed by students from each province.

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.

A total of 89 titles were borrowed from members of CAER and 31 titles were loaned to members of CAER.

2015-2016	Items Loaned to CAER	Items Borrowed from CAER
<i>Alberta</i>	5	4
<i>British Columbia</i>	7	28
<i>Manitoba</i>	3	7
<i>Newfoundland</i>	3	4
<i>Ontario</i>	6	37
<i>Saskatchewan</i>	7	9
Total	31	89

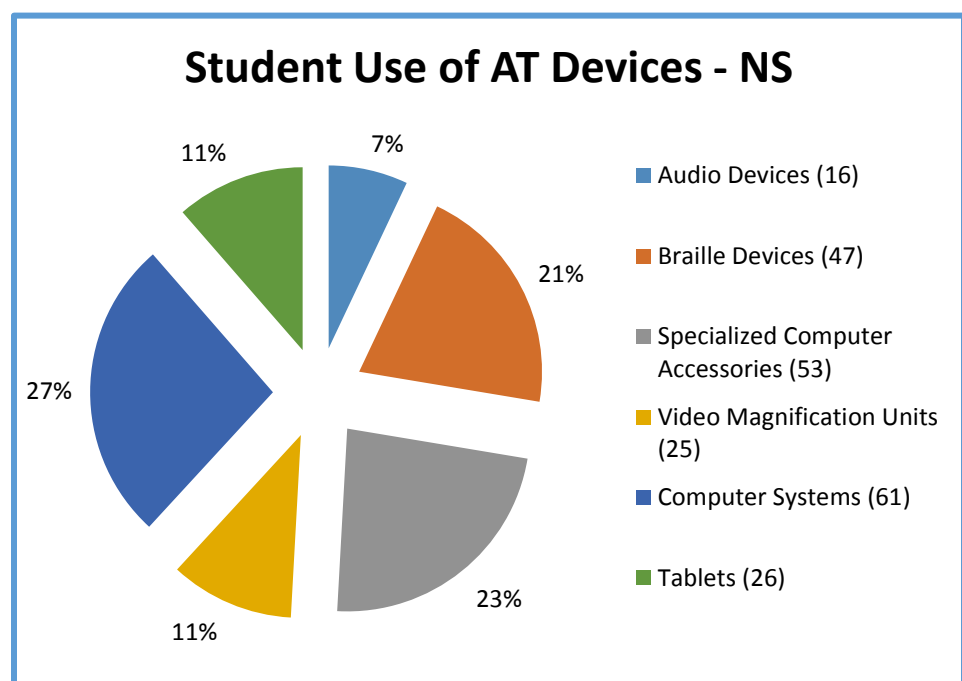
Interlibrary loan (ILL) savings have been calculated using an average page count of 200 for the 89 ILL titles borrowed at an approximate cost of \$6/page. The estimated savings for APSEA derived from ILL for the past year is \$106,800.

Assistive Technology

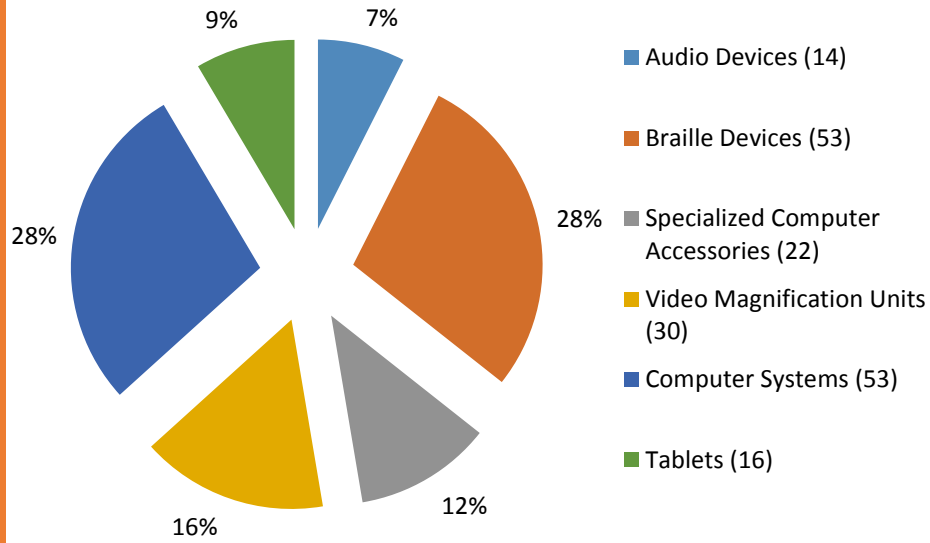
Assistive Technology (AT) is an important component of the APSEA organization. During the 2014-2015 school year, strategies for providing improved assessment of student's AT skills, including individualized and group training for technology devices, were provided both onsite, offsite and online to staff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

