



Spring-Summer/
Printemps – Été 2011
REFLEXIONS



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Learning Disabilities Association of New Brunswick
Troubles d'apprentissage—association du Nouveau-Brunswick

As a result of concerns expressed to us from parents and professionals, the Learning Disabilities Association has explored the changes coming to our schools regarding changes to the Special Education plans (SEPs). The following paper details the issues.

**Learning Disabilities Association of New Brunswick/Troubles d'apprentissage-association du Nouveau-Brunswick Position Statement on
New Brunswick Department of Education 2010 Changes to Special Education Plans**

This statement is submitted to the New Brunswick Department of Education on behalf of the Learning Disabilities Association of New Brunswick/Troubles d'apprentissage-association du Nouveau-Brunswick (LDANB - TAANB), a provincial association affiliated with the Learning Disabilities Association of Canada – Association canadienne des troubles d'apprentissage (LDAC - ACTA).

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**LET'S TALK
ABOUT IT**



James Middleton, Kate's younger brother, had to learn the reading he delivered at his sister's wedding off by heart in an effort to overcome his dyslexia.

18TH NATIONAL LDAC ACTA CONFERENCE....DON'T MISS IT



The Learning Disabilities Association of Prince Edward Island, supported by the Learning Disabilities Association of Canada, is hosting the 18th National Conference on Learning Disabilities, on September 29 to October 1, 2011 in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island.

The theme for the conference is "No One is An Island: An Ecological Approach to Learning Disabilities". Be there to hear the latest research and stimulating dialogue on learning disabilities.

Keynote speakers will include Jim Koller PhD founder of the US Center for the Advancement of Mental Health Practices in Schools. His presentation will be addressing The Intersection of Mental Health and Learning Disabilities Across the Lifespan. His research includes bullying and school violence, teacher burnout and stress as well as mental health and systems changes.

Others will include George McCluskey on Executive Function, Maggie Mamen on Understanding emotional and behavioural problems in persons with LD. Keith Bain and Janice Stevens will speak on Making AT available to youth with LD. Yude Henteleff and Joy Winchell will address Achieving Best Interests by Best Efforts.

Other topics include the current RTI as well as UDL; stigma associated with LD; Transition planning; Early intervention and trends and Issues.

Knowledge and Skills for Successful UDL Implementation

In light of the history of implementation of inclusionary practices in our province, LDANB has concerns of the teacher training in URL which will occur and the resources which will be made available to our front line workers, our teachers.

From LD Online : *It is important to acknowledge that teachers need new knowledge and skills to successfully implement both RTI (Response to Intervention) and UDL (Dalton et al., 2005; Howard, 2003; Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2005; Rose & Meyer, 2002). Thus, professional development and ongoing support within the schools is important. In addition, technology*

may be an important tool. UDL solutions often make use of technology to increase flexibility and adaptability, with the added benefit of improving teacher support and student engagement (Pisha & Coyne, 2001). Thus, technology can be used to reduce some of the difficulties of implementation. Its inherent flexibility helps make the design of an adaptable curriculum much more feasible.

Source: *Response-to-Instruction and Universal Design for Learning: How Might They Intersect in the General Education Classroom?*

By: Nicole Strangeman, Chuck Hitchcock, Tracey Hall, and Grace Meo, et al. (2006)

<http://www.ldonline.org/article/13002>

What is Universal Design for Learning (UDL)?

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a research-based framework for designing curricula—that is, educational goals, methods, materials, and assessments—that enable all individuals to gain knowledge, skills, and enthusiasm for learning. This is accomplished by simultaneously providing rich supports for learning and reducing barriers to the curriculum, while maintaining high achievement standards for all students. (Source: www.CAST.org)

The term “**Universal Design**” is defined as “a concept or philosophy for designing and delivering products and services that are usable by people with the widest possible range of functional capabilities, which include products and services that are directly accessible (without requiring assistive technologies) and products and services that are interoperable with assistive technologies.” Speakerphones, curb cuts, and close-captioned television are all examples of universal design in our lives.

UDL and Technology

Advances in technology have made UDL possible. UDL uses technology’s power and flexibility to make education more inclusive and effective for all learners. And UDL provides new ways for teachers to customize their teaching to students with a range of abilities, interests, and backgrounds.

