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Decisions

This is, indeed, the year of significant decisions for the members and non-members of BCASP.

To begin, there is a very unusual and very important election that will be occurring at our Annual General Meeting on Thursday during our Psych Matters Conference 2007. Regretfully, our dedicated and hard working president, Peter Molloy, is resigning after serving the executive for many years. Fortunately, we have two long time members of the executive who have stepped forward and indicated a willingness to try and fill Peter's shoes. Ray Tomusiak, who has been our chair of the ethics committee, and Doug Agar who is currently our membership secretary are both running for the office of president. We have not had an election for president since 1989 when Barbara Holmes ran against Tony Sweet, so this is an unusual event for us. The office of president has a significant impact on the direction that BCASP will take during their term in office. It is very important that each member attending the AGM talk to both candidates and read their articles in this newsletter carefully. Both Ray and Doug offer us experience, competence, and differing visions about BCASP. Therefore, it is a difficult decision, and I urge all of you to make your choices thoughtfully.

Another important decision that we will be making at the AGM will be whether or not we will accept the final report and recommendations from the LD committee in their "Best Practice Guidelines for the Assessment, Diagnosis and Identification of Students with Learning Disabilities." (<http://bcasp.ca/news.php>) There will be a panel discussion at our conference where the new report will be presented and discussed in depth.

One decision that all of us have already made is whether or not to become members of BCASP. That decision has now been extended to people hired to work in independent schools as psychologists as a result of a new Order in Council. Such membership is also a decision that must be made by psychologists in public schools who are neither members of BCASP or the College of Psychologists. At least two psychologists in Vancouver have been contacted by post-secondary counsellors to clarify if their psychoeducational assessments were written by a certified or registered psychologist. Those counsellors also referred to the documents included in this newsletter to request that a formal diagnosis of LD, that was in accordance with DSM-IV-TR guidelines, be included as an addendum to the psychoeducational assessments.

Finally, we have two slightly lighter pieces. One article is a souvenir from my trip to Ellis Island in New York. The second article is from our friends Dumont and Willis, who not only get the last word, they get a whole dictionary.

Take care,

Psych Matters 2007 Conference Notice

Hopefully, you have received the details for this year's BCASP conference. It is our 20th Annual Conference and it will be held again at the **Pacific Palisades Hotel** on Robson Street in Vancouver on November 7th, 8th, and 9th 2007 (just before the Remembrance Day long weekend).

Contact

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pmolloy@sd23.bc.ca

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<http://www.bcasp.ca>

Sessions and Events:

Wednesday, November 7th

- Fostering Resiliency (Dr. Denise Boute)
- Relationships: The Fourth R (Dr. Shelley Hymel)

Thursday, November 8th

- CHC Theory (Dr. Kevin McGrew)
- New Connors Rating Scales (Jenni Pitkanen)
- LD Working Paper Panel
- DAS II and Cognitive Functioning (Dr. Colin Elliot)

The Annual General Meeting for BCASP Members

The Wine and Cheese Party

Friday, November 9th

- PAL II (Dr. Virginia Beringer)
- Law and The Practice of School Psychologists (Dr. Yvonne Martin-Newcombe)
- Panel on Ethical and Legal Issues (Dr. Yvonne Martin-Newcombe & Dr. Max Uhleman))

The Friday Luncheon

Accommodation:

Accommodation can be made at the Pacific Palisades Hotel. Call: 1-800-663-1815 or e-mail: reservations@pacificpalisadeshotel.com

Registration:

For more information about registration rates, please contact Margaret Chevalier, Vice President.

E-mail: Margaret_Chevalier@sd63.bc.ca

Phone: (250) 385-0369

BCASP Conference 2007
c/o Margaret Chevalier
2817 Adelaide Ave.
Victoria, BC V9A 2L3

Counsellor's Conference Notice

British Columbia School Counsellors Annual Conference

The Provincial
Professional
Development Day is
Friday, October 19th.

The BC School Counsellors' Association is once again hosting our annual conference, at the Coast Plaza Hotel in Vancouver's West End, October 18 & 19, with the Welcome Reception, Wednesday night, October 17.

<http://www.agentsofchange2007.com/index.html>

This year's theme is AGENTS OF CHANGE. We have 2 incredible keynote speakers, more than 35 workshops and special events on every day of the conference.

Keynote Speaker:
Justin Trudeau

Keynote Speakers:

We are honoured to have Justin Trudeau and Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond, British Columbia's first Representative for Children and Youth, as our keynote speakers for this year's conference.

