# education watch: an update on inclusive education

Volume 2, Issue 3 • Winter 2011

# February is National Inclusive Education Month in 2011

Join the Inclusive Education Team – Do something in your community to celebrate and promote inclusive education in February and make a difference.

#### **WHAT CAN YOU DO?**

**TEACHERS:** share your strategies and success;

**PARENTS:** share your vision for your child and the positive experiences you have had with teachers and schools;

**PARENT GROUPS:** recognize a teacher, principal or staff member doing a great job in your child's school or classroom.

We are planning a National Web Seminar on inclusive education in Canada—it will be scheduled for the last week of February 2011. Look on the homepage of our website for details. www.inclusiveeducation.ca



Diversity includes. On se ressemble.



Check out our flyer at http://www.inclusiveeducation.ca/engage/educationweek.asp

**HEADS UP – A number of provinces and communities** take part in activities during February. Check on plans in your province or community.

#### Among the activities:

MANITOBA: Anne Kresta from Community Living Manitoba tells us that Manitoba Education has just proclaimed the week of February 21st to be Inclusive Education week.

Major Activity – A Town Hall Meeting February 23, 2011, 7-9:30 pm at Gordon Bell High School

Manitoba Education will describe progress to date and future directions, followed by a discussion among participants about current issues.

**NEW BRUNSWICK:** NBACL is calling for nominations for Inclusive Education Awards to be presented in February 2011. More information at: http://www.nbacl.nb.ca/english/events/inclusive\_awards.html

Check with other ACLs for activities in your area.



Diversity includes. On se ressemble.



From left: Zana Lutfiyya, University of Manitoba, Noella Piquette-Tomei, University of Lethbridge, and Scott Thompson, University of Regina.

## **Canadian Disability Policy Alliance**

## - Learning Collaborative and Equity Coalition (2009-2014)

### CACL/Inclusive Education Canada - A Partner

The Canadian Disability Policy Alliance is a national collaboration of disability researchers, community organizations, and federal and provincial policy-makers, all aimed at creating and mobilizing knowledge to enhance disability policy in Canada, with the ultimate aim of promoting equity and opportunity of disabled Canadians. The Alliance is funded by the Social Science and Humanities Research Council for a period of five years, during which time the members will address four policy areas: employment, education, citizenship and health services. The project lead is Mary Ann McColl, PhD, MTS, Queen's University.

Members of the Education Team are:

- Dr. Vianne Timmons, Education Team Lead, President and Vice Chancellor of the University of Regina;
- Dr. Scott Thompson, Academic Co-Lead (Education),
   Faculty of Education, Educational Psychology, Inclusive Education, University of Regina;
- Dr. Gordon Porter, Lead Community Partner (Education), Director of Inclusive Education Canada

The education team will use its national network of educators and policy makers to examine the standard of inclusive education across Canada and develop standards for measuring consensus in best practices and areas for growth in each province. The Team met at the University of Regina on November 3, 2010.

Other Team members include Zana Lutfiyya, Associate Dean (Research and Graduate Programs) and Professor, Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba, and Noella Piquette-Tomei, Associate Professor, Educational Psychology, University of Lethbridge. They are shown in the photo with Scott Thompson.

For more information on this CURA Project use the LINK: http://disabilitypolicyalliance.ca/index.php



Dr. Vianne Timmons, President of the University of Regina, and Michael Bach, Executive Vice President of CACL.

## Western Canadian Conference on Leadership in Inclusive Education – A Success

The conference drew more than 200 delegates to Regina from November 4-6, 2010 and featured speakers from throughout the country with a focus on Western Canada. The keynotes were President Vianne Timmons of the University of Regina and Michael Bach, Executive Vice President of CACL. They delivered a call to action that effectively started the discussions that followed over the three days of the conference. Bendina Miller, President of CACL and Bruce Uditsky, CEO of the Alberta Association for Community Living were featured speakers along with Donna Barrett, Superintendent of Northland School District, Alberta and Tanya Whitney, Principal, Forest Hills School, Saint John, NB.

Other speakers addressed policy and program issues that covered a wide range of challenges and opportunities. A number of speakers were interviewed at the conference and clips of their comments will be posted on the www.inclusiveeducation.ca website where you can find the full program and some of the presentations.

