

**Inclusive Education:
Sharing our Success – Mapping our
Future**

**Provincial Forum
April 19 – 20, 2007**

PROCEEDINGS REPORT

Prepared by: Don Gallant

INTRODUCTION

On April 19 and 20, the Newfoundland and Labrador Association for Community Living (NLACL), as part of its Community Inclusion project, hosted a day and a half forum that brought together educators, families, and other stakeholders involved in the area of inclusive education to learn of ongoing efforts and outcomes within the provincial community inclusion project, to have input into the development of a strategy for change, and to share examples of how inclusive outcomes are being achieved within our school system (both secondary and post secondary).

In Attendance

Sandra Gilliam	Wabush	Dan Goodyear	St. John's
Lisa Shaw	Wabush	Sophia Slaney	St. John's
Nancy Corbin	Gr. Falls-Windsor	Mary Kelsey	St. John's
Jennifer Woodford	Gr. Falls-Windsor	Patti Dinson	St. John's
Rhonda French	Gr. Falls-Windsor	Deanne Jackson	St. John's
Donna Giles	Deer Lake	Mary Hillis	St. John's
Paulette Jackman	St. John's	Erika Collins	St. John's
Sandra Taylor	St. John's	Charlene Kenny	Fermeuse
Michele Neary	St. John's	George Tucker	St. John's
Paula Gillis	Stephenville	Judy Renouf	Stephenville
Dan Smith	St. Anthony	Ray Mclsaac	Stephenville
Laurel Penney	St. John's	Ken O'Brien	St. John's
Linda Luedee	Corner Brook	Donna Walbourne	St. John's
Dale Jennings	Marystown	Melanie Thomas	St. John's
Vivian Rose	Marystown	Una Tucker	St. John's
Flo Paul	Gambo	Don Gallant	St. John's

The forum began with words of introduction from the facilitator. Mr. Gallant then had participants introduce themselves, noting what part of the province they were from and their particular affiliation.

GREETINGS

The Minister of Human Resources Labour and Employment, the Honourable Shawn Skinner brought words of greeting on behalf of his Department. In his remarks the Minister noted the importance of the work being done by the NLACL, with and on behalf of its families, and in partnership with many other government and community organizations. He noted the immense contribution being made by educators and the value of inclusive education. He spoke of the natural connection between inclusive education and the increased capacity of young adults with disabilities to enter the workforce and/or post secondary education and become productive contributing citizens. Minister Skinner also noted the value and importance of senior politicians hearing stories from families and individuals – to help them understand better the positive implications and impacts of government investment.

SESSION 1

The next session included a presentation by Donna Walbourne, Project Coordinator on the provincial community inclusion project and its focus on inclusive education. A summary of the highlights of this presentation are presented below:

- Priority areas for Newfoundland and Labrador project are inclusive education (2006 – 07) and family and disability supports (2007 – 08)
- This forum is a culmination of work completed within this past year
- The knowledge, sharing and community engagement that took place in the previous years of the Community Inclusion and Well Being Initiative have proven highly informative in terms of identifying the needs, gaps and future steps needed to build more inclusive communities for individuals with developmental disabilities in Newfoundland and Labrador.
- Promoting inclusionary practices within the education system has been a consistent area of focus and interest in NL.
- It is important for educators, administration and other children to have an open and positive attitude towards inclusion.

SESSION 2

During the next session, Dr. Michele Neary and Melanie Thomas provided an overview of recent work undertaken within this area, including a Cross Canada Comparison of Inclusive Education Policies, Personnel and Funding Regimes, and a NLACL Paper that make recommendations for change in the area of inclusive education.

Prior to beginning the formal presentation, Dr. Neary asked the group to provide in a word or two *what inclusive education meant*. Some of the responses included:

Equality	Supports in place
Connected	Increased potential
Belonging	Happy children
Contributing	Choices
Opportunities for growth	Learning from each other
Learning the same classroom	Effective teaching

A summary of the highlights of this presentation are presented below:

- In 1954 the first 'schools' for children with developmental disabilities were started by Vera Perlin. These were operated by volunteer organizations.
- In 1971 the responsibility for the education of all children was enshrined within provincial legislation
- We began with notions of integration and mainstreaming – notions that were concerned about 'placement' – now we speak of inclusion – which is more than a simple matter of placement – it is about 'whole schools' – it a philosophy and a set of beliefs.
- Historically NLACL has been portrayed as having a very rigid 'definition' of inclusive education – one that spoke of 100% of children being included

100% of the time in the regular classroom. In reality though NLACL does recognize the necessity for some students to be instructed in other places for some parts of the day – just like many other students who come out for speech/language, etc. This time out of regular class must however not be seen as a first option and always there must be a plan to increase time in the ‘regular’ class.

- While our provincial policy is very good it is still only ‘draft’ policy
- All children have an inalienable right to education
- Segregation is no longer an option
- Inclusive schools should welcome and include all students and provide supports to individual students who may require them to reach their potential in any domain of growth and development.
- There is much variability in practice across our schools
- There is polarized opinion also on the extent to which students with special needs should be integrated into regular classrooms. While a stated Department of Education policy on the matter exists, there is no consistent approach. A broad range of models has been adopted by schools and school districts, in many cases under pressure from parents. (The Ministerial Panel on Educational Delivery in the Classroom, 2000)
- Education is a provincial jurisdiction
- Undergoing a paradigm shift.....from special / regular education
- Should now be a merger of the ‘two systems’
- There is still a debate regarding the resource room model vs. the special education teacher model
- Factors that impact on Inclusive Education include understanding and knowledge of instructional practices that enable support of diverse groups of learners; parent’s desire to see change and their ability to lobby effectively; supportive and prepared educators who share a vision of an inclusive education system; resource support available; and teacher workload
- There is a strong view that in many cases learning would be better enabled if classroom teachers had the support of teaching assistants instead of student assistants
- There is always a gap between what is developing in the schools of our land and what the teacher preparation programs can accommodate within their undergraduate programs.
- Three primary systems used in Canada: Census based (Alberta, NB**, NWT, NS, PEI, and Saskatchewan); Categorical (BC); and Hybrid (Manitoba, NL, and Ontario). Some jurisdictions have recently moved away from categorical or piloting a census model (Alberta, Manitoba (pilot), and Saskatchewan)
- Funding Mechanisms Should Allow for increased local control; respectful identification of individual strengths, needs and supports required; economizing effect; streamlining administrative processes and reducing paperwork; and accountability.
- we need a strong vision supported by legislation and policy

During this session, six small discussion groups were formed and asked to address one of the following questions:

1: Language and Labeling - How does the terminology we employ (to refer to students with “special needs” or to educational placements) impact on perceptions and treatment of students with disabilities? Consider the impact on teachers, students (with and without disabilities) and others. What implications can or should these labels have on policy and practice?

2: Legislation/Policies - What legislation and policies (at the provincial, district or school levels) address diversity and reinforce human rights for all students and employees? Are legislation and policy (at all levels) adequate to ensure consistency in inclusive education in this province? If not, what changes should be made?

3: Monitoring - How is special education evaluated in this province? What enhancements could be made to ensure that programs and services are being monitored effectively?

4: Professional Development - What pre-service and in-service training is currently available to prepare educators to work with diverse learners in the regular classroom? Is training adequate to prepare educators to meet the diverse needs of all students in the education system? What changes could be made to assist in the preparation of all staff to meet the needs of diverse learners within the school system?

5: Appeal - Is the current appeal process satisfactory to students, parents, and educators? If not, what changes should be made to enhance the appeal process?

6: Personnel - Is the current deployment of staff (roles, responsibilities, ratios) adequate to meet the diverse needs of students in an inclusive education system? If not, what changes should be made?

Each group then presented a summary of their discussions. A summary of these presentations follows:

Question 1:

- Labels can limit and/or lower expectations of everyone – especially of other students – an assumption of deficits, decreased expectations. As soon as the diagnosis is said it is assumed that they cannot achieve, will fail. Affects teacher attitude and perceptions
- Mindset of what they expect will be the outcome vs. what the child can actually do
- Inclusion means a ‘normal’ child with disabilities
- Teachers need to make unique accommodations specific to each child, based on their needs not their label
- Access to needed supports and services need to be at the local school level
- System requires the label – it is the way in which supports are accessed – cannot get the services without the label!

- Labels may have administrative purposes but should not touch the child in the classroom
- Teachers / system should be about enabling progress – not ‘administration’
- Important that we all live and learn together
- Services too stretched – not enough services to enable movement away from a label
- Labels promote differences – not commonalities
- We are all People First!