<http://www.agentsofchange2007.com/keynotes.htm>

Workshops:

We have more than 35 individual workshops on a wide range of topics, such as:

- *Project Respect - Preventing Sexualized Violence amongst Youth ages 14-19
- *POWW - Path of Wise Warriors: An Aboriginal Youth Empowerment Program
- *Depression: Black Dog in the Schoolyard
- *Preventing and Treating Childhood Sexual Abuse
- *Putting Narrative Ideas into Practice with Children
- *Coming Out and Sexual Minority Students: What's the big deal?
- *Psychosis Sucks! Building Strategies in the School for Early Psychosis Intervention
- *Helpful Approaches for Working with Young People with Eating Disorders
- *Divorce Litigation, Parental Alienation and the Role of the School Counsellor

and MANY MORE...

<http://www.agentsofchange2007.com/workshops.htm>

Thanks,

Dave Mackenzie
BCSCA Conference Chairperson

For a school psychologist in a private school to be exempted from membership in the College of Psychologists, the following three conditions must be met:

- *“Acting in the course of employment by...*
- *an authority as defined in the Independent School Act...*
- *if qualifications in psychology are a condition of such employment.”*

“The first session was so successful that it was decided that the group would meet twice yearly from now on.”

Order in Council

(Independent Schools can now have employees who can call themselves psychologists but do not have to be members of the College of Psychologists. They only have to be hired into a position for which qualifications in psychology are a condition of employment. -- Ed.)

Order of the Lieutenant Governor in Council No. 339 approved and ordered on May 30 2007

Executive Council Chambers, Victoria

On the recommendation of the undersigned, the Lieutenant Governor, by and with the advice and consent of the Executive Council, section 3 (2) (c) of the Psychologists Regulation, BC Reg. 442/99 is repealed and the following is substituted:

- (c) acting in the course of employment by
 - (i.) a provincial, federal or municipal government or government agency,
 - (ii.) an authority as defined in the *Independent School Act*,
 - (iii.) a francophone education authority as defined in the *School Act*, or
 - (iv.) a board of school trustees constituted under the *School Act*,

if qualifications in psychology are a condition of such employment.

An Island Event

Mid-North Island School Psychologists

On May 4th 2007, the school psychologists of mid-north Vancouver Island communities held a professional development session in Courtenay. The session was organized by Tanya McCreith of Campbell River School District and by Nancy Nixon of Comox Valley School District. There were 12 attendees in total, coming from Nanaimo, Parksville, Comox Valley, Port Alberni, Campbell River, and Port Hardy.

The agenda was created in advance by soliciting topics for discussion from attending school psychologists. Topics discussed included: LD diagnosis and the BCASP Best Practice Guidelines, proactive strategies with regards to training of Learning Assistance/ support teachers, pre-referral processes, CDBC involvement, Level B tools for primary children, and adjudication. Overall, the session was an excellent opportunity for sharing with colleagues. Many thanks go out to Tanya McCreith, who took the initiative to organize the gathering.

The first session was so successful that it was decided that the group would meet twice yearly from now on.

So, if you are a school psychologist in the mid-north Vancouver Island area, and are interested in attending our next session, please contact Kirstin Funke-Robinson by e-mail at: kfunke@sd68.bc.ca or call: 250-755-2945.

Douglas Agar

I am asking for your support in the upcoming election for President of the British Columbia Association of School Psychologists.

As the current Membership Secretary of BCASP as well as the Membership Secretary of our Canadian organization (CASP), I have a very sound understanding of the relevant issues facing school psychologists in British Columbia as well as a national perspective.

Candidate's Statement:

During my four years as the Membership Secretary for BCASP I have endeavoured to respond to new applicant queries and concerns in a timely manner and to find ways to accommodate their individual needs within the parameters of our Bylaws and Membership Criteria. Moreover, I have worked tirelessly to protect our professional status from scrutiny by ensuring that new applicants meet our membership standards.

As a member of the BCASP Executive I have played an integral part in developing the very positive relationship with the Ministry of Education that BCASP currently enjoys. This relationship has greatly contributed to the recognition by both the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health that Certified School Psychologists play an integral part in the provision of psychological services within the education system. This recognition has resulted in the extension of the Exemption Clause of the Health Act – Psychological Services for three to five years. In addition, I successfully completed high level negotiations with Community Living British Columbia to have the Psycho-Educational assessments completed by Certified School Psychologists recognized at par with Registered Psychologists.

