

CODE CHRONICLES LES CHRONIQUES DU CODE

ISSUE NO. 6
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WELCOME TO ISSUE SIX! BIENVENUE À LA SIXIÈME ÉDITION!
Read on and enjoy the contributions of our many writers from school districts across Ontario. Prenez connaissance des contributions de vos collègues de par tous les conseils scolaires de l'Ontario. Bonne Lecture!

CONTRIBUTORS

Thanks to the following for participating in this issue

Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board
CODE Special Education Leadership Team

Ontario's Institute for Education Leadership

Be sure to visit Ontario's Institute for Education Leadership (IEL)'s website at www.education-leadership-ontario.ca. IEL is a unique partnership committed to exploring leading-edge thinking on education leadership and applying that expertise to the development of high-quality resources and learning opportunities for school, board, and system leaders.

While you are there, click on the APPLIKI link on the site:



Appliki is a knowledge mobilization search engine brought to you by Ontario's Institute for Education Leadership. This comprehensive search engine offers a wealth of exemplary resource materials for Succession Planning and Talent Development currently in use in Ontario's school systems.

Letter from the Editors

Brian Finnigan, Nancy Tully-Peever

WE ARE very pleased to welcome you to our second edition of CODE Chronicles for the 2009-2010 school year. We want to thank our contributing boards for their submissions related to their ongoing excellent work in bringing to life the underlying principles of the Education for All Expert Panel Report. It is a constant reminder that we are involved in an ongoing reculturing of educational service delivery in Ontario, where the real beneficiaries of our work are our students.

This edition also focuses some attention on two of the many partners who help make this reculturing effort move forward; The Institute for Education Leadership and the Centre for Inclusive Education at the Faculty of Education, University of Western Ontario. We would encourage you to follow the links provided to see how the efforts of these two organizations fit into the big picture of creating learning environments that work for all.

We also have included an article that recaps some of the important moments

from the recent AERO (Association of Educational Researchers of Ontario) conference held in Toronto in December 2009. The theme the conference was "Special Education: Research to Support Students with Special Needs". This was a very timely topic considering the initiatives underway throughout the province.

We also want to draw your attention to an excellent article that appeared in the January 18 publication of Maclean's magazine entitled 'Listen Up, Class'. The article focuses on some of the benefits of using sound field systems in school settings and highlights the Keewatin-Patricia DSB. Just another example of how our reculturing efforts are filtering down through the popular media.

We hope you enjoy reading and sharing about items appearing in this edition. We welcome and encourage any feedback you may have concerning this publication and please do not hesitate in contacting the editors if you are interested in highlighting excellent work that is going on in your

district. It is through the mobilization of our collective learning that good initiatives and ideas can turn into great learning for all!

Your editors,

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Contact CODE

IF YOU have a response to any of the articles in this or any issue of the CODE Chronicles Les chroniques du CODE please use the email link found at the end of each article, or if you have a general suggestion for this publication please drop us a line.

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CODE Special Education Project Update

T. J. Fauteux, Michelle Forge
Members, CODE Special Education Leadership Team

JK-GRADE 1 Assessment and Intervention Strategies

Background

Building on the Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE) Special Education Project 2005–2008, this Special Education Project, entitled the JK–Grade 1 Assessment and Intervention Strategies project, is designed to:

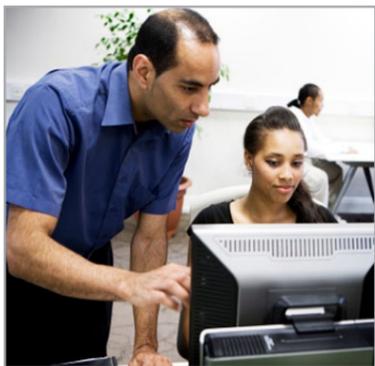
- identify existing effective, evidence-informed assessment and intervention strategies for students in JK–Grade 1
- develop a monitoring tool to support boards in implementing effective, evidence-informed assessment and intervention strategies for students in JK–Grade 1
- provide for broad dissemination of evidence-informed assessment and intervention strategies for students in JK–Grade 1
- codify the process of system change used in the CODE Special Education Project: JK–Grade 1 Assessment and Intervention Strategies
- The CODE JK–Grade 1 Assessment and Intervention Strategies project fosters:
 - ongoing collaboration between the Ministry, including regional Ministry offices, and CODE, representing three affiliate supervisory officers' associations
 - dialogue and reflection on current practice among lead boards—refining the JK–Grade 1 evaluation process; reaching consensus about key outcomes; and sharing effective, evidence-informed tools and strategies
 - dialogue and reflection on current practice by all boards in each region, with further refinement of the tools/strategies and attention to local context
 - trusting relationships, sharing of effective practices, and networking among superintendents of special education province-wide
 - recognition of the knowledge and experience of early childhood educators

Process

The following section outlines the process used to support the development of a provincial overview of assessment and intervention strategies that reflect the experience and expertise of Ontario educators.