Question 2:

- Presence of draft policy results in inconsistent interpretation....however good quality policy
- Differs in interpretation among different stakeholders (teachers, schools, school districts, etc)
- ISSP process is very good but again in practice there are significant difficulties. Need increased training (especially for regular classroom teachers)
- There is no consistency of following policy / not portable
- Why is draft still being used....10 years later?
- Compelling reasons for supports appear to be the norm
- Need to move past concept of categorical teachers
- Many teachers do not have special education training
- There is nothing to ‘stand on’ as related to responsibility for children
- Some difficulties with Pathways – model is weak.
- Ownership issue: never clear. Doesn’t it being made policy make a difference? Written standards of practice are needed to measure outcomes
- Often inadequate practice is a result of inadequate resources

Question 3:

- Great policies in places (ISSP etc)
- Legislation should include reference to promotion and belief in inclusive education
- Our policy is a draft policy which identifies roles and responsibilities but realistically that makes it difficult to evaluate. Draft policy poses difficulty in monitoring
- The policy is an excellent framework and the people implementing it are working hard but often too much is placed on them.
- Within the school system resources (whether categorical or non categorical the way resources are deployed is exclusive
- Dept. of Education / District audit schools to review delivery of services
- Performance appraisal
- Need to move to ‘real’ policy – not draft policy
- Inclusion itinerants step in right direction – recommend making permanent

- Administrators' knowledge (and support) of inclusion is key to successful implementation
- Resources are not always used in the most effective or efficient manner
- Overwork impacts monitoring. Who is monitoring?
- Monitoring at the district levels
- Qualifications of Student Assistants
 - Monthly reviews at the school level
 - quarterly reviews by the school district
- More trained teachers / better program at university
- Education (MUN) to teach all teachers about teaching students and identified exceptionalities

Questions 4:

- (Pre-service)
 - Some inroads made in pre-service (new realities) but still a long ways to go
 - 30% of new teachers leave profession in first 5 years
 - Feelings of inadequacy are very real
 - Multiage classrooms, diverse classrooms bring increasing demands – our pre-service training should acknowledge and address this new reality
 - Ongoing consultation with Faculty of Education needed
 - All teachers should have training in diverse learning and teaching
 - Regular teachers often times not given opportunity to study special education / inclusionary practices
 - Need to move away from a special education model to an inclusive education curriculum
 - Inclusive education should be throughout the education curriculum
 - Need course on effective strategies
 - Use intern model more
 - University must address how to meet the needs of all students
- (In-service / Professional Development)
 - Changes in in-service underway
 - Capacity varies throughout the province; there are different needs in different areas of the province
 - Training needs of students assistants need to be addressed in real and substantive ways
 - Job shadowing proven effective
 - Inclusive education PD underway
 - Need increased substitute days
 - Not just Special Education professional development
 - New demographic realities must be examined – student populations have dropped dramatically in the past 30 years
 - No child should be left behind

- There is concern that NLTA is not as supportive of Student Assistants as they should – maybe fear that assistants will result in decreased number of teaching positions
- Quality education is an investment in tomorrow

Question 5

- Trustees are the Board
- Accountable to whom?
- Are parents fully informed of their rights? Increased education/promotion is needed
- Principal has responsibility to inform
- Who within the district is responsible?
- Need accountability appeal re: categorical
- No independent Panel
- Raised in ISSP review
- Under age 19 – now states that parents are required to speak but there are many students (under 19) who can and should speak for themselves

Question 6:

- Current deployment not always adequate
- Inconsistent across schools and levels e.g. elementary vs. high school). Need does not appear as great in the lower grades but is restricted in the higher grades
- Needs not always recognized. Currently allocation is on the student – need to shift the role from the student to the entire class – allocating funds based on number not specific students, but entire school. Inclusion should account for all students. This would result in maintaining resources instead of focusing on numbers in specific categories
- Special Education teachers and Student Assistants are the preferred supports.
- Best to look at number of students in system
- Need to change the roles and responsibilities of both the teacher and the student assistants - need to affect change to the entire system – many changes need to occur simultaneously
- Everyone must have a shared vision / shared approach to all students
- Must have a vision of clear accountability
- Reduce teacher / student ratios
- Changes will require monitoring and accountability
- Fear that children will be lost without adequate supports
- Will kids with disabilities get 'lost' if we move from a Student Assistant to a Classroom Assistant model?
- Multi-pronged approach needed
- There are two processes underway – Teacher Allocation review and Pathways / ISSP review

SESSION 3

During the next session a panel presentation was given. Panelists included Paula Hennessey, Linda Luedee, Patti Winsor, Sophia Slaney, Mary Kelsey and Dan Goodyear. A summary of the highlights of the panel presentations would include the following:

Paula Hennessey / HCS

- Modification / adaptation based on needs of children / from a little to a lot
- Special needs means including other languages other cultures, acknowledging family circumstances, cognitive and behavioural issues
- Inclusion – all children should attend the same child care center as if they did not have disabilities
- Optimal development
- Zero rejection / in proportion to the general population / now not many children with disabilities in the child care center system
- Aim of full participation of children (with necessary supports) and parents (to their level of comfort)
- All families should have the same options
- Early start to inclusion
- Quality, universal, accessible, developmental
- Importance of child care includes; basic right, sense of belonging, increased self esteem, all kids benefit through increased accepting, facilitate the acquisition of social skills, active lives
- Families develop relationships with other families and parent support
- Barriers – training; need for increased support services; attitudes of adults; stereotypes
- Initiatives – Early Learning and Child Care (training in inclusion; special equipment grants; regional consultants. Provincial Plan includes training in inclusion, regional consultancy and grants to supplement inclusion of children with special needs in child care centres; creation of developmentally appropriate programming
- Provide for replacement staff to enable attendance at ISSP meetings, etc
- Increased ratios

Sophia Slaney - Inclusion Education Itinerant, Eastern School District

- 4 positions across the province
- Goals of the Inclusive Education Itinerants for the Eastern School District have been identified as:
 - To promote and expand acceptance and implementation of effective inclusive educational principles and practices for all teachers for all teachers
 - Implement changes that support inclusive educational principles and practices
 - To build capacity within the system so that positive changes are developed and sustained within schools
- Increased awareness and shared understanding of inclusive education

- Visit schools to clarify inclusive education and how it is implemented and understood
- Conducted Workshops (eg. 5 Keys of Successful Inclusion)
- help with finding resources; collaborative teaching; problem solving
- The majority of teachers support inclusion but lack skills as to proper Implementation
- Conducted focus groups - best practices, practical teaching strategies and resources, how do we do this?
- Workshops held on Differentiation of instruction (Parts 1 and 2)
- effective teaching....respond to variance in learning....for all students
- Collegial Circle created – every 6 weeks they meet and choose a topic and explore / discuss with their peers
- Workshop for administrators

Mary Kelsey, Inclusion Education Itinerant, Eastern School District

- Positive things are happening
- Goal of increasing awareness of inclusion and inclusionary practices
- One principal came looking for articles and he now shares these with all staff at staff meetings and facilitates discussion
- Schools asking for quest speakers and simulation activities
- Student assistants are involved in the training
- Increase our ability to share information and to educate others on inclusionary practices
- Information sharing with each other and the department
- started Best Practice sessions for teachers who had limited sub time but wanted to learn more about inclusionary practices
- Work with ILRC and technology coordinator
- Web site has resources etcwww.angelfire.com
- Increasing acceptance that student diversity is the norm and that schools need to change their practices based on this assumption
- A teacher taught all student sin grade 1 sign language – gives message that you are valued
- Adapt so all can attend
- Using Janeway equipment or making their own
- Taught PECS to all students
- To increase inclusionary practices and to create schools where all members feel a sense of belonging, all members have to contribute
- Mentoring program - Peer Buddies

Patti Winsor, Inclusion Education Itinerant, Nova Central

- Supporting Inclusive Education
- Providing support for teachers who are working with students that have Criteria C support
 - transition planning
 - promoting inclusive practices within a school
 - attend classes with the students

- Purpose is.....
 - To build expertise and capacity within schools so that immediate feedback can be provided
 - To provide an opportunity to allow teachers to network with other teachers throughout the district
 - To provide direct support to select schools
 - To review ISSPs, Pathways to Programming, and service delivery in schools
 - To allow teachers/schools to build a relationship with District Personnel, which fosters a partnership in delivering appropriate programming to students with exceptionalities
 - To better foster inclusive practices
- Topics for Professional Development Days have included:
 - Team Building and Goal Setting for the school year
 - Differentiated Instruction: A Way to Meet the Needs of All Learners in the Classroom
 - Team Teaching: An Innovative Approach to Meeting Student Needs
 - Teaching Reading to Students with Identified Exceptionalities
 - Using Assistive Technology to Foster Independence
 - Meeting the Needs of Students in An Inclusive Classroom
- In process of closing our 5 'alternate' schools
- Same message across all sectors to all teachers
- Build sustainability
- Use lead teachers
- Worked in 16 schools with 8 more to come

Linda Luedee, *Inclusion Education Itinerant, Western School District*

- Share successful inclusive/ best practices I have seen over the last two months - practices that are very practical and can be used in any classroom
- One elementary teacher starts each year with students being included in their regular classrooms on a full time basis. They start school on the same day as their peers, and have full integration for all school and community based activities that involve the school.
- A Grade 6 student gets his 'homework baggie' like all the other students - a very clear sign that he is connected to all his peers. He receives his homework package at the same time as his peers; his baggie will often contain different work than his peers but it will always contain printing, a book to read and often a puzzle. This makes the student feel he is a part of his class and gives him a sense of pride in the work he has completed.
- Many schools participate in a weekly swimming, bowling and skating program for the Category C students and in an effort to make this program more inclusive, some schools have started introducing Buddy Day. Once every six or eight weeks the students will get to take a buddy with them when they participate in these activities.

- Teachers recognized that the Recycling Program needed to include more students than just those with intellectual disabilities. Now in some schools the recycling program is made up of teams with the leader being the student with a disability plus five or six members from their home room - it has become an inclusive practice within the school. This has helped all students feel included and contributing to their school
- Teachers will take a topic/unit that is being taught in the regular classroom and adapt it to fit the strengths and needs of the student. Teachers find it more successful if the title page is the same as the other students in the classroom with different activities within the folder. This allows the students to feel they are an active part of the classroom, that they are the same as their friends and that they are capable of completing some of the work and gives them a feeling of being connected.
- The Co-op Program has been very successful in some schools in the district. Based on a student's strengths, needs and interests a job site will be selected in consultation with the student and teacher. The students work side by side with a worker who teaches the skills they need to be successful at their job.
- On the West Coast there are two chapters of Best Buddies Canada.
- If people with disabilities are segregated and treated as different they will never be accepted as full members of society.