Assistive technology (AT) plays an important role for students with LD. UDL and AT are complementary supports that use different approaches to ensure the access, participation and progress by lowering barriers to achievement. The goal of UDL is not to eliminate the need for AT, but rather to design learning environments that—from the beginning do not contain barriers. Many barriers have to be addressed on an individual basis in typical educational environments, but in well-designed UDL



environments, the technology supports most commonly needed by students with LD are frequently built into the materials and technology used by all students. As a result, fewer students with LD will need the individualized solutions that can only be provided through AT.

It is important to note, however, that considering each student’s individual need for AT—both devices and services remains a necessary part of planning for both the student’s instruction and participation in assessments.

Source: US National Center for Learning Disabilities’ document, *Parents Guide to UDL*.

Financial Aid for Students with Disabilities / Services d'aide financiers pour les étudiants ayant un handicap

The Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities is pleased to announce the release of the 2011 edition of the directory, Financial Aid for Students with Disabilities in New Brunswick.



Le Conseil du Premier ministre se fait le plaisir d'annoncer le lancement de l'édition 2011 de son répertoire, *Services d'aide financiers pour les étudiants ayant un handicap au Nouveau-Brunswick*.

This directory covers a range of bursaries and programs for students who have disabilities or students who intend to study in a medical field after high school. Students may already be enrolled in post-secondary education facilities or may be preparing to do so.

Ce répertoire couvre un éventail de programmes et de bourses pour les élèves qui ont un handicap ou qui ont l'intention d'étudier dans un domaine médical après l'école secondaire. Les étudiants peuvent déjà être inscrits dans des établissements d'enseignement postsecondaire ou pourraient se préparer à s'y inscrire.

The directory is available at our Web site, www.gnb.ca/council, or can be obtained by contacting our office by telephone 1.800.442.4412, by fax 506.444.3001 or by email pcsdp@gnb.ca.

Le répertoire est disponible sur notre site Web, www.gnb.ca/conseil ou peut être obtenu en communiquant avec notre bureau par téléphone 1. 800. 442. 4412, par télécopieur 506. 444. 3001 ou par courriel pcsdp@gnb.ca.

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FACEBOOK AND TWITTER.**

UPCOMING EVENTS

September 29– October 1 2011 LDAC National Conference, Charlottetown, PEI

Registration

Ldac2011conference.com/registration/

June 11-12 LLNB's *Celebrate Learning!* Conference at Mount Allison University for info call 506-384-3607

A VENIR

Le 29 septembre au 1e octobre - Congrès national de ACTA à Charlottetown, IPE

Inscription:

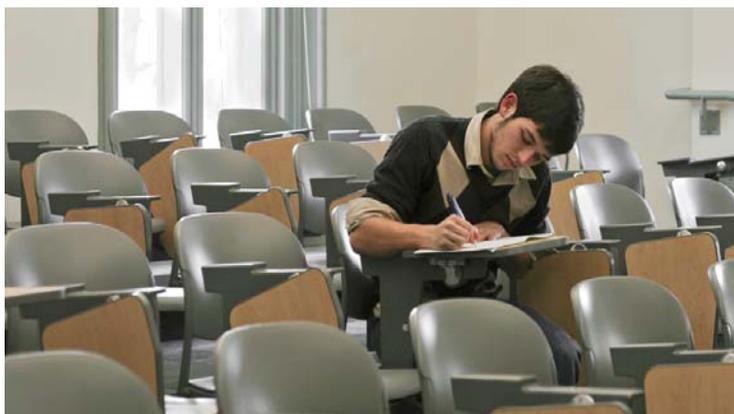
Ldac2011conference.com/registration/

Où aller pour un dépistage de TA

Il n'y a qu'une façon de savoir avec certitude si vous avez des troubles d'apprentissage – ces troubles sont diagnostiqués par un dépistage structuré appelé évaluation psychologique. Ces évaluations sont effectuées par des membres compétents d'un groupe reconnu comme l'Ordre des psychologues, formés pour reconnaître les troubles d'apprentissage. Il peut s'agir de psychologues cliniciens ou scolaires, d'associés en psychologie, de neuropsychologues ou de spécialistes des troubles d'apprentissage.

