

May-month (...we mean COVID!) Connections & Giveaways

Last year our SIC arranged May-month activities and giveaways to celebrate Speech and Hearing Month in our own little way. We figure, what better way to stay motivated and give us that last needed push to get through to the end of June?

With such unexpected and drastic changes, this school year will undoubtedly be one we'll all remember. In an effort to keep us connected and encouraged during this time, Sandy pitched the idea of kicking off our "giveaways" a little earlier than usual.

We were able to arrange our first of several virtual meetings with members on April 15th and were so pleased with the turnout and engagement!

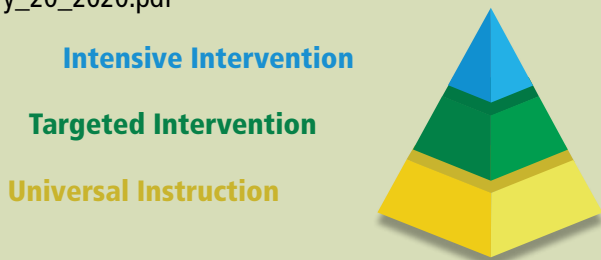
The Mysterious Role of School-based SLPs

If you ask our students, we're willing to bet they'd say we play games and cards – all day long!

When we first formed, one of our initial goals as an SIC was to increase understanding in our school communities regarding the nature of services we provide to students (i.e., we do so much more than fixing that lisp!) We especially hoped to bring to light the essential connections between speech and language skills and literacy, academics and social development.

Of course that was all *before* we had to shift gears in response to the Premier's Task Force and defend our very place within the school system itself. With our most recent focus on understanding and perhaps redefining our roles within NLESD's new *Tiered Approach to Learning*, even the Task Force ordeal seems like it happened ages ago!

We have been fortunate in that two of our members, Sandy Crowley and Kim Lawlor, have volunteered to represent Newfoundland and Labrador on a SAC committee on SLP service delivery models in schools. The committee released a national advocacy proposal in January which explores the roles of SLPs in schools across Canada and is certainly timely as we navigate through the changes of the tiered system. The information can be found at: https://www.sac-oac.ca/system/files/resources/Schools_National_Advocacy_Proposal_approved_by_Board_January_20_2020.pdf



Professional Development/ Materials Grant

For the third year in a row we are happy to offer a grant to SLP Special Interest Council members. Grant money may be used for professional development or for the purchase of therapy materials. Please read on to learn how to apply by **June 21, 2020**.

The grant to be awarded is a maximum of \$500. Applications will be reviewed by the SLP-SIC executive and eligible applicants will be randomly selected. Please consider the following guidelines:

- Travel, accommodations and registration will be covered up to \$500; the fund does not cover the cost of meals.
- Funds will be awarded when proof of attendance and necessary receipts are received.
- Professional development must be in the area of speech, language and literacy, and/or be relevant to school-based speech-language pathologists.
- Applicants must agree to provide a short written summary of what they learned during their professional development. This summary will be shared with our members through our newsletter and social media.
- Funds must be used within one calendar year of the awarded date.

Hurry and get your applications in before it's too late – by **June 21**. This is an opportunity you won't want to miss!

Go to www.nlta.nl.ca/slp-pdgrant.

The meetings have been a wonderful opportunity to hear first-hand from school-based SLPs in every corner of our province. As the saying goes, *We're all in this together*.

To clue up each meeting we drew for prizes – the first winner was Christine Champdoizeau of NL's Conseil Scolaire Francophone. We hope you will enjoy your very own copy of *The Marshalla Guide*... we must admit we are a little jealous! Paulette Jackman was the second lucky winner of a \$150 Super Duper Gift Certificate! Keep an eye on our Facebook group for our final draw which includes four \$25 Teachers Pay Teachers gift cards.

Update on Recommendations #10 and #11

Speaking of the Premier's Task Force, we're sure everyone remembers the recommendations in the report that were especially pertinent to SLPs (see below if you need a refresher)...

- *The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and the Department of Health and Community Services, within one year of the release of this report, develop a provincial child health services model, situated within one government department, to ensure seamless service delivery to schools, continuity of care, and year round access for children and families, and to include: community nursing, speech/language pathology, psychology, occupational therapy and social work.*
- *The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and the Department of Health and Community Services review the capacity of social workers, psychologists, occupational therapists, speech language pathologists and community nurses to ensure adequate service to students and families in the new proposed model.*

Fortunately (we hope!?) it's been a relatively quiet year for our SIC on this front, with the apparent main focus of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD) at this time being implementation of the tiers. In the fall, a company called Optimus Consulting was hired by EECD to further investigate the feasibility and implications of these recommendations. School-based and healthcare SLPs were given opportunities to collaborate with Optimus and give feedback on these important issues, and no doubt we anxiously await a report of the findings.

As an SIC we will certainly keep our membership informed as more information becomes available, but at this point in time we are hopeful that *no news is good news*.

Calling for Nominations

Our SIC currently holds 7 executive positions and are asking for your nominations for new members who might be interested in serving. While each of the titles are listed separately, we've found that roles often overlap – we seem to function well as a team that shares executive responsibilities as needed, so no need to feel intimidated!

An election will be held via virtual meeting at the end of September and **nominations are due by June 26th**. The nomination can be completed by following this link: www.nlta.nl.ca/slp-sic-nomination-forms