Dan Goodyear / CONA

- College of the North Atlantic has implemented a fully inclusive model of service delivery for students with disabilities.
- This model has been designed to compliment the Pathways Model of Service Delivery currently being used in the K-12 education system.
- Through its implementation, students with disabilities are enabled to access skills training within the provincial public college system.
- The model of service delivery addresses the needs of students with disabilities who meet entrance requirements by accepting them into regular college programs and providing them with the required accommodations.
- For those students with disabilities who do not meet entrance requirements, the model of service delivery allows the applicant to apply for a modified program.
- The college recognizes that there are many and varied supports required in meeting the needs of all learners. In an attempt to meet these needs the college has lobbied government to secure money to provide 10 permanent resource facilitator positions across the province. These resource facilitators work directly with students to provide one-on-one assistance which enables them to reach their full potential.
- The number of students with disabilities accessing the college is growing each year.

- At our St. John's campus students with disabilities have been very successful with well over 90% of our students completing their college programs.
- Students have had wonderful college experiences - experiences that have enabled them to learn differently while remaining part of a fully inclusive learning environment.
- We fully recognize the potential and abilities of all students accessing the college system. We must continue to build our capacity to deliver equitable services to enable all learners to have full access and full participation in a quality post secondary education.
- Further partnerships and linkages with community agencies and school boards are critical to ensure adequate transition to the post secondary institution.
- We must ensure an education system that is meaningful and relevant to all learners.

During the summary wrap up to the first day the facilitator noted that we had heard of the efforts of the NLACL with respect to inclusive education with a particular focus on efforts during the past year. Michele and Melanie had reminded us that the NLACL's position on Inclusive education is not 100% of the children 100% of the time – that inclusive education is more than a matter of placement – it is one of culture and process – that our policies are sound but the real issue is one of implementation. The panel had given great examples of how to make inclusion real and doable in the class and in our schools – good practical advice. That it was refreshing to be part of a discussion of how to make it work rather than a debate about if or why. Great to hear that at least one district was moving away from the alternate school model.

SESSION 4

Laurie Thompson.....insert Laurie's notes

SESSION 5

During this session, Dr. David Dibbon, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies, Faculty of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland addressed the forum. Highlights of his presentation would include:

- Faculty now moving to make inclusive education a part of the education degree program
- There is 'competition' for spots on the course curriculum
- To just add / do 3 more courses might be a mistake – need to look at the whole program...need more of an integrated approach and have inclusive education throughout all parts of the courses
- There is an increased emphasis on inclusive education...but faculty needs to agree on what IE means
- The current degree in Special Education is very good (and some of this needs to be accessible to other teachers)

- Aware that in many instances special education is used to gain entry to the system....get education degree – no job – do special education – teach – get tenure – move to regular class
- Many teachers expressing concerns that they do not obtain the requisite skills needed to do their jobs (special education)
- Cannot say exactly what will happen in the future.....difficult to make change within the university context
- MUN would have to teach the 'ideal' definition of inclusive education...but this cannot be done in isolation (need for discussion with community organizations, teachers etc)
- NLACL could work with the Dean / Dr. Dibbon
- There is an acknowledged gulf between the theory and practice / difficult to address / partially because this is only a one year course
- Theoretical background is very important but there does need to be a better connection between the two (theory and practice)
- There are different models – professional school model; co-op model;
- Need to move away from the 'ivory tower' perception
- Maybe the time frames need to be extended
- Many young teachers are leaving the profession
- Possible models include: 1) 2 week as assistant to a teacher 2) 6 weeks with a buddy – and then paired with a teacher 3) go out 10 weeks with individual teacher and teach
- Need exposure to more than one teacher
- There is nothing yet at the Senate as to compulsory completion of special education courses
- Program is being reviewed but this is a slow process....need to get it right!

Appendices

Community Inclusion-Inclusive Education: What We've Learned
Donna Walbourne, Community Inclusion Coordinator
Inclusive Education Provincial Forum
April 19-20th

What is Community Inclusion?

- National Initiative since 1997
- Funded under Human Resources Social Development Canada
- Number of Community Based Projects over the past ten years
- Specific Focus Areas (2006-2008)

CI Advisory Committee

- Education
- Human Resources Labour and Employment
- Health and Community Services
- FINALLY!
- College of the North Atlantic
- Canadian Paraplegic Association
- Seniors Resource Centre
- People First
- Coalition of Persons with Disabilities
- Consumer Health Awareness Network NL

Focus Area: Inclusive Education

- What have we done?
 - Researched history and current policy/practice
 - Focus Groups in 4 regions
 - Key Informant Interviews
 - Findings Shared with NLACL
 - Ontario School Culture Initiative
 - Highlighting Best Practices
 - National Sector Meetings
 - Provincial Forum

What Have We Heard from Families?

- Attitude is Essential
- The need to emphasize 'the bad'
- Barriers to accessibility
- Strategies and knowledge of effective teachers
- Instability from year to year
- Bussing challenges
- Need identified and reality are different
- No plan for post school transitions
- Lack of awareness around community and employment
- Lack of extracurricular activities
- Inconsistent funding

- Language used causes parents to 'label' children
- Irregularity of ISSP meetings
- Meaningful education not a priority in high school
- Every year-same battles
- Lack of accountability around policy application
- Fight for 100% inclusion

What Have We Heard from Educators?

- Integrating criteria 'C' students more difficult
- Inclusion for sake of Inclusion
- Some teachers are uncomfortable
- Appropriate as opposed to total inclusion
- Challenges with transition from school to post school life

Suggestions/Recommendations from stakeholders

- Journal for home-school communication
- More reviews/meetings
- Teachers need to expect more from parents
- Teacher assistants as opposed to student assistants
- Build on child's strengths
- Small class size
- Need support and contact information
- Programs and plans should start in Sept
- Strong ISSP team is essential
- Need to bring all stakeholders together
- The rights of all students need to be considered
- Need for more meetings between stakeholders and NLACL
- Need for better diagnostics models to prepare students
- More involvement from parents and stakeholders
- New formula required for student assistants
- Curriculum changes needed at the university level
- Students assistants need to be essential

Questions/Comments?

**BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION SYSTEM:
A COLLABORATIVE ACTION PLAN
Newfoundland and Labrador Association for Community Living (NLACL)
April 2007**

Overview of session

- The impetus for this work
- Strategies employed
- What do we mean by Inclusive Education?
- What are some of the factors influencing inclusive education?
- What's happening across the country?
- What's happening in this province?
- What can be done to move toward a more inclusive education system in this province?

Why we believe, what we believe

- Philosophy
 - All children have an inalienable right to education
 - Segregation is no longer an option
- Outcomes
 - Measured social outcomes
 - Children that learn together, live together

Impetus

- Historical context
 - Progressive movement from no educational opportunities to increasingly inclusive educational opportunities
 - NLACL history of collaboration on issues relating to education

The training, education and vocational preparation of the retarded is a most extensive problem. There is a particular need for some definition of responsibility and official policy. It would seem reasonable that responsibility should rest with the Department of Education as it does in the case of other children. - Spectrum of Mental Retardation Services, 1964

- **Current climate**
 - Experiences in education vary across the province
 - Recognized need (on the part of many stakeholders) for changes in the implementation of education programs (distribution of resources, funding mechanisms, appeal, etc.)
 - Recent review processes
 - ISSP/Pathways Review
 - Teacher Allocation Commission
 - Recent announcements re:
 - Teacher allocations
 - Excellence in Mathematics Strategy

- **Strategies Employed**
 - Consultations with students, parents, educators and others
 - Cross Canada comparison of elements (Document and literature review)
- **What was said**
 - Emphasis on assessment and paperwork
 - Limited supports
 - Inability to celebrate successes
 - Need for pre-service and in-service training
 - Transition Planning - what happens next?
- **What do we mean by Inclusive Education?**
 - Who are we talking about?
 - What definition do we hold?
- **Who are we talking about?**
 - Focus on the characteristics of the child:
 - Student with intellectual disabilities
 - Student with disabilities
 - Student with special needs
 - Student with exceptionalities
 - Focus on the supports required:
 - Student requiring individual plans
 - Student who requires additional support
 - It's about all students. Because all students require support. Some compelling reasons to strengthen our efforts to meet the diverse needs of students:
 - Changing demographics
 - Expectations
 - Social and economic trends
 - Enhanced understanding of how children learn
 - Inclusion Matters
 - Inclusion Matters

Newfoundland and Labrador Demographics (Statistics Canada) 2001 total population of children aged 5-14 years: 61,390.

Total number of children with disabilities: 2,440 (3.97%)

- **Definition(s) of Inclusive Education**
 - Process
 - Outcome (Placement)
 - Outcome (Enhanced ability to meet diverse needs of all students)
 - Philosophy (to guide policy and legislation)

Sample legislation/policies

British Columbia Special Education Policy: “British Columbia promotes an inclusive education system in which students with special needs are fully participating members of

a community of learners. Inclusion describes the principle that all students are entitled to equitable access to learning, achievement and the pursuit of excellence in all aspects of their educational programs. The practice of inclusion is not necessarily synonymous with full integration in regular classrooms, and goes beyond placement to include meaningful participation and the promotion of interaction with others...A school board must provide a student who has special needs with an educational program in a classroom where the student is integrated with other students who do not have special needs, unless the educational needs of the student with special needs or other students indicate that the educational program for the student with special needs should be provided otherwise.”

Alberta Policy 1.6.1 - Educational Placement of Students with Special Needs: Educating students with special needs in regular classrooms in neighbourhood or local schools shall be the first placement option considered by school boards, in consultation with students, parents/ guardians and school staff. In Alberta, educating students in inclusive settings is the first placement option to be considered by school boards in consultation with parents and, where appropriate, students. Inclusion refers not just to setting but to specially designed instruction and support for students with special needs in regular classrooms and neighbourhood schools. Small group instruction from resource teachers may take place within or outside the regular classroom. Some students are placed (full time or part time) in specialized classes either within a neighbourhood school or at a district site.