# Promoting Partnership with Parents in Peru

Ines de Escallon, a parent and inclusive education advocate from Toronto, spoke at a conference in Lima, Peru in October 2010.

Ines made a presentation to 600 teachers titled "The Role of the Family in Inclusive Education". She was invited by the Ministry of Education in Peru. Ines also conducted a workshop on Families and Inclusive Education with eight (8) mothers participating as well as a number of

support teachers.



Ines de Escallon

The National
Director of Inclusive
Education,
Clemencia Vallejo,
is working to
promote inclusive
education in Peru.
According to the
Ministry of

Education, only 23% of children with disabilities receive an education in Peru. The department has entered into an alliance "PRODIES" with the Spanish Embassy and the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation. The support is focused on providing economic contribution to efforts to improve education for students with disabilities. Ines observes that there is a high level of need to help teachers understand why it is important to work with families in Peru and throughout Latin America. Teachers and school officials need to learn how to work with families and develop strategies that will build partnerships in the effort to promote inclusive education.





**Deirdre Smith** 

#### Deirdre Smith is Manager, Standards of Practice and Education at the Ontario College of Teachers.

Deirdre is co-editor of a new book of case studies in inclusive education that will be published by SENSE Publishing in early 2011. She has worked with Gordon Porter, Director of Inclusive Education Canada on this project for the last several years. Deirdre has also been a speaker at conferences on inclusive education in Toronto, St. John's and Regina. At the College, Deirdre leads a team of program officers who conduct research, development and implementation activities that promote continuing competence among members of the College. Smith has been active in policy development and in-service teacher education. She is a former school principal and Special Educational consultant with extensive experience as a Teacher Behavior consultant, Youth Counselor, Pre-Service Teacher Educator and an In-Service Teacher Educator.



From left: Diane Richler, Past President of Inclusion International, Michael Rebell, and Gordon L. Porter, Director of Inclusive Education Canada.

# US Legal Expert Michael Rebell, USA To Advise Convention Strategy on Inclusive Education

Michael Rebell, a highly respected New York lawyer, with experience in litigation on education rights, has volunteered to work with Inclusion International and the Convention Action Team on Education that has been established. He is Executive Director of the Campaign for Educational Equity and Professor of Law and Educational Practice at Teachers College in New York City. Professor Rebell cofounded and served as Executive Director of The Campaign for Fiscal Equity (CFE), which won a major constitutional ruling on behalf of New York City public schools. Michael is one of the foremost authorities on the education adequacy movement in the United States and has pioneered the legal theory and strategy of educational adequacy. He has also litigated numerous class-action lawsuits especially on behalf of students with disabilities.

### **Parent Provides Leadership:**

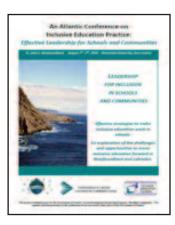
# **Sherry Gambin-Walsh Promotes Inclusion in Schools in Newfoundland and Labrador**



Sherry joined the staff of the NLACL in April 2010 and immediately took on the job of providing the local coordination of the Atlantic Conference, **Conference on Inclusive Education Practice: Effective Leadership for Schools and Communities.** Sherry works on the association's Community Inclusion Project and brings the passion of a mother to her work promoting inclusive education and working with families and teachers.

# August Conference in St. John's Features Speakers from Newfoundland and Eastern Canada

A conference focused on effective leadership for schools and communities was held at Memorial University from August 1-3. The event was organized by Inclusive Education Canada with the Newfoundland and Labrador Association for Community Living. More than 200 participants took part with teachers and educators from the host province predominating.



Participants suggested the following strategies to move Inclusive Education forward in NL:

- 1. Continuation of the Department of Education's provincial program for Inclusive Education.
- 2. Enabling schools that have had positive experiences with Inclusive Education within NL to present to those schools that are starting the program.
- Educating a school as a unit thus enabling them to work together with the same knowledge and understanding of the expectations to move Inclusive Education forward.
- 4. Workshops for teachers that provide opportunity for breakouts, learning from one another and strategies to implement Inclusive Education practices in the classroom.
- 5. Workshops on differentiated instruction.
- Provide teachers with more human resource support in the classroom as depicted by the diversity of the needs within that particular classroom.
- 7. Information sessions for parents to explain and enable them to understand the changes that are occurring within their child's school and why.
- 8. Provide parents and educators with statistical data from other provinces on Inclusive Education.