The lead board/regional teams were selected in October 2009 after all boards were invited to submit an expression of interest in carrying out the functions as outlined by CODE Team. After reviewing the expressions of interest submitted, the following boards were selected to carry out the duties as lead board for their region:

1. Hamilton-Wentworth DSB
2. Dufferin Peel CDSB
3. York Region DSB
4. Hastings and Prince Edward DSB
5. Sudbury CDSB
6. Lakehead DSB
7. CSDC des Grandes Rivières



The lead board/regional teams are expected to ensure that the monitoring tool originally developed by the lead boards and refined at the regional level is aligned with Ministry goals, with "Lessons Learned" at the district and school levels during the CODE Special Education Project (2005–2008), and with the K–12 School Effectiveness Framework. The CODE Team and the Superintendents responsible for Special Education in the lead boards met with representatives from all school boards at regional meetings. During these meetings, we explained the project and the expectations for participation.

The lead boards and CODE Team explained that project design must include expectations for:

- implementation of effective, evidence-informed assessment and intervention strategies for all students in JK–Grade 1
- identification of existing effective, evidence-informed assessment and intervention strategies for students in JK–Grade 1
- sharing of effective, evidence-informed assessment and intervention strategies for students in JK–Grade 1 through leadership networks

Regional team meetings have been scheduled by the lead boards and the project is underway in all seven regions. At the outset, the lead/regional teams are preparing to define the Evidence-Informed Assessment and Intervention Strategies that are used by school boards for students in JK–Grade 1.

Each region is preparing a submission to the team, which is comprised of the CODE Team and lead board members. This meeting is scheduled for May 2010. Results of this meeting will provide a provincial overview of effective, evidence-informed assessment and intervention strategies for students in JK–Grade 1.

We are very excited about the work that school districts across Ontario are doing for this project and we look forward to sharing the process and product in further detail. ◆

John Fauteux and Michelle Forge
Co-Chairs, CODE Special Education Leadership Team

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Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board Embeds Assistive Technology and Differentiated Instruction Within Curriculum and Teacher In-service

Dawne Boersen, Coordinator of Curriculum
Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board



The teachers and administrators of Huron-Perth CDSB have worked diligently over the past four years to use differentiated instruction, universal design, and Assistive Technology as key strategies to support our students. Even though HPCDSB is a small rural board that serves a fairly homogenous student base, we recognize that diversity comes in many forms and that our students learn in unique ways that require us to provide instruction and support their learning through various means. We are a hope-filled community with a belief that all students can succeed in a faith-based environment, and this initiative fit in well with our beliefs about student learning.

Using CODE funding, we've extended our work to continue to build capacity among our staff so that they can help our students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs) to use Assistive Technology. We feel that the latest developments in technology can help students with learning disabilities cope with barriers to their learning, whether they struggle with receiving information or with producing evidence of their learning.

During phase one of this initiative, a program manager was hired to lead a team of teachers in writing lessons for Primary, Junior, and Intermediate teachers to use with Clicker 5, Write:OutLoud and Co:Writer. These teachers were then deployed to support classroom teachers in implementing these programs in their classrooms. In phase two of the initiative, a support person was hired to work with teachers in their classrooms to set up the Assistive Technology and to help the student(s) and the teacher become familiar with the software. The support person worked alongside teachers in the classroom to ensure that the technology matched what was outlined in students' IEPs. As well, workshops were held for Special Education Resource Teachers to understand more about how Maplewood and the IEP engine worked. These teachers were able to take this learning back to the school and assist classroom teachers with the construction of the IEPs. To enhance these efforts, brochures and print materials were created to help teachers troubleshoot issues when support personnel were not available to provide direct support. Educational Assistants and library technicians were also trained to use and troubleshoot the Assistive Technology in this phase of the initiative.

We were pleased to see students using Clicker 5, and evolved from using Write:OutLoud and Co:Writer to Premier Assistive Technology and to seeing IEPs that reflected teachers' comfort level with Assistive Technology. A value-added component of the capacity building was teachers' interest in using these and other forms of technology with all of their students. Certainly the principles of universal design (necessary for some, good for all) have taken root in HPCDSB.