▪ **Inclusive education: What do we mean?**

- Inclusive schools should welcome and include all students and provide supports to individual students who may require them to reach their potential in any domain of growth and development.
- Every student should be entitled to receive their education within a regular classroom with their age peers in a public school in the community in which the student resides.
- A student who requires additional support should have an individual education plan which outlines their individual goals and objectives as well as instructional methods and supports that are required to support the student to achieve these goals and objectives.
- There may be occasions where it will be in the best interests of both the student who requires additional support and the rest of the class, to provide the student with opportunities for one-on-one or small group instruction for periods of time in a setting other than the regular classroom.
- The student who receives instruction outside the regular classroom must be provided with a positive learning environment.
- Except in emergency circumstances, instructional time outside the regular classroom should be a planned part of the student's individual education plan and reasons why instruction outside the regular classroom is the preferred option should be documented.
Regular evaluation of the benefits of individual or small group instruction should be undertaken.
- If a student is removed from the regular classroom for an extended period of time due to behavior or other concerns, plans should be written and

implemented to return the student to the regular classroom as soon as possible.

Sample legislation/policies

Newfoundland and Labrador draft Special Education Policy Manual:

Policy 15: It is directed that each school board ensure students are assigned to and have their programs delivered in the same learning environment as their age peers, except where it has been determined there are compelling reasons for alternate assignments.

15.1 Students with exceptionalities are assigned a home room with their age peers, except for compelling reasons as determined by the individual support services planning team. (reasons are suggested)

15.2 Decisions about instructional settings are made by the Individual Support Services Planning team only after programming decisions are made.

15.3 If a student is to be instructed in settings different from his/her peers, the support services planning team must demonstrate that the reasons for doing so are compelling.

15.4 If a student is instructed in an alternate setting, the ISSP must include a plan to ensure reintegration and maximum participation in the same learning environment as her/his peers.

▪ **Variation exists**

- “There is polarized opinion also on the extent to which students with special needs should be integrated into regular classrooms. While a stated Department of Education policy on the matter exists, there is no consistent approach. A broad range of models has been adopted by schools and school districts, in many cases under pressure from parents.”

The Ministerial Panel on Educational Delivery in the Classroom, 2000, p. 27.

▪ **Other factors that impact on Inclusive Education**

- Understanding and knowledge of instructional practices that enable support of diverse groups of learners
- Parent’s desire to see change and their ability to lobby effectively
- Supportive and prepared educators who share a vision of an inclusive education system
- Resource support available
- Teacher workload

▪ **Teacher workload**

- Class composition is another factor that needs to be taken into consideration when students are being assigned to classes. Over half of the province’s teachers are concerned that the number of students in their classes on Pathways 2, 3, or 4 makes their workload unreasonable or unmanageable, claiming that the extra work associated with ISSPs and the related documentation process needs to be reduced, or the number of students that teachers are responsible for needs to be capped. (Dibbon, D. (2004). It’s about time!! A report on the Impact of workload on teachers

and students. St. John's, NL: Faculty of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland).

- Across the Country
 - Provincial Jurisdiction
- Data Sources Examined
 - Department of Education webpages
 - Legislation
 - Policies
 - Annual Reports of the Departments
 - Special Education Review Reports
 - Other reports
- What was examined
 - Legislation and policies relevant to:
 - Access
 - Inclusion
 - Placement
 - Individual planning processes
 - Parental and student participation
 - Appeals
 - Classroom level personnel (roles and responsibilities)
 - Funding mechanisms (limited look at accountability)
- Access
 - All provinces and territories include some statements about access to free, public education for all children (ages usually specified);
 - Some talk specifically about provision for special education (eg. Alberta) or requirement to make accommodations (eg. Manitoba, Northwest Territories)
 - Some provinces include in their legislation provisions for exclusion (eg. Alberta & Saskatchewan)
- Inclusion
 - First option: Regular classroom; exceptions apply (Alberta, BC, Manitoba, NB, NWT, NS, ON, Quebec, NL (draft policy only));
 - Least restrictive environment (Yukon);
 - Continuum of support (PEI, Saskatchewan)
- Appeals
 - To Board only (BC, NL, PEI)
 - Council of Commissioners (Quebec)
 - Special Education Tribunal (ON)
 - Education Appeal Tribunal (Yukon)
 - Education Authority (NWT)
 - To Deputy Minister (Manitoba)
 - To Minister or Ministerial Board of Appeal (Alberta, NS, Saskatchewan (Minister may appoint one or more persons to inquire into and report on))
- School level personnel

- The Paradigm Shift
- School Level Personnel
 - Teachers (all provinces and territories)
 - Resource Teachers (Alberta, Manitoba, NB, NS, PEI (Special Education/Resource Teacher), Quebec, Saskatchewan)
 - Learning Assistance Teachers (BC, Saskatchewan, Yukon)
 - Teaching Assistants/Educational Assistants Alberta, BC, NB, NS, Manitoba, NWT, ON, PEI, Saskatchewan, Yukon (Quebec uses Integration Aides)
 - Special Education Teachers (NL, ON)
 - Categorical Teachers (NL)
 - Student Assistants (NL)
- Role of the Regular Classroom teacher in BC
 - The ministry expects that with sufficient training and experience, classroom teachers will be capable of including students with intellectual disabilities and providing programs in which they can be successful, provided that specialized support is available when needed. In-service training opportunities and a collaborative team approach are recommended to support and encourage the development of the necessary skills and understandings which the classroom teacher may require (BC Policy Manual, p. 44).
- Role of the Regular Classroom Teacher NL
 - Primary responsibility for children on Pathways 1-3;
 - Shared responsibility (with special educators) for children on Pathway 4 (Special education teacher has primary responsibility for implementing alternate courses);
 - Shared responsibility with special education and categorical teachers for students on Pathways 5.
- Teaching Assistants
 - Sample Roles and Responsibilities:
 - providing individual support under the direction of the teacher and based on the objectives and goals outlined in the student's IPP
 - working with a small group of students to reinforce a concept or skill that the teacher has previously taught to the group
 - providing personal care, such as toileting, personal hygiene, dressing, or checking the operation of assistive equipment
 - assisting with material preparation
 - providing information to the teacher about a student's academic performance, behaviour, growth and needs
 - supervising students beyond the classroom, such as on the playground or at work experience sites
 - providing behaviour support by reinforcing appropriate behaviour consistent with the teacher's expectations. (Alberta)
- Student Assistant's Role

- To follow the procedures of the behavior management plan as designated in the ISSP.
 - To assist the teacher by contributing information regarding the child/youth's strengths and needs
 - To attend ISSP meetings if appropriate.
 - To assist the teacher in providing personal care to children including eating and drinking, lifting, self-care and toileting.
 - To assist with the operation of specialized equipment (e.g., stairtrac, wheelchair, walker).
 - To accompany/porter the child/youth to and from classes and school activities.
 - To assist the teacher preparing child-specific materials.
 - To assist with child-specific assistive devices.
 - To assist the teacher during emergency procedures.
 - To assist the teacher in meeting the child's personal care needs as outlined in the ISSP.
 - To maintain confidentiality.
 - To correspond with parents only through the teacher.
- Ministerial Panel on Educational Delivery in the Classroom (2000)
 - "There is a strong view that in many cases learning would be better enabled if classroom teachers had the support of teaching assistants instead of student assistants" (p. 27).
 - "A system has been created in which student assistants have become the "property" of the student and not a support to the classroom".
 - The Panel recommended that the role of student assistants be reviewed with a view to redefining a number of these positions as school-based teacher assistants with educational training and qualifications who can serve a range of educational and individual needs (p. 29).
- Increased knowledge
 - "Research and practice on inclusive education are well ahead of the curriculum at most faculties of education across North America. While state and provincial legislatures have been busy putting inclusive legislation into place, teacher preparation programs have been coping with a whole range of new subject areas and methodologies, such as technology, language across the curriculum, human rights education, global studies, and a host of others. There is always a gap between what is developing in the schools of our land and what the teacher preparation programs can accommodate within their undergraduate programs." (Fox, M. (March 31, 2005). A Review of Inclusive Education Programming for Pre-Service and In-Service Teachers, Teaching Assistants and Student Services Administrators. Paper prepared for Mr. A. Wayne MacKay, Independent Consultant, Inclusive Education: A Review of Programming and Services in New Brunswick, p. 9.)

- Funding Mechanisms
- Many jurisdictions have recently reviewed how they fund special education
- Growing concerns about the relationship between special education funding and services
- Three primary systems used in Canada:
 - Census based (Alberta, NB**, NWT, NS, PEI, Saskatchewan)
 - Categorical (BC)
 - Hybrid (Manitoba, NL, Ontario)
 - Some jurisdictions have recently moved away from categorical or piloting a census model (Alberta, Manitoba (pilot), Saskatchewan)
- Newfoundland and Labrador Hybrid System
 - “Funding is provided for the following services through a combination of per student ratio, caseload analysis and individual student application. All students are counted for classroom teacher allocation then for non-categorical special education teacher allocation. Students with severe needs are counted again for the specific categorical special education services.” (Department of Education website)
- Criticisms of Census Model
 - Does not adequately account for exceptional circumstances
- Criticisms of Categorical Model
 - Questionable cost effectiveness.
 - Labour intensive.
 - Restricts local flexibility.
 - Category labels, rather than specific needs of students dominate discussion and resource allocation.
 - Results in negative portrayals of children. Negative impact on program decisions. (Educators and others often assert, “We can’t provide this support because she is not a Criteria C student”.)
 - Limited accountability. (Focus is on monitoring to ensure that funds are directed toward the areas they were intended).
- **Funding Mechanisms Should Allow for...**
 - Increased Local Control.
 - Respectful identification of individual strengths, needs and supports required.
 - Economizing effect.
 - Streamlining administrative processes and reducing paperwork.
 - Accountability.
 - Assess current status of inclusive education in this province (standard)
 - Identify appropriate measures for evaluating success
 - Agree on process and people who should be involved in monitoring
- What we need
 - A strong vision supported by legislation and policy

- Increased knowledge and understanding of the nature of learning and effective practices for addressing the needs of diverse groups of learners
- Redefinition of roles and responsibilities of educators and support personnel
- Efficient Funding Models and Resource Allocation
- Enhanced collaboration and coordination of services
- Planning and monitoring to strengthen capacity
- Effective Dispute Resolution Processes

Recommendations (7 areas)

Policy and Principles

Recommendation 1: That the Department of Education review the Education Act and Regulations pertaining to special education to ensure that the legislation promotes an inclusive and respectful school environment.

