

## EDUCATION AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT FOR EAs

### OVERVIEW

#### Goal

To provide consistent, quality learning options for education assistants across the province with a view to increasing the skills and building the capacity of Education Assistants working in the K-12 public school system.

#### Objectives

- To offer learning options in accordance with priorities stated by support staff members and school district representatives.
- To ensure options are presented in a high quality and consistent manner.
- To establish a system for school districts and locals to access funds and to facilitate the delivery of these learning initiatives at the local level.
- To work with post-secondary institutions for recognition of these learning options as credit towards EA certification at public post secondary institutions.

#### Process

##### Step One

**Getting started** - A committee that includes school district representation (ideally, both human resources and special education) and support staff (local president or designate and pro-d chair or other representative) will review and select learning options. *Districts may submit alternate proposals for use of funding but they will be subject to review and must be consistent with our objectives for this project. If districts request to offer their own options, a form will be provided for instructors to submit their learning outcomes, activities and methods of assessment.*

## Step Two

**Application Process** – The parties should jointly complete the application and send to SSEAC for approval. Districts must have an application submitted by **October 1, 2010** with plans for completion by December 2011. Districts and locals will be able to make amendments, additions or deletions to their plans; however, we ask the local parties to develop this plan with as much accuracy as possible to allow the instructors the ability to plan their time accordingly for the upcoming school year.

Provincial Outreach programs (ie. POPARD, SET-BC and POPFASD) will provide their own instructors. For other learning options, when Districts have their own presenters for a particular learning option, they will need to submit the application form along with the presenter's credentials and current relevant experience. The presenter will need to follow the curricular framework as provided by SSEAC and use the appropriate assessment tools. For districts needing instructors, SSEAC will attempt to provide an instructor or they will consider training an appropriate in-house person to provide the option.



**Please note** – *We encourage districts and locals to submit their applications as soon as possible; the money is available and can be accessed as soon as the application has been approved. This will also increase chances of availability of instructors, particularly if the request is for one of the Provincial Outreach Programs.*



**BONUS!** For those districts and locals who have their plans into the Committee prior to October 1, 2010 – they will be forwarded \$3,000 of their allocation to cover any initial costs. Remaining funding will only be provided upon completion of training.

## Step Three

**Application Approval** – Within two weeks of receipt of the application, Districts and locals will be notified by email of the status of their application

#### Step Four

**Delivery of the Training** – once the application is approved, the parties may proceed in offering options. Contact may be made directly to POPARD, SET BC, or POPFASD. For other options, SSEAC will have pre-approved instructors or can assist in locating one for you.

The local parties will be responsible for the coordination of the training including choosing dates for sessions in consultation with presenters and selecting format (evenings, summer institute, weekends, etc.).

Reimbursement of expenses/costs will be consistent with Skills Enhancement Fund and may include reimbursement of costs such as course fees, print materials, incremental wages and meals/mileage where appropriate. The reimbursement of expenses must be agreed to by both local parties.

Where districts are using district staff to provide the training, the Committee will approve an honoraria of up to \$150 per three hour module.

A few key reminders:

- Presenters must be given **at least** one week's notice to cancel
- Districts must provide appropriate technical support for on-line courses and follow-up for all options delivered.

#### Step Five

**Upon Completion of Training** - Participants who attend all sessions in a learning option and complete the assessment in accordance with provided criteria will receive a certificate of completion. The local parties will need to keep a record of options offered, numbers in attendance for each session, numbers of certificates granted and how the course was offered (summer, evenings, etc.). Data collected throughout this project will be used for project evaluation.

## **Education and Skill Development for Education Assistants: Learning Options**

The Education and Skill Development for Education Assistants (EAs) work of SSEAC is designed to meet two main objectives: to support the professional development of education assistants working in the 21<sup>st</sup> century classroom and to develop, coordinate and provide relevant, systematic and sustainable professional development to education assistants across BC. To this end the enduring understandings and skills listed below are embedded in all the learning options.