The use of Assistive Technology didn't stop with our students who have IEPs. Classroom teachers have moved from using Assistive Technology only to support their students with IEPs to using it with all students. We see examples of teachers using Clicker 5 with SMART Boards as centres for learning to decode new words, using other SMART Board software to provide an interactive learning environment for all students, and using Audacity software to support students reading below grade level in accessing print texts in oral form. Students now have opportunities to write exams, tests, and complete projects using Dragon NaturallySpeaking and Premier Assistive Technology for speech to text, text to speech, and word prediction. Using these programs for classroom instruction builds differentiation right in. Blogs, podcasts, and moodles are being used to engage students and their parents in the learning taking place in our schools. Voluntary workshops offered in the summer and after school integrate technology and curriculum areas and are always well attended. Teachers are recognizing that Assistive Technology can be used to assist all students, no matter what their need may be.



Future plans include further promotion of the use of Assistive Technology for all students. A full-time board employee has been hired to continue to support students and teachers in implementing Assistive Technology in the classroom. This investment reflects our compassion for all students and our desire to create a level playing field and to break through the barriers that children may face, whether they have special education needs, family pressures, or other challenges. We strive to be Christ-like in our actions and words as we move forward with this initiative to continue to meet our students' learning needs. ◆

Comments about this article? Email dawne_boersen@hpcdsb.edu.on.ca

Les conseils scolaires de langue française s'engagent dans un processus collectif pour la réalisation du projet du COD

Liliane Laforest, Member
CODE Special Education Leadership Team



Depuis de nombreuses années, les conseils scolaires de langue française unissent leurs efforts dans des initiatives communes. Ils partagent leurs expériences, leurs connaissances et s'appuient les uns les autres dans les divers projets qui ciblent un objectif commun. Le projet de la Stratégie d'évaluation et d'intervention de la maternelle à la 1re année favorise l'engagement d'un effort collectif afin de créer un cadre conceptuel basé sur les nombreuses pratiques et outils pédagogiques développés dans les conseils au fil des ans. Les programmes de maternelle et jardin d'enfants à temps plein sont établis depuis plusieurs années dans les conseils de langue française, ce qui a permis la mise en place de stratégies pédagogiques et d'outils d'enseignement efficaces. Les enseignants et les enseignantes de ces niveaux ont formé une équipe depuis longtemps, mais reconnaissent le besoin de faire des liens avec la 1re année pour augmenter leur efficacité à améliorer le rendement des élèves. C'est dans cet esprit de collaboration que le personnel des conseils a reconnu l'importance de se mobiliser dans le processus proposé par le projet du CODE.

Tous les conseils scolaires participants à ce projet ont privilégié une démarche d'enquête propre à leur milieu pour ensuite consolider leurs résultats avec l'ensemble des conseils. Des équipes d'enseignantes et d'enseignants, du personnel des services professionnels et d'appui ainsi que des directions d'école se regroupent en communauté d'apprentissage pour identifier, analyser et évaluer les interventions pédagogiques qui favorisent une amélioration du rendement des élèves. On y apporte les expériences et les connaissances tant des services pédagogiques que de l'enfance en difficulté, tous font équipe pour mobiliser leurs connaissances et ainsi favoriser l'apprentissage professionnel. Des questions-clés sur ce qui est important pour tous en matière d'évaluation et d'intervention guident leur réflexion afin de proposer un cadre conceptuel de stratégies d'évaluation et d'intervention pour la maternelle-1re année. Il deviendra un outil qui encouragera la pratique réflexive de tous les intervenants et intervenantes à tous les niveaux. Ce cadre conceptuel fournira au personnel des pistes d'action qui leur permettra de cibler les interventions fondées sur des données probantes afin d'améliorer le rendement des élèves. Il servira d'outil dans l'élaboration du plan d'amélioration des écoles en s'appuyant sur les diverses ressources publiées par le Ministère telles : l'Apprentissage pour tous, Guide d'enseignement efficace, etc. Les éléments du cadre conceptuel : l'organisation et le processus du système, le leadership pédagogique, l'apprentissage professionnel, l'évaluation et l'utilisation des données soutiennent le changement systémique et durable. La participation des parents et la communication communautaire sont aussi des éléments essentiels du cadre qui doivent être privilégiés.