Recommendation 2: That the Department of Education, in collaboration with students, parents, educators and others, will develop a comprehensive policy for supporting all students. The policy will:

- reflect the legislation and reinforce the principles and goals associated with an inclusive education system;
- strengthen the capacity of school districts to design and deliver supports and services that are effective in meeting the diverse needs of students;
- provide guidelines for developing family and community partnerships;
- offer suggestions to assist school districts in reviewing and enhancing local policies; and,
- provide guidelines for monitoring of supports and services.

Recommendation 3: The Department of Education and other stakeholders in the education system, including representatives of the Newfoundland and Labrador Association for Community Living, should complete an analysis of principles articulated in other jurisdictions and re-examine and modify our provincial principles to reflect our vision of an inclusive education system.

Recommendation 4: The Department of Education, school districts and schools must work collaboratively to ensure that educators throughout the school system and all stakeholders are aware of Inclusive Education policies.

Training and Professional Development

Recommendation 5: That the Department of Education, the Faculty of Education, the NLTA, and school districts work collaboratively to ensure that all graduates from the Faculty of Education are well prepared to teach students with diverse needs in regular classrooms. Inclusive education, the diversity of needs in today's classrooms, and best practices in curriculum implementation and program delivery should be fundamental to the content of all regular education courses.

Recommendation 6: The Department of Education should review and modify, if necessary, the requirements for teacher certification to ensure that new teachers have completed a teacher education program that has prepared them to work in Inclusive Education systems with a diverse range of students in regular classrooms.

Recommendation 7: The Department of Education and the Faculty of Education should explore the possible development of an on-line learning environment for Inclusive Education. Courses and programs on Inclusive Education strategies could then be accessed by a range of education professionals across the province.

Recommendation 8: The Department of Education and the Faculty of Education should explore the possible development of an Inclusive Education Summer Institute to enable professional development of practicing teachers.

Recommendation 9: The Faculty of Education (MUN), school districts, schools, the Department and educational associations should work collaboratively to complete research in inclusive practices.

Classroom Personnel

Recommendation 10: The Department of Education must initiate a process involving all stakeholders in a review of the current model of special education with specific focus on the roles and responsibilities of personnel.

Recommendation 11: The Department of Education should replace the job title “Student assistant” with “Educational Assistant” and define roles and responsibilities for Educational Assistants. The role of educational assistant as support for teachers should be clearly defined and training requirements for Educational Assistants should be established.

Effective Planning Tools

Recommendation 12: Pathways model should only be utilized for the students for whom it was initially designed: students at the high school level.

Recommendation 13: Individual Education Plans (IEPs) should be developed for children in primary, elementary, and junior high school who require educational support.

Funding and Resource Allocations

Recommendation 14: The Department of Education should initiate a process involving all stakeholders in the education of students who require additional supports to examine the current use of the categorical funding system and make recommendations for shifting to a model of funding that will enhance inclusive education in this province.

Recommendation 15: The Provincial Government of Newfoundland and Labrador should consider limiting the class sizes for all grade levels within the public education system.

Enhanced Collaboration

Recommendation 16: That the Department of Education and School Districts will respect and strengthen partnerships in education with parents, students, and advocates by:

- Examining educational design processes at the provincial and local levels to identify and implement enhancements in the inclusion of these stakeholders in these design process.
- Finding and using effective avenues for involving students in processes to review, monitor or modify our education systems.
- Ensuring that parents are active partners in the education decision making process

Dispute Resolution and Monitoring

Recommendation 17: The Department of Education should review legislation to include provision for dispute resolution processes beyond the level of school districts. A mandatory dispute resolution process should be developed for use when all school and district attempts to resolve issues have been exhausted.

Recommendation 18: That research be completed to obtain a realistic view of current practices connected with individualized education planning and inclusion of students who require additional support in regular education classes.

THANK YOU

Panel Discussion Forum on Inclusion

Paula Hennessey – Health and Community Services

Inclusion in Child Care: Introduction & Overview

What is inclusion?

- Inclusion means that all children are involved in all aspects of programming
- It goes beyond the notion of placing children with special needs into a child care setting,
- It means the integration and the full incorporation of children with special needs, to the best of their ability, into daily programs.
- It means incorporating basic values that promote and advance participation, friendship, and a celebration of diversity.

For children with disabilities this means:

- the necessary supports of training, equipment, physical modifications and extra staffing are available to all programs, at no extra cost to parents or to the individual programs. that they are active participates, not just observers on the sidelines

Principals of Inclusion:

- Zero reject
- Naturally Occurring Proportions
- Same Range of Options
- Full Participation
- Parent Participation
- Advocacy

What does Inclusion look like?

- Routines & transitions are structured to promote interaction, communication, & learning by being responsive to child behaviour, using naturalistic time delay, interrupted chain procedure, transition-based teaching & visual cue systems.
- The social environment is structured to promote engagement, interaction, communication & learning
- Provides peer models, peer proximity, responsive adults, imitative adults & expanding children's play and behaviour
- Play routines are structured to promote interaction, communication & learning by defining roles for dramatic play, prompting engagement, group friendship activities & using specialized props.

Inclusive Environments

- Use developmentally appropriate programming (i.e. emergent curriculum)
- Fosters respect & social interaction among all children
- Focuses on integration of children with diverse needs, cultures & backgrounds

- All children need child care for the same reasons:
 - Healthy child development
- Parental employment, training & respite
- Friendship & social cohesion

What is Inclusive Child Care?

- Child care that enables children to learn together
- An environment that supports & nurtures individual strengths of each child
- Each child participates in the daily routines & activities of the class

Why is Inclusive Child Care Important?

- All children should have the opportunity to interact with their peers regardless of their ability
- Children learn many developmental skills through socializing & communicating with their peers
- Children are given the opportunity (at a very young age) to form relationships & accept others regardless of differences

Factors that Impact Inclusion

- Attitude of licensees, operators & child care providers
- Providers level of training/knowledge
- Past experiences
- Resources (human, materials)
- Relationships with families
- Access to professional supports

Who Can Child Care Providers Contact for Support & Information?

- Regional Health Authorities are responsible for licensing, inspecting & monitoring all regulated child care services.

Child Care Services is responsible for carrying out this service. There are numerous professionals involved with this process.

- Child Care Services Staff
 - Social Worker
 - Assist with Child Care Licensing
 - Inspect & monitor Child Care Centres/Family Child Care Homes
 - Work with Child Care Consultants to support regulated child care
 - Provide support to families who need assistance in finding child care or who have questions about any aspect of child care including the child care subsidy program
 - Provide professional development to Early Childhood Educators (ECEs)
 - Child Care Consultant
 - Provide programming support to regulated Child Care Centres/Family Child Care Homes

- Work with the Social Worker to monitor & inspect regulated Child Care Centres/Family Child Care Homes
- Assist applicants with licensing process
- Delivery of EQuIP program
- Provide professional development to ECEs
- Child Care Inclusion Consultant
 - Provide support to regulated Child Care Centres/Family Child Care Homes to enhance inclusion & inclusionary practices
 - Administer the Inclusion Equipment Grants
 - Administer Staffing Enhancement Grants
 - ISSP Grant
 - Ratio Enhancement
 - Provide training, consultation, & hands-on support if needed
 - Provide information needed for referrals
 - Work with the Social Worker & Child Care Consultant

Standards Manuals

- Standards and Guidelines for Health in Child Care Settings
- Centre-Based Infant Care-A Guide to Program Standards
- Standards for Early Childhood Programs in Centre-Based Child Care
- Standards for Outdoor Play Areas in Centre-Based Child Care

Inclusion Supports in Child Care

- Initiatives to Promote...
 - Accepting
 - Children in
 - Child Care by
 - Enhancing
 - Programs and
 - Training

Objectives

- To enhance child care services for children with special needs by enhancing inclusionary programming & practices in child care by providing:
 - Training in inclusion & diverse needs
 - Grants to support Inclusion:
 - Inclusion Equipment Grant
 - ISSP Grant
 - Ratio Enhancement Grant

An Introduction to the Inclusion Equipment Grant

- The Inclusion Equipment Grant is intended to assist regulated Child Care Centres/Family Child Care Homes to enhance the availability of equipment & materials in order to better provide for the developmental needs of all children, in particular, those with diverse needs.