Finally, as a District administrator for Student Support Services in the Sooke School District and member of the British Columbia Council of Administrators of Special Education (BCCASE), I have access to provincial administrators of special education as well as the Director and Managers within the Ministry of Education. This access allows me excellent opportunities to advocate for BCASP and the needs of our membership in order to allow BCASP to continue to press an agenda for positive change.

I look forward to an opportunity to represent you as the President of BCASP in the coming year.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Douglas Agar

Ray Tomusiak

Colleagues:

I wish to introduce myself to you as a practicing school psychologist in the Greater Victoria School District #61. I have been a BCASP member since 1993. I have served on the BCASP Executive for 5 1/2 years as the BCASP Newsletter Editor from 2002 to 2004 followed by Chair of Ethics and Professional Conduct. I have also facilitated the development of the new BCASP Website and have served as Manager of the site.

I have been dedicated to serving BCASP over the last several years and have gained much experience in BCASP affairs. As President, I would wish to see that BCASP attains a high level of respect and recognition as it continues to grow as a professional organization.

At this time I believe BCASP would be best represented by a president who is a practicing school psychologist. I can fully offer my time to BCASP affairs. Importantly, as my loyalty is solely with BCASP, I can act positively and at arm's length with members of key administrative groups such as the Ministry and BCCASE while keeping the best interests of BCASP in mind.

I believe in a strong and independent BCASP. We need to be forceful in addressing our concerns to the Ministry. We also need to continue dialogue so that the Ministry recognizes our expertise. Furthermore, we would have much to gain by establishing very positive relations with the College of Psychologists.

BCASP will acquire the respect and recognition of others by developing, maintaining, and enforcing high standards and ethics. The issue of qualifications is important. We have an obligation as a professional organization of school psychologists to ensure that individuals hired as school psychologists are indeed qualified for the position.

In respect to a recent proposal for increased supervised practicum hours, I am in favour of a thorough review of our membership criteria before making any changes.

Finally, regular and frequent communication between the President and the membership is vital. Members need to be kept informed of current issues and developments.

For further information or discussion, please contact me at (250) 743-5686 or e-mail me at raytomusiak@mac.com

Thank you

Ray Tomusiak

Candidate's
Statement:

New BCASP Guidelines on LD

The Final Working Paper of the “Best Practice Guidelines for the Assessment, Diagnosis and Identification of Students with Learning Disabilities” (2007) is available for viewing on the BCASP website (<http://www.bcasp.ca/pdf/LDFinal.pdf>).

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“BC Certified School Psychologists conducting LD assessments outside of their employment role/situation [e.g., private practice] will not be recognized as having met Ministry criteria for qualified assessors.”

Ministry of Advanced Education Guidelines

The Ministry of Advanced Education provides funding for specialized services and adaptive equipment for students with Learning Disabilities (LD). The following policy is to assist service providers, post-secondary students with Learning Disabilities, and Assessors in understanding what documentation is required to access programs that fall under the administration of Student Aid BC.

Qualifications of Assessor

Assessors must have the following qualifications:

- a Registered Psychologist with an expertise in diagnosing Learning Disabilities; or
- a Certified School Psychologist and (if in BC) a member in good standing with the BC Association of School Psychologists (BCASP) (Must be or must have been employed by a provincially funded school board/college/university at the time of the LD assessment)
- **Please note:** BC Certified School Psychologists conducting LD assessments outside of their employment role/situation [e.g., private practice] will not be recognized as having met Ministry criteria for qualified assessors.

Documentation

The LD assessment report attached:

- was completed within the last 5 years (In some cases, a current achievement assessment may be required for students in transition to post-secondary education, in order to accurately reflect current academic ability)
- is complete, typed on official letterhead, includes the assessment date, the assessors name, title, professional credentials, address, phone/fax number and is signed and dated

Diagnostic Features

The LD diagnosis contains and reports on the following diagnostic features:

- diagnosis of the individual’s achievement on individually administered, standardized tests in reading, mathematics, or written expression are substantially below (substantially below is defined as a discrepancy of more than 2 standard deviations between achievement and IQ, or a smaller discrepancy between achievement and IQ [i.e., between 1 and 2 standard deviations] in cases where an individual’s performance may have been compromised by an associated disorder in cognitive

“DSM-IV diagnostic criteria”