The following are highlights from 2015-2016:

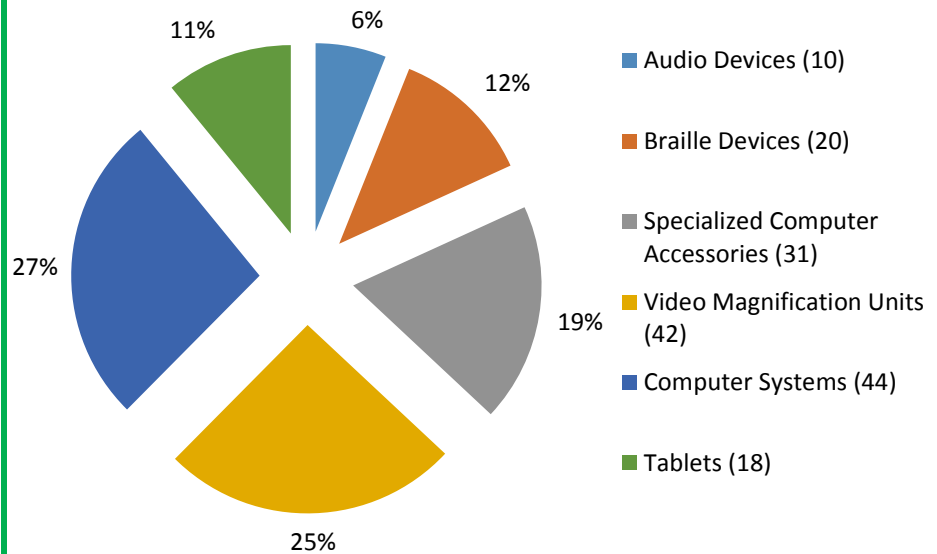
- Completion of a pilot project using the COSMO Electronic Braille (eBraille) and Braille Education Remote Training (BERT) software to provide real time braille instruction. Use of this system demonstrated success with the ability to teach braille.
- Collaboration between the APSEA Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Consultant and staff from the IWK Health Centre fostered partner building to ensure students are obtaining a thorough assessment prior to providing tools.
- Online iPad Training Sessions ensured adequate training was being provided to students and educational teams (including families) when using this device in the classroom.
- Participation on the APSEA Centre-Based Assessment Team to provide assessment for students using the SET3 (Student, Environment, Task, Tools and Training) process supported students to ensure they were using devices that met their needs.
- Presentation at the 2016 Seeing Beyond the Horizon Canadian Conference for Parents Educators and Professionals of Children who are Blind or Visually Impaired. The session was entitled: Social Media and Students with Visual Impairments: An Itinerant Teacher's Perspective.