Eligibility

- All licensed centres & licensed/approved Family Child Care Homes are eligible to apply
- Grant Amounts
- Funding levels are based on licensed capacity & full-time/part-time status as follows (annually):
 - Full-time 33+ spaces \$850.00
 - Full-time <33 spaces \$550.00
 - Part-time 33+ spaces \$400.00
 - Part-time <33 spaces \$250.00
 - Regulated Family Child Care Homes \$150.00

Eligible Purchases Include:

- Developmentally appropriate equipment & materials which support the inclusion of children with special needs. Items such as:
 - Furniture for the use of children in homerooms
 - Play equipment for the hands-on use of children
 - Art materials for the hands-on use of children

An Introduction to the ISSP Grant

- Model for Coordination of Services is a provincially mandated process
- A plan for accessing & coordinating services across various service providers (e.g., education, health, justice, HRLE)
- Looks at the strengths and needs of a particular child across all areas of development
- Documents the child's annual goals in the Individual Supports Services Plan (ISSP) & accessing services
- In most instances parents/caregivers are the managers of the child's ISSP
- Children with special needs are often being followed by one or more professionals in the community and as a result have an existing ISSP
- Child care settings will be provided funding for replacement staff so that regular staff can attend the ISSP meeting

Eligibility

- All licensed Child Care Centres/Family Child Care Homes are eligible to apply

An Introduction to Ratio Enhancement

- Children with special needs include children who have many requirements (e.g., related to culture/language, identity, medical conditions, diagnoses, and circumstances) including:
 - Delays and/or exceptionalities in one or more areas of development (e.g., social, cognitive, language, physical and self-help)
 - Emotional, behavioural, sensory and/or learning difficulties (whether a child has a diagnosis or not)
 - Family circumstances (e.g., English as a second language, different culture)

- Short or long term medical conditions (e.g., injury illness, asthma or allergies, etc.)
- Not all children with special needs require support at all times
- Staffing supports will help enable centres/homes to better provide for the needs of all children
- Some children with special needs may require modifications to the environment, equipment, programming and/or additional staffing support
- Ratio Enhancement can be used:
 - As a preventative measure to support the inclusion of many children with diverse needs in one homeroom/FCCH
 - To assist a homeroom/FCCH in including a particular child with diverse needs (vs. one-on one)
- Requirements of Ratio Enhancement in a Child Care Setting
 - All staff in a child care setting:
 - Will be involved in programming for, care & supervision of all children in that setting at all times (unless otherwise advised by the Inclusion Consultant)
 - Will complete all required observations & documentation (e.g., data collection) requested by Inclusion Consultant, Child Care Services, and/or other professionals
 - Will be involved in all training identified by Inclusion Consultant in consultation with the operator/licensee e.g., training recommended to support skill development of staff
- Application Process
 - A child care setting who identifies a need for assistance should contact Child Care Services to request consultation with the Inclusion Consultant to explore ratio enhancement options:
 - To address group needs in a child care setting
 - To support the inclusion of an individual child
 - Parental/caregiver consent must be obtained to address any request for consultation to support an individual child
 - The Child Care Inclusion Consultant will provide feedback to the operator/provider & discuss strategies for successful inclusion of the children & support for the staff
 - If the need for additional staffing is identified, the Inclusion Consultant would complete the application in collaboration with the operator/licensee
 - The operator/licensee is responsible for recruitment/hiring of the additional staff
- Eligibility
 - A Child Care Centre/Family Child Care Home may be eligible for additional staff support if there is a demonstrated need, based on:

- The number of children enrolled who require additional support beyond the regular program
- Measures have been taken to support the children's needs
- Current staff commit to additional training in inclusion principles and practices
- An ISSP is in place (where appropriate)
- Individual Programming for Children with Special Needs
 - Some children may require individual programming & support
 - All individualized programming would be completed by other professionals involved with the children
 - All individualized programming will be consistent with existing Child Care Services regulations, policies & standards
- Strategies that Prevent or minimize Challenging Behaviours
 - Environmental
 - Program
 - Teaching social skills
 - Early warning signs
 - Change your approach
 - Observations!

Model of Prevention & Intervention for Challenging Behaviours
 Individualized Intensive Interventions
 Social & Emotional Teaching Strategies

Classroom Preventative Practices

Building Positive Relationships

- EQuIP
 - Enhancing
 - Quality and
 - Inclusive
 - Practices
- An on-site consultation program designed to measure & improve the quality & inclusive practices of child care environments
- How is the Inclusion Consultant Involved in EQuIP?
 - The Inclusion Consultant Will...
 - Be involved in EQuIP once Child Care Centres are ready to identify & address goals & objectives pertaining to inclusion & inclusionary practice
 - Administer special link tools (to measure inclusion & inclusionary practice)

- Work collaboratively with Child Care Consultants (i.e., EQUIP consultant), operators/licensees & homeroom staff to identify goals & objectives
- Some activities related to inclusion & inclusionary practice may include:
 - Hands on training
 - Mentoring of staff
 - Working with operators/licensees to develop an inclusion policy & standards of practice

For further information - Contact the Inclusion Consultant, Child Care Services, at any one of the four Regional Health Authorities

**Panel Discussion
Annual Conference
Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Community Living
St. John's Newfoundland April 18, 2007**

Presentation by Sophia Slaney

- 1.) **Introduction**
- 2.) **Goals of the Inclusive Education Itinerants for the Eastern School District have been identified as:**
 1. To promote and expand acceptance and implementation of effective inclusive educational principles and practices for all teachers for all teachers
 2. Implement changes that support inclusive educational principles and practices
 3. To build capacity within the system so that positive changes are developed and sustained within schools
- 3.) **Chronology of Activities:** To increase awareness and to develop a shared understanding amongst school personnel throughout the district of what is meant by inclusive education. Response was two-fold: **1. School visits-** we were invited to schools to clarify for staff what inclusive education is and how it is implemented in our province. **2. Workshop-** The 5 Keys of Successful Inclusion. The objectives of this workshop were to present an evolution of inclusive education from a historical perspective and to examine the factors which contribute to successful inclusion, the development of a positive school climate, locating resources, collaborative teaching, differentiation of instruction and creative problem solving. This workshop provided a vehicle for discussion around inclusion and it was an opportunity for us to gather information about what kinds of strategies school personnel were using to cultivate inclusive environments in schools throughout our district. Example: Tyler. I had the privilege last year to visit an elementary classroom where a teacher had done a fantastic job in providing the opportunity for meaningful inclusion of all students in her classroom. This was quite a challenge for her as she had among her 30 students, a child who is blind, another with a severe learning disability and another with significant cognitive and physical disabilities. With careful planning and the support of other school personnel, she was able to create a dynamic and engaging learning environment where all students were held accountable for their own learning.

- 4.) It quickly became apparent through our delivery of this workshop, and through the school visits, that although the majority of teachers support the philosophy of inclusive education and although they were all achieving various levels of success with it, they continued to have many questions and concerns about implementing it more effectively. We decided that a useful method to assess the needs of teachers, while at the same time building capacity around the philosophy of inclusive education in schools, would be through the establishment of **Focus Groups**. One of these groups was formed in the Eastern Region of the District. The other in the Western Region. Teachers in both groups were provided with an opportunity to ask questions and to share best practices. Example: Peter. A special education teacher in the group demonstrated, what I think is, and will continue to be, an essential quality in individuals in creating successful inclusion and that is a willing, positive and determined attitude. This particular teacher challenged us often and asked many, many questions. He was constantly searching for resources and strategies which would help him to provide the best possible programming for his students. He shared materials he had developed and resources he had found with all members of the group. The focus groups also gave us an opportunity to share best practices, effective teaching strategies and resources to support the efforts of these teachers in the classroom.
- 5.) It became evident very quickly from our frequent discussions with school personnel that their primary need to create more inclusive classroom environments was practical strategies and resources for immediate use. Response: two workshops – **Differentiation of Instruction (Part One)**. DIF is: At its most basic level, differentiation consists of the efforts of teachers to respond to variance among learners in the classroom. Whenever a teacher reaches out to an individual or small group to vary his or her teaching in order to create the best learning experience possible, that teacher is differentiating instruction. DIF is essentially “effective teaching”. This workshop, explores the “how-to” of DIF and emphasizes low-preparation, practical and effective teaching strategies to meet the needs of all students. This workshop has been very well-attended and well-received by teachers. So much so, that **Differentiation of Instruction (Part 2)** was developed this fall. The content of this workshop builds on the first. The focus in part 2 is on using technology as a way to differentiate the curriculum and how to multi-level lesson plans.

Teachers have e-mailed us with their success as a result of trying these strategies in their classrooms. In one school, I have become very involved in providing follow up and support through the school growth and development process. Teachers have formed a **Collegial Circle**, whereby every six weeks

they choose a topic/strategy which they determine may meet the needs of students in their classrooms and they explore it further in the company of their peers. I facilitate and provide support during these one-hour sessions. The membership of this group grows each time we meet, as teachers throughout the school see and hear the results of the collegial circles being implemented.

- 6.) As we became more involved in DIF, and we continued our visits in schools, it became obvious that one of the best practices we had encountered to support students in the regular classroom was co-teaching. Although the special education teacher is responsible for a specific group of students he/she supports in the regular classroom, all students benefit from this arrangement. DIF and co-teaching, when used together are powerful examples of an effective response to diverse needs in the regular classroom. As a way to support teachers who were already co-teaching and to provide a starting point for others who were interested in this approach, we developed a workshop on collaborative teaching, of which co-teaching is one form.
- 7.) Recognizing, as well, how crucial administrative support is in the development of an inclusive school environment, a workshop for administrators was developed and an article I wrote for administrators on inclusive education was published in the professional journal of the Atlantic Canada Connected Community (a branch of the ASCD – A professional organization for administrators based in the U.S.). If you would like a copy of this article let me know and I will forward it to you. I have e-mailed it to Donna Walbourne as well. The workshop, **Inclusive Education: Historical Perspective and Current Practices** includes a presentation on the historical evolution of the provision of student support services in schools. The rationale for inclusion and recent research is reviewed. School personnel gain an increased awareness of what true inclusion means and are provided with current practices proven to be effective in creating an inclusive environment in schools. Administrators responded positively. Example: One administrator commented that the issue of being included is driven home and becomes very personal when you find yourself excluded in any situation or by any system, be it health, education, justice, etc.... She went on to say that it can become a highly charged and emotional issue and she illustrated this point with her own personal experience in the health care system. It is through this kind of sharing that we build empathy for each other and provide a context and understanding which motivates us all to look for ways to create more welcoming and inclusive school environments.