# Inclusion International Sets Up CAT on Inclusive Education

Connie Lauren-Bowie, **Executive Director of** Inclusion International. has announced that four Canadians have been appointed members of the CAT on Inclusive Education. "CAT" stands for "Convention Action Team" and the purpose is to find ways to use the **UN Convention on the** Rights of Persons with Disabilities as a way to promote inclusion in schools. The Canadian



**Connie Lauren-Bowie** 

Members are Ines de Escallon, a parent from Toronto, Diane Richler, Past President of Inclusion International, also from Toronto as well as CACL President Bendina Miller, from British Columbia, and Gordon Porter, Director of Inclusive Education Canada from New Brunswick.

The CAT on inclusive education will work with the Inclusion International member organizations in countries which have been identified as national pilot projects and they will respond to individual requests for support and information.

The CAT will support the development of strategies to promote inclusive education through:

- Review and reform of education sector plans
- Legislative and policy reform
- Teacher training
- Curriculum adaptation & accessibility
- Provision of materials and resources

The CAT website **www.iicats.org** has been created as a platform for sharing information. It is hoped that it can facilitate an exchange between the team members and at the same time hopefully eventually be useful to our members.



## **Human Rights and Inclusive Education**

One of the themes that has generated considerable interest in Canada recently is the implication of human rights laws on access to inclusive education. In addition to provincial and territorial human rights laws, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities has also added to the mix since Article 24 deals specifically with the provision of inclusive education – and life long learning. Raylene Stokes, a lawyer with the Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Justice and Carey Majid, Director of that province's Human Rights Commission, and also a lawyer, addressed that issue at the Atlantic Conference in St. John's in August.

For more information you can find guidelines issued by the Ontario and New Brunswick Human Rights Commissions at the following sites:



**Raylene Stokes and Carey Majid** 

Ontario: http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/resources/Guides/AccessibleEducation/pdf

New Brunswick: http://www.gnb.ca/hrc-cdp/e/g/Guideline-Accommodating-Students-Disability-New-Brunswick.pdf

New Brunswick Pamphlet: http://www.gnb.ca/hrc-cdp/PDF/pamphlet-accommodating-students-disability.pdf

### **Newfoundland School for the Deaf Closed!**



Dan Goodyear

At the Atlantic
Inclusion Conference
held in St. John's in
August, Dan Goodyear,
Director of Student
Services for the
Department of
Education discussed
the closing of the
Newfoundland School
for the Deaf. He
explained that no new
students were enrolled
for the coming year
and there were no new

students projected in coming years. The minister of Education, Hon. Darren King made the announcement on August 2, 2010. The minister said that while generations of students had been served in the school, times change. He commented on the new cochlear implant technology developed in the last decade and the desire of students and families to keep their youngster at home. The

Minister said that — "This change is consistent with our inclusive education approach and is in the best interest of students' academic and social development." Michael Bach, the Executive Vice President of CACL commended the Newfoundland and Labrador government for their forward looking policy.

For the full Department of Education Press Release link:

http://www.releases.gov.nl.ca/releases/2010/edu/0802n10.htm



# **Education Minister in New Brunswick Makes Inclusive Education a Priority**



The Honourable Jody Carr, Minister of Education, NB

New Brunswick's new Minister of Education, **Hon. Jody Carr** (standing in photo) told a group of more than 30 school principals in November that inclusive education is one of the priorities for his department. Carr was speaking to the principals in a day long session sponsored by NBACL through the Community Inclusion Program. The Minister said that inclusion was one of the three key mandates given to him by NB's Premier David Alward when he invited him to take the job. Mr. Carr said that many recommendations in the McKay Report of 2006 still need to be pursued and the focus in the next several years will be to enhance and strengthen the provinces support for inclusion in schools and classrooms.

## Inclusive Education Sector Forum in St. John's

Key players in projects promoting inclusive education supported by the "Community Inclusion Initiative" met this summer in St. John's. They shared strategies and were updated on things happening in several provinces – among them Newfoundland & Labrador, New Brunswick, Ontario, Manitoba, British Columbia and the Northwest Territories. Shown here are **Shana Soucy, the Inclusive Education Coordinator for NBACL** and **Ray McIsaac, the President of NLACL**. These projects are supported by Federal Office of Disability Issues (ODI) – Human Resources and Skills Development Canada.