L'évaluation peut aussi fournir bien des renseignements utiles sur vos capacités (vos atouts et vos faiblesses) et sur les façons de vous aider (stratégies et a c c o m m o d e m e n t s) .

Il est essentiel que le professionnel ait une formation et une expérience de travail directe dans l'évaluation des troubles d'apprentissage chez l'adulte. Cette personne doit aussi être au fait des recherches sur les TA et avoir une connaissance pratique des directives locales, provinciales et fédérales régissant l'aide à fournir dans différents contextes. Ce professionnel doit aussi pouvoir vous aider à comprendre vos besoins aux études, au travail et dans la vie quotidienne.



À qui s'adresser pour trouver un professionnel compétent :

- Conseillers en orientation de votre école secondaire
- Coordonnateur des services de soutien aux personnes handicapées dans votre collège ou université
- L'association des troubles d'apprentissage de votre région ou www.ldac-acta.ca
- Organismes communautaires de santé mentale
- Centre d'orientation ou de techniques d'études d'un collège ou d'une université
- Thérapeutes en apprentissage ou spécialistes de l'apprentissage (psychologues) en pratique privée

Après avoir pris contact avec une de ces personnes, demandez-lui de vous adresser à un professionnel qui a l'expérience du travail avec des adultes ayant des troubles d'apprentissage.

Lorsque vous rencontrerez ce professionnel, vous voudrez lui [poser des questions](#) pour vous assurer que vous travaillez avec la bonne personne.

De:
http://www.youth2youth.ca/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=82&Itemid=195&lang=fr

LDANB Position Paper cont'd

LDAC is a national non-profit volunteer-based organization with the mission of representing children and adults with learning disabilities, parents and professionals and to represent issues pertaining to prevention, early identification, assessment, education, intervention, social interaction, coping skills, family support, transitions, employment, and justice to various levels of government and other agencies. LDANB wishes to outline our concerns regarding the proposed changes to Special Education Plans (SEPs), specifically the elimination of Accommodated SEPs for students with “universal accommodations” as determined by the child’s teacher.



LDANB represents many students with varying learning needs and styles who are on accommodated SEPs. Without the accommodations mandated by their SEP, they would struggle in school due to problems in areas such as comprehension, fluency, processing speed, memory or vocabulary. Their SEP ensures that they are provided with the supports needed to maximize their learning in the classroom and optimize their potential including specialized instruction and assessment that is accurate and fair for the individual.

We believe that it is the legal obligation of the Province to provide the “specific” interventions for students with learning disabilities based on ongoing formative assessments. We feel that the proposed changes to SEPs fail to comply with human rights and provincial legislation. The Human Rights Code in New Brunswick defines “mental disability” as including “any learning disability”. Accordingly, the education system is mandated by law to accommodate these students’ particular needs. Further, Section 12 of the Education Act in New Brunswick specifies that by reason of diagnoses and educational attainment, an “exceptional pupil” is entitled to a “special education program” which is “based on the results of continuous assessment and

evaluation and which includes a plan containing specific objectives and recommendations for education services that meet the needs of the pupil”. Our understanding is that the SEPs for those students with “universal” accommodations will summarily be dismissed at the end of the 2010 and 2011 school year.

LDANB also wishes to make comment on the plan for the classroom teacher to decide which assessments are “justifiable” and which are “universal”. We recognize that classroom teachers are increasingly responsible for a much more diverse group of students with a wide range of abilities and disabilities, making accountability for all students a challenge. We believe teachers need to implement recommendations for students whose needs may be complex and multifaceted that are thoughtfully planned to promote positive outcomes, but having the classroom teachers make decisions on which accommodations are universal and which are justifiable, we see as problematic. Instruction needs to be specifically differentiated to the child’s profile of abilities and needs as documented in a psychological assessment and based on the type, severity and complexity of the learning disability and requirements of the particular class.