**Panel Discussion
Forum on Inclusion
April 19th & 20th, 2007**

**Eastern School District
Inclusion Education Itinerant
Mary Kelsey**

Introduction

I would like to highlight some of the positive things that have happened in our district over the past two years that indicate to me that inclusion is a concept that is at the forefront and that an acceptance and respect for the diverse needs of all our students continues to grow.

One of the main goals when these positions were created was an increase in awareness of inclusion and inclusionary practices.

- In order to inform staff members of effective inclusionary practices the principal of the school gives out professional journal articles a week prior to the staff meeting. During the meeting, time is set aside to discuss the article through varied grouping strategies. This principal continues to seek out articles which promote inclusion.
- Schools have requested the names of guest speakers who would be willing to come to their school to speak about their specific disability in an attempt to increase awareness and understanding.
- More schools appear to be inviting their student assistants to be part of their professional development activities.
- Some schools make an active effort to recognize support staff such as bus drivers by inviting them to morning coffee as they play an important role in part of our student's day. This helps to develop good working relationships which allow for collaborative problem solving.
- In our district monthly meetings are held with the SEO of SSS, the behavioral support specialists, and us to share information and to collaborate on our various initiatives. We are able to support one another and share information. Just recently an issue came up regarding a student with severe behavioral challenges attending school for partial days. This issue was discussed with inclusion being at the forefront. How can we provide this student with a sense of belonging while we address his behavioral concerns? Also the issue of suspensions has also been discussed with inclusion in mind – recognizing that in school suspensions may be a better alternative but struggle to find the resources to do so.

Another important goal for us was to increase our ability to share information and to educate others on inclusionary practices:

- Regular monthly meetings
- Meetings and open communication with the department(We just recently started Best Practice sessions for teachers who had limited sub time but wanted to learn more about inclusionary practices Accommodations and technology for students with diverse reading an writing needs. Independent Living Resource Center. Schools
- Use of our First Class conference site for inclusive education- Teachers will often request information or send us information – able to inform teachers of upcoming PD opportunities- also able to post learning clips on topics we have developed such as creating a positive classroom climate and collaborative teaching. We can post information and send it to teachers.
- Ability to post our own sessions on the PD calendar
- Contacted by city hall – presentation on the REAL program, consultation with instructors at Memorial.

Another goal was for an increasing acceptance that student diversity was the norm and that schools would start to change their practices based on this reigning assumption:

- a Grade one teacher of a student with a hearing impairment decided that the class would learn sign language and use it while singing their songs during the Christmas concert. The concert had special meaning for all who participated and attended, especially for the parents and grandparents with hearing impairments who knew they were valued members of that audience.
- Prior to planning field trips and extracurricular activities teachers discuss the participation of students with special needs to see what adaptations need to be made so all students can participate. One school reports that they use modified equipment from the Janeway and some they have made themselves so all students can participate in skiing and skating activities.
- In another school where a student use PECs to communicate, the teacher and student have gone into classes to demonstrate this system with the result that other students can now communicate with this student.
- Another teacher of a student with autism bought a book called, “I have Autism” which came with a book that you could print off and personalize for individual students. This student made his own book and then a PowerPoint presentation about his story of having autism to present to his class which was well received.
- An increased awareness among high school teachers that alternate forms of evaluation and choice can yield more motivation and better quality of work. One school offered the choice of a science fair project, creation of a web page, or a research paper rather than the one choice of a science experiment.

- Some schools report that they are more sensitive as to the type of assignment they will ask students to complete such as a family history or a family tree.
- Other schools provide study guides that clearly outline the key outcomes and topics covered. This guide uses features such as diagrams, large fonts, text blocks and other features to increase the readability of this tool.
- Use of texts at various reading levels (Romeo and Juliet)
- Increased use of technology so that students can access the curriculum.

Another goal was for school communities to realize that to increase inclusionary practices and to create schools where all members felt a sense of belonging that all members had to contribute;

- inclusion of support staff
- Student learned how to use the braille so she could support her friend who was visually impaired
- Another school has a mentoring program where they pair students who are in need of extra attention with a mentor from the community who comes in once a week during lunchtime and socializes and plays games with these students. The school reports that while the benefits to the student are enormous, that the mentors also gain a lot from the interaction. Just recently one of the student mentors decided to also become a big sister to this student.
- Peer buddies for reading and extracurricular activities such as swimming; peer tutoring, friendship circles
- Schools also report very positive results when they have paired younger and older students to participate in activities- older mentors feel a sense of pride as they are recognized for their contribution.

Future Focus

- Continue to increase awareness through the sharing of information especially around language and resources
- Universal Design for Learning
- Creation of a poster depicting examples of inclusionary practices
- Plan an event which raises awareness of inclusion through an event such as a Community Awareness Day(Make people aware of the difficulties that people with disabilities encounter every minute and hour of their lives) or a Bulletin Board or Poster Contest
- Continue to encourage schools to make inclusionary practices and differentiated instruction as part of their School Growth and Development plan

Therefore, while there is still much to be done, we have many reasons to celebrate.

Thank you

Celebrating our Successes- Mapping our Future

Linda Luedee
Itinerant for Inclusion
Western School District

What a wonderful, upbeat and positive title for this provincial forum. Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this panel discussion and share with you some successful inclusive/ best practices I have seen over the last two months. These practices are very practical and can be used in any classroom.

Although I have recently accepted the position of Itinerant for Inclusion with the Western School District and it is relatively a new position provincially, inclusion is what we have all been striving toward for many, many years. As educators it has been first and foremost on our minds- it has been our goal. As I look back on my teaching career and community involvement over the years I feel we have lots of successes to celebrate with each other today and the reason for this is because of your involvement and commitment to inclusion.

Let me share with you some of the inclusive/best practices that have been implemented and are successful within our schools and community.

One elementary teacher I visited during the last 2 months informed me she starts each year with students being included in their regular classrooms on a full time basis. They start school on the same day as their peers, hang their book bags and lunch bags on hooks outside their classroom and they have full integration for all school and community based activities that involve the school. She is having great success with this approach and she feels that from day 1 the students feel connected to their class and it gives them a sense of ownership. She always refers all discipline concerns, good behavior, lost and found to the classroom teacher to solve which helps the student feel connected to not only his peers but the teacher as well.

Show baggie:

We all know what a baggie can be used for but for a Grade 6 student who gets his homework baggie like all the other Grade 6 students it is a sign that he is connected to all his peers. He receives his homework package at the same time as his peers and his homework is returned to his home room teacher who corrects the homework and returns this corrected work to the student. His baggie will often contain different work than his peers but it will always contain printing, a book to read and often a puzzle. This inclusionary practice makes the student feel he is a part of his class and gives him a sense of pride in the work he has completed.

Home room/Art/Phys.Ed/Theatre Arts/Home Ec/Band/Tech Ed are many classes that are successful for inclusion. These are classes in which students can make

new friends and continue to be with the same peers they have had since Kindergarten. They can participate in a lot of the activities in these courses and are capable of being successful. They also feel connected to the group and enjoy contributing to the class.

Buddy Day:

Many primary/ Elementary/Junior High Schools within the Corner Brook area participate in a weekly swimming, bowling and skating program for the Category C students. Teachers have struggled with how to make this program more inclusive and some schools have started introducing Buddy Day. Once every six or eight weeks the students will get to take a buddy with them when they participate in these activities.

Teachers often struggle with how to make programs within the school more inclusive. For example the Recycling Program needed to include more students other than those with intellectual disabilities. After much sole searching all teachers felt that the recycling program is beneficial to the students because it teaches the students a lot, gives them responsibilities and is financially beneficial for the students and their classes. However, the recycling program in some schools are now made up of teams with the leader being the student with a disability plus five or six members from their home room it now has become an inclusive practice within the school. This solution helped all students feel included and contributing to their school and helping save their environment.

Parallel Programming:(Show example)

Many Special Education Teachers find this a challenge and a lot of work but feel the results are amazing. Teachers will take a topic/unit that is being taught in the regular classroom and adapt it to fit the strengths and needs of the student. Teachers find it more successful if the title page is the same as the other students in the classroom with different activities within the folder. This allows the students to feel they are an active part of the classroom, they are the same as their friends, they are capable of completing some of the work and gives them a feeling of being connected. This is a common practice within the elementary schools but is more difficult but not impossible within Junior High and High schools.

Coop Program:

This has been very successful in some schools in the Western school district. Based on a student's strengths and needs and interests a job site will be selected for a student. This selection will occur in consultation with the student and teacher. They will work side by side with a worker who will teach them the skills they need to be successful at their job. Many students are very successful at their job sites and many secure paid employment. They now become valued members of a staff which leads them to socializing with a new circle of people and they feel great about themselves and what they are doing.

On the West Coast we now have two chapters of Best Buddies Canada. This is a national organization dedicated to enhancing our community through one to one friendships between individuals with intellectual disabilities and university/college students who share common interests. They feel that they make a difference one friendship at a time. This program gives people with disabilities the chance to experience what most of us take for granted: going for coffee with a friend, or out to a movie or simply enjoying the company of a good friend. This is a rewarding program for all the participants involved and it demonstrates to all communities that everyone has a contribution to make.

In closing I would like to extend a thank you to the organizing committee of the NL Association for Community Living for encouraging us to celebrate our successes in Inclusive Education. If people with disabilities are segregated and treated as different they will never be accepted as full members of society. I look forward to helping map our future.
Enjoy the conference.

Inclusive Education Forum
Sharing our Successes – Learning Through Sharing
NLACL – April 19, 2007

Dan Goodyear
CONA

College of the North Atlantic has implemented a fully inclusive model of service delivery for students with disabilities. This model has been designed to compliment the Pathways Model of Service Delivery currently being used in the K-12 education system. Through its implementation, students with disabilities are enabled to access skills training within the provincial public college system.