Ce qui caractérise particulièrement ce projet sont les rencontres de professionnels en communauté d'apprentissage tant au niveau de l'école, du conseil et des conseils scolaires de la province contribuant à l'établissement de nombreux réseaux. Ce projet réalisé grâce à la collaboration de nombreux éducateurs et éducatrices permettra un partage élevé de connaissances entre conseils scolaires et de son personnel sur les stratégies d'évaluation et d'intervention efficaces fondées sur des données probantes pour les élèves de maternelle-1re année. ●

Comments about this article? Email lila@vianet.ca

The IDEA Partnership – Collaboration to Improve Outcomes for Students with Special Needs

Compiled by Michelle Forge, Co-Chair
CODE Special Education Leadership Team

I recently had the opportunity to attend the annual conference of the Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE), www.casecec.org. CASE has an affiliate group in Ontario known as OCASE. For further information about OCASE activities, please contact Suzanne Moffatt at suzmoffatt@hotmail.com.

At the CASE conference, I learned about a terrific resource that has been created by The IDEA Partnership in the United States. The following information is from their website at www.ideapartnership.org.

The members of the partnership are interested in sharing information about improving outcomes for students with special education needs. I encourage you to visit the partnership's website and to explore the resources it has compiled. Below, you will find information from The IDEA Partnership website that provides a brief overview of some of the resources available. The information is reprinted with permission.

The IDEA Partnership reflects the collaborative work of more than 50 national organizations, technical assistance providers, and organizations and agencies at state and local level. Together with the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), the Partner Organizations

form a community with the potential to transform the way we work and improve outcomes for students and youth with disabilities.

Collaboration on Issues

The IDEA Partnership organizations develop and use tools to enhance relationships and shared work. The organizations collaborate with each other and with State Education Agencies (SEAs) and national centers on the following issues they identified as important. Our work is currently focused on:

- Intersection of NCLB/IDEA
- Interagency Transition
- School Behavioral Health
- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Creating Agreement/Appropriate Dispute Resolution
- Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Early Childhood

Creating Dialogue

IDEA 2004 requires people in different roles to work together. It is easier to work together and more productive if you understand their stakeholder role and what the statute and regulations requires of them. It is also important to understand their views or how they think and feel about these requirements.

- Dialogue Guides are tools for community leaders to bridge the gap between what the law says we should do and how we actually do it in our community. Community stakeholders (families, practitioners, professional associations, higher education, policymakers, and legislators) all over the country can interact in focused conversation
- Dialogue Guides raise questions that encourage and support community stakeholder members in conversation. Shared understanding and better implementation of IDEA 2004 is the goal, which ultimately results in improved outcomes for children and youth.
- A Facilitator Guide to Creating Dialogue and an array of guides that have been prepared by cross-stakeholder groups are available at http://www.ideapartnership.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=section&id=13&Itemid=53
- To gain a better understanding of the facilitator's roles and responsibilities in conducting dialogue, we invite you to read and download the Dialogue Guide Facilitator Handbook at www.ideapartnership.org.

Communities of Practice

A Community of Practice (CoP) is quite simply a group of people that agree to interact regularly to solve a persistent problem or improve practice in an area that is important to them.

The Partnership created issues based National Communities of Practice that states and stakeholder organizations affiliate with based on their common interest in improving practice. The Partnership communities are focused on shared implementation of IDEA and the alignment of IDEA with other federal legislation. The Communities work together through face-to-face meetings, routine learning calls and an electronic community site, www.sharedwork.org

Through the CoP approach, we strive to:

- bring diverse organizations into a working relationship around their common interests
- bring stakeholders into the work of state education agencies as allies
- bring fresh approaches to persistent problems by uniting decisionmakers, practitioners and consumers around a common goal

Communities of Practice Convened and Facilitated by The IDEA Partnership

- National NCLB-IDEA Collaboration Community
 - » *State CoP on NCLB/IDEA*
 - » *Practice Groups on NCLB/IDEA*
- National Community of Practice on School Behavioral Health
 - » *State CoP on School Behavioral Health*
 - » *Practice Groups on School Behavioral Health*
- National Community of Practice on Autism Spectrum Disorder
 - » *State CoPs on ASD*
 - » *Practice Groups on ASD*
- National Community of Practice on Creating Agreement
- National Community of Practice in Support of Transition
 - » *State CoP on Secondary Transition*
 - » *Practice Groups on Secondary Transition* ●

Comments about this article? Email michelleforge@yahoo.ca

Centre for Inclusive Education

The Centre for Inclusive Education, located in the Faculty of Education at the University of Western Ontario, is a research association composed of faculty members, research associates, and graduate students who share an interest in inclusive education research. The goal of the Centre is to encourage collaborative investigations of theories and practices in an effort to enhance the educational opportunities of all students with exceptionalities. The Centre is committed to sharing research findings and resources with academics, educators, and families.

The centre is involved in a variety of projects related to creating Inclusive Educational environments for students. A wealth of resources and information is available at their website, well worth a visit: www.edu.uwo.ca/Inclusive_Education/index.asp