Ray McIsaac, the President of NLACL



Shana Soucy, the Inclusive Education Coordinator for NBACL



# Message from an Inclusive Education Enthusiast

#### To: www.inclusiveeducation.ca

I received your flyer about inclusive education month from a co-worker and I immediately visited your website. I am a Speech Language Pathologist at Upper Canada District School Board in Ontario and inclusive education has been my passion for my whole 14 year career. On your website you asked us to let you know what we will be doing to celebrate Inclusive Education Month 2011.

At Upper Canada District School Board we have developed SMART Inclusion, a grass roots initiative that involves using SMARTBoards and assistive technology scaffolded by theory such as Universal Design for Learning, Differentiated Instruction and the Participation Model allowing ALL students to achieve meaningful social and academic participation. I have attached an article on SMART Inclusion that was just published in *Closing the Gap* magazine summarizing the first year of this initiative. We continue to research this concept and we are currently involved in a two-year research project with two SMART Inclusion schools where technology and theory are being used to include ALL students from Kindergarten to Grade 8. February 24, 2011 we will host a SMART Inclusion Day where we open our schools to school districts and agencies from across North America and beyond to see SMART Inclusion in action and to meet the real stars of the show—our students:)

For more information on SMART Inclusion visit us at **smartinclusion.wikispaces.com**. The SMART Inclusion Team is sharing resources here to help others along this most exciting road that we have been traveling along for the past three years.



Thanks for your passion and for your vision,

#### Alexandra Dunn

Speech Language Pathologist, Upper Canada District School Board Oxford Mills, Ontario

E-mail: Alexandra.Dunn@ucdsb.on.ca

Twitter: **SMARTInclusion** 

Wikispaces: smartinclusion.wikispaces.com



# **Christy Waldner, Muenster, Saskatchewan** is a mother and advocate for inclusive education. She is a member of the board of the Saskatchewan Down

is a member of the board of the Saskatchewan Down Syndrome Society and was a delegate to the Western Canadian Conference on Inclusive Education held in Regina in November. Christy is seen here (on right) with her daughter Bailey who is enrolled in a teacher education program. Christy is anxious to see inclusion achieved in her community schools.

# Community Living Ontario Highlights Inclusive Education Efforts

CLO is focused on several projects promoting inclusive education in the province. **Linda White** and **Kimberley Gavin** are leading this effort. One of the most exciting projects is working with young people to tap into their energy and openness to social action.

The Re:ACTION4Inclusion Youth Initiative is creating a real buzz in some communities. After two very successful youth leadership conference's hosted by the Community Inclusion Initiative, there is a clear momentum for change.

Participants who attended these conferences have taken up the call to take action with enthusiasm and commitment.

Since the conferences held in March 2010 there have been a number of requests to have the Youth Advisory Group and the conference speakers come to local communities. The question that is causing the buzz and energizing people is: "What are Youth prepared to do to make our communities welcoming places?"

In November members of the Re:Action4Inclusion Youth Team hosted school assemblies at their schools to ask this question and to challenge their school community to rethink their preconceived notions of people who have a disability. School assemblies were held in various Ontario communities with speaker Norman Kunc telling his "Story Of A Stranger".



Linda White and Kimberley Gavin

An article describing the project on Community Living Ontario's website:

http://www.communitylivingontario.ca/news-events/news/citizenship/students-are-passing-torch

Linda and Kimberley advise that the 3rd Annual Re:ACTION4Inclusion Conference will be held at the YMCA-Geneva Park Leadership Training and Conference Center in Orillia, March 25th-27th, 2011. This event will provide high school students the opportunity to tap into their leadership potential and nurture the potential to be strong advocates for inclusive education. This will enable them to have a voice in helping to change the culture of their schools.

### Manitoba Report

# **Transitioning to Adulthood:** Parents Report on How the Process is Working for their Sons and Daughters with Disabilities

Report Prepared October 2010

Community Living Manitoba recently completed a survey of transition planning targeted at the families of Manitoba youth with a wide variety of disabilities aged 14 to 24 years. This was done in response to reports that information regarding the Bridging to Adulthood Protocol for transitioning youth to community had not reached parents of youth with disabilities aged 14 to 21 years. The survey was developed to explore how different elements of transition planning had been used and how satisfied parents were with how the process is working or has worked for their son or daughter. This 29 question online survey was linked to the CL-MB website and advertised to parents across Manitoba through CL-MB newsletters, email

campaigns, and networks of support groups, respite providers, and disability specific organizations and associations (for example the Cerebral Palsy Association, the Manitoba Down Syndrome Society, Autism Society of Manitoba and Asperger Manitoba Inc.). Data was collected from the spring of 2010 until mid October 2010.