LDANB raises concern that totally eliminating accommodated SEPs for those with universal accommodations will mean that many of our students with learning disabilities will no longer have documentation to ensure that they have continuous evaluations to assess how individualized accommodations are meeting their needs. Accommodations can change over time and adjustments may need to be made to ensure the child’s continued success. LDANB believes that the teachers must be accountable to all of their students for providing every opportunity possible for them to achieve

LDANB Position Paper cont'd

educational goals. Many of our students will flounder without a specific education plan and well-designed accommodations that allow them to access the curriculum and demonstrate their learning.

LDANB recognizes the premise for the proposed SEP changes is the introduction of Universal Design for Learning (UDL). If UDL is implemented in all classrooms as proposed, schools will then deliver a curriculum that will accommodate more diverse learner needs and transfer the burden of change away from the students. We trust this will translate to increased opportunity for all students, including those with learning disabilities, to access and participate in general curriculum.

LDANB feels that until such time that teachers have been thoroughly trained on how to apply the principles of UDL in classroom practice and are mentored to integrate these into their practice, it is premature to make changes to SEPs. Barriers exist in many classrooms for integrating an array of technologies and in representing some of the classroom materials in multiple formats. There is a pressing need to create new materials that are more UDL-oriented for children with varying learning needs. Existing technology to help students with learning disabilities (e.g., electronically enhanced versions of text materials) is limited, difficult to use and expensive.

While LDANB endorses the incorporation of UDL tenets and practices, as we believe UDL will create a learning environment that is responsive to the needs of children with learning disabilities, we cannot endorse the changes to SEPs. We feel changes in pedagogy and curriculum must be in place and then a thorough review of SEPs and the impact of any change should be made in consultation with parents and stakeholders to ensure that that the children have the supports that they need. We strongly believe that implementation of the principles of UDL does not eliminate the need for specific accommodations for students with learning disabilities.

LDANB also represents students at the post secondary level. We are distressed that our students will lack the necessary paperwork to obtain required educational supports to ensure their success when they leave the public school system for higher learning. Lacking this documentation, their unique learning needs will not be recognized and they will struggle unnecessarily. In addition, without the paperwork to identify their learning disability, they will not qualify for tax deductions and education grants.

In conclusion, LDANB takes the position that policy makers and stakeholders in children's lives have a shared responsibility to promote open dialogue on the issue of SEP changes. LDANB requests that the Department of Education address the concerns we have raised by:

- immediately putting the plan to eliminate accommodated SEPs on hold until adequate consultation and discussion has taken place with parents and stakeholders. The Department of Education must ensure that any changes made will not adversely affect the students and will continue to guarantee justice, equality and equity for our students;
- working with New Brunswick universities to ensure that pre-service teachers are given teacher preparation coursework emphasizing the application of UDL and adequate practice to ensure they are able to implement UDL principles;
- providing practicing teachers with professional development, resources (such as digital texts and assistive technology) and support to implement UDL.

Thank you for your consideration of our position and for recognizing the reality of each student's uniqueness. We welcome an opportunity for further discussion with you on this important matter.

**Learning Disabilities Association of New Brunswick Inc./
Troubles d'apprentissage-association
Nouveau-Brunswick Inc.**

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est notre site

**The right to learn,
the power to
achieve /**

**Le droit
d'apprendre, le
possibilité de
réussir**

**Notice of Annual General Meeting /
Notice de la réunion annuelle**

June 4 2011 / le 4 juin 2011

**Held at the Kingsbrae Gardens Building, St .Andrews, NB
A l'édifice Kingsbrae Gardens, St. Andrews, N.-B.**



Thank you

To those who participated in the Fredericton Marathon on the Mothers Day weekend on behalf of LDANB /TAANB. Raising money as well as awareness of Learning Disabilities was the endeavour but the exercise was also a result . If any one else would like to take on this as a project for the many marathon going on in the province this summer and fall, please contact Jenelle at 506-459-7852.

Let's get involved, and get fit !

Lobster Draw



**Get your
ticket for the
Lobster Draw
for Fathers
Day.**

**The draw is for 1st prize—30 lbs of lobster 2nd
prize— 20lbs of lobster. Cooked and delivered.**

**You can get them from the LDANB TAANB office at
459-7852 or from one of the many members
selling them. A great way to support the work of
the association and win a Maritime favourite.**