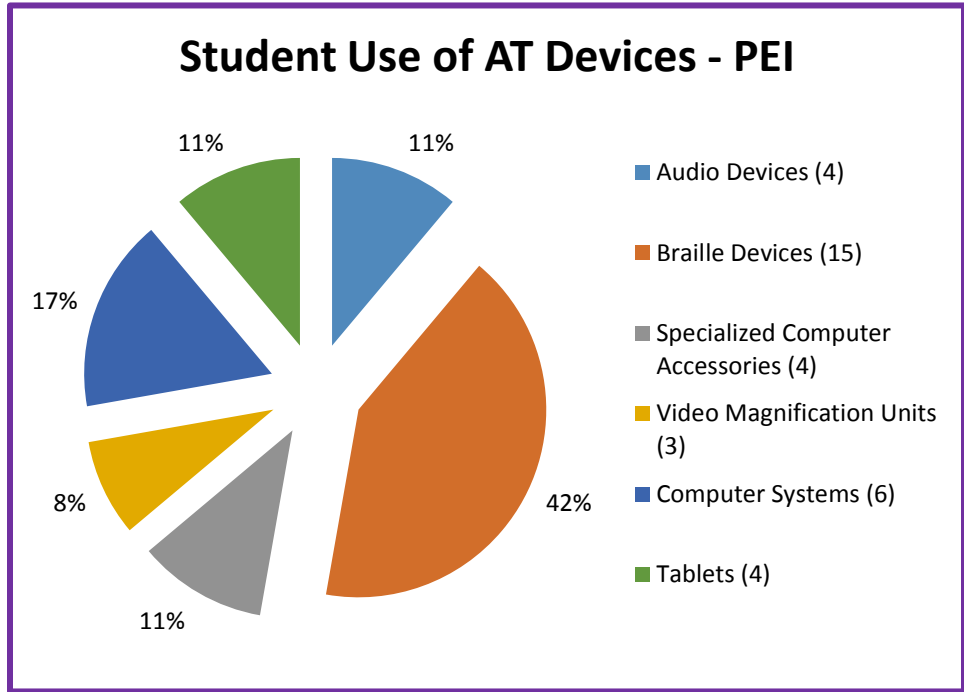


Student Use of AT Devices - NB



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	

Special Initiatives

Implementation of Unified English Braille (UEB) - YEAR TWO

Adopted in Canada in 2010, Unified English Braille (UEB) was implemented for students from Grade 7 to 12 during the 2015-2016 school year. This was the second and final year of implementing the Unified English Braille Code. Year two was more intensive as it required production of more complex material within the core curriculum, specifically math and science.

All teaching staff completed an online braille course and staff in the transcription department will all be re-certified by the end of the 2015-2016 school year. The organization is active with building the collection for Unified English Braille Resources. APSEA has also worked closely with partners of CAER while producing to avoid duplication.



Atlantic Canada Accessible Resource Services (ACARS)

ACARS is an online digital 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. This system was developed during 2015-2016 school year and can provide access to Adapted PDF files and e-text. The system was introduced to one school board in Nova Scotia who continue to examine its features. Upon completion of their investigating, their feedback will be utilized to ensure it 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 (AIE) Partnership

ASD & Behavioural Interventions: An Introduction for School Personnel

The 10-module e-learning sequence, *“ASD & Behavioural Interventions: An Introduction for School Personnel”* was offered twice during the 2015-16 academic year, for a total of three cohorts of educational personnel having completed the training since its launch on April 2, 2015. The overall completion rate has remained at or above the 80% mark for all rounds of training. Participant feedback from the first two rounds of training (April – June, 2015 and October 2015 – January 2016) guided the AIE team in making a number of revisions to course content and assessments, which were incorporated by New Brunswick’s e-learning team for the February – May 2016 round of training.

The next round of training is anticipated to begin in late September or early October, 2016. Once again, all provinces will have the opportunity to enroll participants if they wish to do so. It is anticipated that 2 rounds of training will be offered in 2016-17, with course dates and completion timelines similar to last year.

ASD and Behavioural Interventions Course Completions April 2015 - June 2016

Province	Course Completions
New Brunswick	1086
Newfoundland and Labrador	559
Nova Scotia	512
Prince Edward Island	198
Total Course Completions	2355

Overall completion rate: 81%

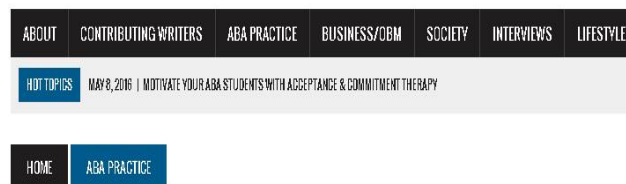
Dissemination of Evidence-Based Practice: AIE Website, Webinars, and Information Papers

The redesigned AIE website was launched in September, 2015, and since that time the website has been accessed by approximately 3600 visitors representing 35 countries. The vision for the new website was that it would be more focused, dynamic, and user-friendly, than its predecessor. We sought to retain the key components from the previous website, while removing some of the seldom-used features to make room to further enhance the Atlantic identity of the site and improve navigation. Feedback from the provincial ASD consultants indicates that we were successful in meeting those goals, as traffic on the website has increased significantly this year and our colleagues across all provinces report that they are making more frequent use of the website.

The website received an additional boost in April 2016, as the result of the AIE Partnership’s desire to share our work with others in the field. We reached out to Dr. Todd Ward, President of one of the fastest-growing electronic media enterprises in the field of evidence-based practice for ASD, diverse needs, and challenging behaviour.