The model of service delivery addresses the needs of students with disabilities who meet entrance requirements by accepting them into regular college programs and providing them with the required accommodations. These accommodations include, but are not limited to, providing extended time to complete test and exams in alternate settings, oral testing, reduced course loads, and the use of readers and scribes.

For those students with disabilities who do not meet entrance requirements, the model of service delivery allows the applicant to apply for a modified program. Students who apply for a modified program will have their application assessed by a special admissions team. It is important to note that not all college programs can be modified and therefore each application will be reviewed on an individual basis.

The college recognizes that there are many and varied supports required in meeting the needs of all learners. In an attempt to meet these needs the college has lobbied government to secure money to provide 10 permanent resource facilitator positions across the province. These resource facilitators work directly with students to provide one-on-one assistance which enables them to reach their full potential. This year the provincial government has designated \$500,000 to provide both human and technical supports throughout the college system. In addition to this provincial contribution, Disability Services at the St. John's Campus has worked closely with external agencies to secure additional monies to provide further resources for students with disabilities. These additional resources are necessary to meet the needs of the 185 students who have disclosed with a disability at our St. John's Campus.

The number of students with disabilities accessing the college is growing each year. This is a very positive thing, as people are realizing that training options are available and supports are provided to help learners reach their full potential. At our St. John's campus students with disabilities have been very successful with well over 90% of our students completing their college programs. This

success can be attributed to the provision of the required supports and program accommodations, combined with the caring and compassion of faculty members.

While we continue to strive to improve our services we often fail to celebrate our successes and the real differences that have taken place in the lives of our students. Let me introduce you to some of our successful learners.

Corey was one of the first students to avail of program accommodations. He came to us as a quiet young man that had not experienced a lot of academic success. He was however, determined to complete the Welding-Entry Program and become self sufficient. Corey had a severe reading disability and needed to have his disability both recognized and accommodated if he were to succeed. Working with him, his family and his instructors we were able to provide the necessary supports to enable Corey to master all learning objectives within his program. Today Corey is working full-time, has purchased a home and is independent and very much a part of his community. He has a great deal of self confidence and has grown to become a very good self -advocate.

Laurie graduated from the Office Administration Program in 2001. She was a bright, capable young woman who was always eager to learn and to participate fully. Laurie has a visual impairment, only having approximately 3% of her vision. To meet Laurie's academic needs she required adaptive technology, all print material needed to be enlarged and she required a large monitor for her computer. Fortunately, we could meet all of Laurie's needs and she was able to complete her program in a fully inclusive learning environment and graduate at the top of her class. Since then, Laurie has secured full-time employment in her field and is doing very well.

Scott came to us as a quiet but determined young man. He had registered in the Auto Service Technician (AST) Program and was eager to learn the required skills to become a first class mechanic. Scott was exceptional in all shop activities but experienced some frustration with the theory components of the program. Scott disclosed with having dyslexia. To enable Scott to read print material we introduced him to the Kurzweil Reading program. With limited training Scott was able to independently access all print material and read and study at any time. This program enabled Scott to maintain an A average and he was able to progress through his program, meeting all course objectives. Scott excelled in the Auto Service Technical Program and was actually the top student in his class. Scott accepted a job in the Auto Service Industry before he completed his full entry level program and will complete his entry level program during his first block as an apprentice.

Rebecca is a quiet, sincere and focused young woman. She was determined to succeed despite many obstacles. Rebecca completed the Office Administration Program in 2004. She graduated with an A average. Due to her physical disability, Rebecca required extra time in completing tests and exams in a

comfortable setting. Today Rebecca is employed within the Provincial Government and is doing very well.

Jonathan is currently registered in the Office Administration Program. Upon inquiring about applying to the Office Administration Program it was evident that Jonathan did not meet the entrance requirements. Jonathan had not successfully completed high school and would therefore be required to write the Canadian Adult Achievement Test (CAAT) to determine whether or not he would be accepted into the Office Administration program. Upon completing this entrance examination, Jonathan demonstrated that he was very capable. Jonathan has autism. Jonathan has worked extremely hard and has met with great success; he maintains close to a 4.0 grade point average and can type 60 wpm without errors. Jonathan has the support of a full-time resource facilitator that works with him daily.

Another student named Jonathan is currently registered in the Commercial Cooking Program. As Jonathan did not meet the entrance requirements for the program, we suspected modifications would have to be made to meet his individual needs. We discussed this option with him, his parents and college personnel and everyone agreed we would modify course objectives only when necessary. While there have been some minor frustrations within the program we have not had to modify any of the curriculum to date. Jonathan has an intellectual disability and was fearful of not being able to complete the academic requirements of the program. Within the kitchen he has excelled and has met and surpassed all course outcomes. By providing the services of a resource facilitator, Jonathan has been able to complete the Commercial Cooking Program along side his classmates without any program modifications.

All of these students and others have had wonderful college experiences - experiences that have enabled them to learn differently while remaining part of a fully inclusive learning environment. We have all gained so much from providing supportive environments where all students learn together. Inclusive education benefits us all. Learners are provided with quality instruction while at the same time they build strong friendships and become fully immersed in college life.

It is critical that we fully recognize the potential and abilities of all students accessing the college system. We must continue to build our capacity to deliver equitable services to enable all learners to have full access and full participation in a quality post secondary education. To continue to provide these services the college must further build on our capacity to provide equitable services by expanding our human and technical resources. Further partnerships and linkages with community agencies and school boards are critical to ensure adequate transition to the post secondary institution. Only through working together and fostering the need and importance of learning together will we ensure an education system that is meaningful and relevant to all learners.

***Inclusive Education: Sharing our Success - Mapping our Future
Provincial Forum
April 2007***

**Nova Central School District
Patti Winsor**

Inclusive Educational Practices

Supporting Inclusive Education

Providing support for teachers who are working with students that have Criteria C support

- transition planning
- promoting inclusive practices within a school
- attend classes with the students

Closing of Alternate Schools

Providing Professional Development for teachers

Model "Best Practices" at District Level

Lead Teacher Initiative

Purpose

- To build expertise and capacity within schools so that immediate feedback can be provided
- To provide an opportunity to allow teachers to network with other teachers throughout the district
- To provide direct support to select schools
- To review ISSPs, Pathways to Programming, and service delivery in schools
- To allow teachers/schools to build a relationship with District Personnel, which fosters a partnership in delivering appropriate programming to students with exceptionalities
- To better foster inclusive practices

Participation

- 16 schools (2005-2006) and 8 schools (2006-2007)
- geographically represented
- Primary, elementary, junior and senior high schools are represented
- One Non-Categorical Student Support Services Teacher from each school is participating

Professional Development Days

Topics for 2005-2006

- Team Building and Goal Setting for the school year (December)
- Differentiated Instruction: A Way to Meet the Needs of All Learners in the Classroom (February)
- Team Teaching: An Innovative Approach to Meeting Student Needs (April)

Professional Days for 2006-2007

- Team Building and Goal Setting for the school year (December)
- Teaching Reading to Students with Identified Exceptionalities
- Using Assistive Technology to Foster Independence (March)
- Meeting the Needs of Students in An Inclusive Classroom (May)

School Visits

- Program Specialist for Student Support Services and Itinerant Teacher for Inclusive Education will visit each school that is participating in this initiative.
- Meetings are held with each Student Support Services Teacher, Guidance Counselor, and Principal to determine service delivery within the school.
- Meet with the Lead Teacher to discuss goal setting and direction of lead teacher approach in their school
- Review current ISSPs and Pathways to Programming
- Follow-up letter is written to the school
- Presentation on Inclusive Education is provided to all staff, when requested
- Services are available as requested by the individual schools

Committees

- Roots of Empathy Steering Committee
- Safe and Caring Schools Project - GFW
- Committee Against Violence
- Regional Advisory Committee on Supported Employment
- Education Advisory Committee – Healthy Students Healthy Schools

Celebrating Best Practices in Inclusive Education

“A Dream is a Wish Your Heart Makes”

Thank you

An Inclusive School Culture
What is An Inclusive School Culture

- ✓ **Promote, create and sustain inclusive cultures in elementary and secondary schools**
- ✓ **Addresses race, ability, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, socio-economic status, newness to the community**
- ✓ **About inclusion of all stakeholders in school community, including students, educators, parents, support staff and administrators**

An Inclusive School Culture
What is An Inclusive School Culture

- ✓ **Catalyst to change through reflection – review and dialogue – and action**
- ✓ **Focuses on culture – looks for policies, procedures, strategies and actions as well as uncovers attitudes, norms and beliefs**
- ✓ **Highlights both successes and areas that need improvement**

An Inclusive School Culture
Driving Principles

- **Ensure safe environment for open dialogue**
- **Discussions are confidential**
- **Describe own perception – of self/others; focus on current situation**
- **Encourage positive thinking and constructive criticism**
- **Everyone participates**

An Inclusive School Culture
Overview of the Process

- **Principal invites stakeholders – students, educators, support staff,**

parents and administrators - to participate

- Session held in school – 2 ½ hours to discuss and completed review (facilitated)
- Results compiled into a profile for each school
- All schools attend session to review profile and discuss next steps
- Schools develop goals and strategies based on what they have learned
- Schools build into improvement plan

***An Inclusive School Culture
Overview of the Review Session***

- Provide brief overview of the project and intent
- Split into stakeholder groups – students, parents, educators, support Staff*, administrators
- Reflect and respond – discuss each question, provide evidence and check box
- Gather to provide brief overview of discussion by each group

***An Inclusive School Culture
Role of the Facilitator***

- ✓ **Keep people on track and time**
- ✓ **Ensure everyone understands the questions and examples**
- ✓ **Encourage everyone to participate**
- ✓ **Keep people focused on question**
- ✓ **Provide examples from own experiences**