“Certified School Psychologists conducting LD assessments outside of their employment role/situation (e.g. private practice) will not be recognized as having met criteria for qualified assessors.”

processing, a co-morbid mental disorder or general medical condition, or the individual’s ethnic or cultural background) that expected for age, schooling and level of intelligence; and

- the learning disability significantly interferes with academic achievement or activities of daily living that require reading, mathematical or writing skills

LD Diagnosis:

- The LD Assessment Report clearly states a diagnosis of a Learning Disability meeting DSM-IV diagnostic criteria which describe the level of severity, and the manner in which the disability significantly interferes with academic functioning e.g. reading, memorizing, writing, note-taking, test-taking, etc.
- The report contains recommendations for specific reasonable accommodations that are needed to address the current and substantial impact of the disability on the student’s academic functioning. Recommendations are supported by test scores and are included in the report.

Source:

http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/studentaidbc/forms/documents/verification_permanentdisability.pdf

Simon Fraser University Guidelines

Students with a Learning Disability

Documentation of the need for accommodations must be current (within the last three years). This condition is necessary because assessment constitutes the basis for determining reasonable services and accommodations.

Appropriate Professional:

- Registered Psychologist or
- Certified School Psychologist
- **Please note:** Certified School Psychologists conducting LD assessments outside of their employment role/situation (e.g. private practice) will not be recognized as having met criteria for qualified assessors.

Documentation should include:

- the name and credentials of the evaluator as well as the date(s) of testing
- a clear statement that a learning disability / disorder is present (according to DSM-IV criteria) along with the rationale for the diagnosis based on a discrepancy model

“A clear statement that a learning disability / disorder is present (according to DSM-IV criteria) along with the rationale for the diagnosis based on a discrepancy model.”

“In accordance with The Ministry of Advanced Education, Student Services Branch policy, a learning disability assessment must identify a discrepancy of 2 standard deviations between academic achievement and Full Scale IQ.”

“A comprehensive diagnostic interview that includes academic, developmental, family, and psychosocial history”

*[**Note 1:** individual “learning deficits”, ‘learning difficulties’, ‘learning differences’, and ‘learning styles’ do not, in and of themselves, constitute a learning disability]

*[**Note 2:** In accordance with The Ministry of Advanced Education, Student Services Branch policy, a learning disability assessment must identify a discrepancy of 2 standard deviations between academic achievement and Full Scale IQ, or a smaller discrepancy between achievement and Full Scale IQ [i.e., between 1 and 2 standard deviations] in cases where an individual’s performance may have been compromised by an associated disorder in cognitive processing, a co-morbid mental disorder or general medical condition.

- evidence of comprehensive testing (with age appropriate norms) and all test scores

*[**Note 1:** domains to be addressed include intellectual potential as measured by a cognitive battery; receptive language (reading, listening); expressive language (speaking, writing, spelling); language processing (thinking, conceptualizing, integration); mathematical computation; information processing (short-term and sequential memory, attention, visual and auditory processing, fine-motor and gross-motor functioning, processing speed); personality (screen out problems due to anxiety, depression or psychiatric disorders); test behaviour and learning styles]

*[**Note 2:** test scores should be reported as standard scores or percentiles, grade equivalents are not acceptable]

- a comprehensive diagnostic interview that includes academic, developmental, family, and psychosocial history
- a statement of the strengths and weaknesses that will affect the student’s ability to meet the demands of a university education

Source:

<http://www.sfu.ca/csd/pdfs/documentation.pdf>

My Souvenir from Ellis Island, New York:

Mental Testing: According to a 1917 U.S. Public Health Service manual, 9 out of 100 immigrants were marked with an "X" during the line inspection and were sent to mental examination rooms for further questioning. The "X" indicated that a mental defect was suspected.

During this primary examination, doctors first asked the immigrants to answer a few questions about themselves, and then to solve simple arithmetic problems, or count backward from 20 to 1, or complete a puzzle. Out of the 9 immigrants held for this "weeding out" session, perhaps 1 or 2 would be detained for a

“The ‘X’ indicated that a mental defect was suspected.”

secondary session of more extensive testing.

“They asked questions. ‘How much is two and one? How much is two and two?’ But the next young girl also from our city went and they asked her, ‘How do you wash stairs, from the top or from the bottom?’ She say, ‘I don’t go to America to wash stairs.’”

--Pauline Notkoff, a Polish immigrant in 1917, interviewed in 1985.