His website, Behavioral Science in the 21st Century (www.bSci21.org) and his journal, Behavior Analysis Quarterly (www.BAQuarterly.com) are focused on disseminating information on research-supported interventions and approaches in a way that is accessible to scientists, practitioners, and the general public. Dr. Ward was very interested in our AIE Information Paper, **“Current Research Regarding Time-out”** and asked if we would create a synopsis of the paper, which was published on bSci.org on April 12. The feature included information about the AIE Partnership and a link back to the AIE website. Our article on time-out was the most-read article on the bSci21.org website for the month of April. In June, we submitted a second article to bSci21.org, based on our most recent AIE Information Paper, **“Teaching Essential Skills to Prevent the Development of Challenging Behavior in Learners with ASD,”** which was released and disseminated across the four provinces in May.

All of the Autism in Education information papers are available in both English and French on the AIE website at: <http://aie.apsea.ca>



ABA Practice



APRIL 12, 2016
Time-out Or Not?

By Shelley McLean, M.Ed, BCBA The Autism in Education (AIE) Partnership Controversy over the use of time-out in schools seems to span time and international borders. Common questions that arise tend to focus on how or when time-out should be...

AIE Professional Learning Symposium 2016 Participation by Province		
Province	Provincially-Sponsored Attendees	Public Registrations
New Brunswick	30	26
Newfoundland & Labrador	7	1
Nova Scotia	25	58
Prince Edward Island	15	0
Other	0	1 (BC)
Total Participants	77	86

AIE is hoping that review of the website by APSEA’s new web application developer, particularly with respect to design and function, will provide some valuable insights regarding additional adjustments to design and functionality that may continue to improve the website. AIE anticipates hosting three webinars in 2016-17, which will increase our previous annual webinar offerings by one webinar,

providing even greater access to professional learning for educational personnel throughout the Atlantic region.

AIE Professional Learning Symposium, May 4-5, 2016

May 4, 2016 marked the Autism in Education Partnership's first public AIE Professional Learning Symposium, held at the Halifax World Trade and Convention Centre.

Although support from the provincial departments of Education and Early Childhood Development and funding from an Autism Speaks Family Services Community Grant had allowed us to offer a similar professional learning opportunity to our provincial ASD consultants each spring since 2012, for the first time, this year, we were pleased to be able to share this opportunity with more educators, including our colleagues representing Anglophone and Francophone sectors and our First Nations schools; with our partner professionals in health and mental health services, early intervention, community services, and public safety; with university faculty and students associated with a variety of helping professions; and with parents and family members. It was a privilege to be able to bring together such a diverse group of professionals and caregivers who share the common goal of learning how we can better support our learners with ASD.

Day 1: "Anxiety in Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder"

The first day of this year's AIE symposium featured Dr. Patrick C. Friman, Ph.D., ABPP, Vice President of Behavioral Health at Boys Town (Nebraska) and a Clinical Professor in the Department of Pediatrics at the University of Nebraska School of Medicine. Dr. Friman addressed the causes of anxiety, explained the reasons for increased prevalence of anxiety in individuals with ASD, and provided research-based intervention strategies for addressing anxiety in individuals with ASD and other diverse needs. He also shared a variety of evidence-based strategies to help professionals and caregivers bring about meaningful changes in behaviour for individuals who are dealing with a range of challenges.

Dr. Friman's presentation is now available as a 5-part video series on the AIE website (<http://aie.apsea.ca/index.php/ct-menu-item-15>)

Day 2: “Advancing Capacity through Collaborative Learning”

Day 2 of this year’s symposium was open only to the provincially-sponsored ASD consultants and specialists, and once again focused on nurturing the Atlantic community of practice. The objectives for the day included:

- providing an update on the activities of the AIE Partnership
- obtaining feedback from the provincial ASD consultants regarding which of AIE’s supports and services have been most beneficial to them and what would be most valuable going forward
- providing practical follow-up to Dr. Friman’s presentation
- launching the new AIE Information Paper, *“Teaching Essential Skills to Prevent the Development of Challenging Behaviour in Learners with ASD,”* and providing hands-on training to support ASD consultants to implement the interventions and strategies outlined in the paper
- sharing student successes (Louise Smith, Cape-Breton Victoria Regional School Board)

The feedback from both days of the symposium was overwhelmingly positive: On Day 1, 96.8% of all participants indicated that the information presented was practical and beneficial, and that they anticipated being able to use this information in their respective roles; 95.7% the ASD consultants who attended the second day of the symposium echoed these sentiments. One suggestion for consideration provided by several attendees was that in the future the second day of the symposium should also be open to public registration, as many indicated that two days of professional learning would have been even more valuable.

Target dates for the 2017 symposium are anticipated to be Wednesday, May 3 and Thursday, May 4. Based on attendee feedback, the AIE committee is exploring the possibility of opening both days to public registration for the 2017 symposium.

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