The full report is available on the website: www.inclusiveeducation.ca



### **Newfoundland and Labrador Educators Speak at Conference**

A number of Newfoundland and Labrador teachers, principals and school officials spoke at the Atlantic Inclusive Education Conference held in August 2010. Some of them are noted below.



Jeff Thompson, Assistant Director of Education – Programs, Western School District; Corner Brook. He talked about how his district promotes the concept of a "professional learning community". A key part of the district's effort involved adopting "a philosophy of doing whatever it takes to ensure

each child learns to his/her maximum potential, or at least to the level where s(he) will have an enhanced opportunity to be happy and successful in adulthood.



Patti Winsor, Consultant, Nova Central School District, NL – was featured speaker on differentiated instruction and strategies to make it work in the classroom. It was a very practical workshop and one of the highlights of the conference. Patti is shown on the left with Sherry Gambin-Walsh one of the organizers of the conference who works for the Community Inclusion Project.



Sandra Broomfield, Principal & Audrey Hudson, Instructional Resource Teacher at Peacock Primary School, Happy Valley-Goose Bay. Sandra and Audrey (pictured here) shared how they promote inclusion in their school through supporting teachers in a variety of collaborative ways.

Marlene Munn was born and raised in Labrador although she now lives in Fredericton. Marlene is a mother and is the President of the New Brunswick Association for Community Living. She shared her experience working with teachers to have her daughter Aimee included in school and noted the positive results achieved.





**Salvatore Amenta** – or **Sal** as he is called, is the co-chair of Community Living Ontario's education committee. A retired teacher, Sal brings both passion and experience to the effort to support inclusion in Ontario schools. Under Sal's leadership the committee is moving towards setting priorities for advancing the association's inclusive education mandate.

Comprised of about a dozen members representing diverse perspectives from parents to executive directors of local associations, the committee consolidates the ongoing work in education of Community Living Ontario's community development, government relations, and communications departments. Amenta notes that the complexities of the education system present challenges for the committee as they develop a working plan to tackle issues.

## **Inclusive Education Resources Available**

from CACL and Inclusive Education Canada

You can download several items from CACL on the www.inclusiveeducation.ca website.





### Q & A

inclusion



#### inclusion scolaire

réponses sur l'inclusion

questions et



Available in French

#### A GUIDE FOR PARENTS



#### who can you call for help?



#### a parent's guide to inclusive education





#### Qui pouvez-vous appeler pour de l'aide?

guide des parents sur l'inclusion scolaire





Available in French

#### INFORMATION ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION CANADA



**Check out our No Excuses** campaign on our website.





# **European Agency Promotes Inclusive Education**

The European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education is an independent and self-governing organization established by 27 member countries to act as their platform for collaboration regarding the development of provision for learners with special educational needs.

The agency is maintained by the Ministries of Education in the participating countries (member states of the European Union as well as Iceland, Norway and Switzerland) as well as supported by the European Union Institutions via the Jean Monnet program under the EU Lifelong Learning Program.



Cor Meijer, Director, and Jørgen Greve, Chairman, of the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education

The Agency facilitates the collection, processing and transfer of European level and country specific information and offers member countries the opportunity to learn from each other through different types of knowledge and experience exchange.

The agencies short and long term work programs reflect both member countries' priorities and agreed EU policies regarding learners with special educational needs and the promotion of their full participation within mainstream education and training.

#### **European efforts to promote inclusive education**

On 15 November, Director Cor Meijer and Chairman Jørgen Greve of the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education met with EU Commissioner Androulla Vassiliou and General Director Jan Truszczynski of the European Commission to inform them of the Agency's work programme priorities and formally invite them to the European Hearing for young people with and without disabilities. The European Hearing will take place in the European Parliament, 5-7 November 2011. For information about the agency and it's activities as well as programs of participating countries go to their website – Link at <a href="http://www.european-agency.org">http://www.european-agency.org</a>



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