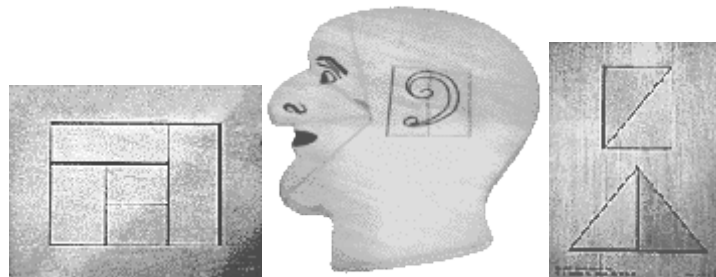


Can you draw a diamond?

Doctors found that this test, which required immigrants to copy geometric shape, was useful only in the examination of immigrants who knew how to write or were used to holding a pencil.

“The whole experience was very frightening...They brought me up to a room...They put a pegboard before me with little sticks of different shapes and little holes...I had to put them in place, the round ones and the square ones...and I did it perfectly. They said ‘Oh, we must have made a mistake. This little girl...naturally she doesn’t know English, but she’s very bright, intelligent.’ They took the cross (chalk mark) off me so we were cleared.” --Victoria Sarfatti Fernandez, a Macedonian Jewish immigrant in 1916, interviewed in 1985.

“The whole experience was very frightening...They brought me up to a room...They put a pegboard before me with little sticks of different shapes and little holes...I had to put them in place, the round ones and the square ones...”



In addition to using standard tests, Ellis Island doctors devised many of their own tests to help diagnose mental defects. Puzzle and mimicry tests were favoured because they did not have to be explained to an immigrant through an interpreter; nor did an immigrant have to know how to read or write in order to solve them.

Will the immigrant with the X become an (X)?

If the immigrant failed to pass these mental examinations, the “X” would be circled to indicate that a mental defect was confirmed. The immigrant would then be refused entry into the country and sent back to his or her country of origin with or without the family members who may have been traveling with the immigrant.

An Untempered Dictionary

[Apologies to Ambrose Bierce and Samuel Johnson.]

*X = Suspected
Mental Defect*

*(X) = Definite Signs
of Mental
Disease*

Individualized Education Program (IEP): A mass-produced, computer-generated document describing in considerable detail the pre-existing program into which the student will be placed. The individualization occurs when the student's name, age, grade, and birth date are entered in the appropriate computer program fields.

Mental Ages/Grade Equivalents: The worst possible test-score statistics; the statistics most commonly demanded by readers of test reports.

Multi-Disciplinary Evaluation: Several relative strangers reading aloud, but not listening to others reading, reports of their various interactions with a student. The independent and possibly contradictory assessments are then "integrated" with a staple as the group disbands. This is a team in the sense that a pole-vaulter, a hurdler, a shot putter, and a runner constitute a track team.

%ile: The favourite abbreviation for "percentile rank," employed to guarantee the already probable confusion between "percentile rank" and "percent correct."

Phonetically Based Reading Instruction: The attempt to persuade a student with auditory perception difficulties, a history of otitis media, and a severe sequential processing disorder that *kuh - ah - tuh* spells "cat."

Severe Discrepancy: One of the regulatory requirements for identification of a specific learning disability: "a severe discrepancy between [academic] achievement and intellectual ability." Frequently misinterpreted as a severe discrepancy between other pairs of variables never contemplated in the regulations, such as Verbal IQ and Performance IQ, height and weight, or hope and experience. Despite Congress's wise and explicit rejection of proposed mathematical formulae to quantify the severe discrepancy, some school districts impose various and wondrous arithmetic criteria that blindly identify students with no particular learning problem and deny services to students with severe learning disabilities. These school districts tend over time to come to mistake their policies for state law.

Triennial Re-evaluation: Retesting every three years to see if the student with deafness, blindness, or cerebral palsy still has a disability. A special case exists for specific learning disabilities. If, as a result of three years of special education, the student's achievement remains low, and the student's IQ score drops, there is no longer a severe discrepancy between levels of achievement and intellectual ability, so the student no longer has a learning disability and is no longer entitled to special services.

Whole Language: A triumph of hope over experience in which young children are expected to learn to read and spell – without instruction – through exposure to good literature and by practice in pretending to write with "invented spelling." To date, this approach has not been attempted for teaching trigonometry.

Burl Pickering 5/20/97

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In-Psyghts

achievement and intellectual ability, so the student no longer has a learning disability and is no longer entitled to special services.”