### **Enduring Understandings**

- all students are unique, have value, belong and can learn
- supporting the learning, participation and membership of students requires intentional practices
- evidence based practices inform current supports
- the work of supporting learning for students with disabilities is collaborative
- confidentiality and ethical practice apply to ones work
- ongoing learning and staying current are critical elements of ones work

### **Skills**

- interpersonal communications
- teamwork
- context specifics (i.e.: elementary vs. secondary, content / curriculum specifics, transitions)
- thinking critically and flexibly
- being reflective

Each learning option has its own knowledge base. Following is a description of all the learning options and the specific learning outcomes developed for each option. These options are designed to introduce or enhance the knowledge and skills of EAs, and can be offered in any particular order. However, it is important to note that the options Foundations of Inclusive Education and Professional and Ethical Practice explicitly teach about the EA role and working in inclusive classrooms. They will give participants fundamental knowledge about supporting students in school settings. The other options provide knowledge and skills that are context specific and build from the fundamental knowledge introduced in the Foundations of Inclusive Education and Professional and Ethical Practice option.

Learning Option	Learning Outcomes	Provider / Format	Delivery Cost
<p><b>Foundations of Inclusive Education (12 hours):</b> This learning option will focus on the fundamental characteristics of inclusive education. Participants will examine components of inclusive classrooms and general best practices to support the participation and membership of students with disabilities in the regular classroom.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To describe the evolution of special education and its impact on the education of students with disabilities</li> <li>• To relate effective practices of the education assistant to inclusive education</li> <li>• To recognize the diverse needs of students in the regular classroom</li> <li>• To examine the effective practices and characteristics of inclusive education</li> </ul>	<p>District personnel; face to face instruction</p>	<p>\$600</p>
<p><b>Professional and Ethical Practice (9 hours):</b> This learning option will focus on policies and guidelines that inform the practice and roles/responsibilities of EAs. They will examine working with teachers and key ethical considerations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To understand legislation and policies in the field of special education and how these relate to the classroom</li> <li>• To recognize the implications of the EA role and responsibilities</li> <li>• To examine critical ethical issues related to the role of EAs</li> </ul>	<p>District personnel; face to face instruction</p>	<p>\$450</p>
<p><b>Supporting Learners with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) 12 hours:</b> This option will provide a foundation for increasing EAs understanding of FASD and its educational implications.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To explain the basics of FASD &amp; the significance to educators</li> <li>• To describe primary &amp; secondary disabilities of FASD and the individual strengths/needs of each learner</li> <li>• To demonstrate appropriate accommodations and their fit with specific learners</li> <li>• To explore resources related to the education of learners with FASD</li> </ul>	<p>POPFASD; face to face or on-line instruction*</p> <p><i>*online available Spring 2011.</i></p>	<p>\$600</p>

Learning Option	Learning Outcomes	Provider	Delivery Cost
<p><b>Basic Sign Language (9 hours):</b> This option is designed for EAs working with hearing students who benefit from signed communication. EAs will be introduced to signs for words typically useful in the school setting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To understand signed communication as a means to build relationships and meet specific learning needs for students</li> <li>• To demonstrate the core vocabulary which supports the educational and social needs of students</li> <li>• To appreciate signed communication requires on-going practice and development to become proficient</li> <li>• To become aware of resources which will assist an EA to maintain and expand their signing vocabulary</li> </ul>	<p>District personnel; face to face instruction</p>	<p>\$450</p>
<p><b>Understanding Common Medical Issues (15 hours):</b> This learning option provides essential health information that EAs require while working in schools. Participants will learn to apply their knowledge of common health issues, recognition and intervention techniques and personal injury prevention, back to the classroom.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To examine the principles of personal care support using a holistic and student centered approach</li> <li>• To differentiate between common health issues (i.e.: diabetes, allergies, epilepsy) and interventions for students</li> <li>• To relate physiological processes to the physical support needs of students requiring assistance</li> <li>• To perform safely using good body mechanics and back safe principles</li> </ul>	<p>District personnel; face to face instruction</p>	<p>\$750</p>

Learning Option	Learning Outcomes	Provider	Delivery Cost
<p><b>Introduction to Instructional Strategies (15 hours):</b> This learning option will explore exemplary teaching and learning strategies for the classroom. Participants will develop an understanding of the model of differentiated instruction as well as adapted and modified curriculum principles.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To explore effective instructional strategies</li> <li>• To understand learning differences and learning styles as they relate to instructional strategies</li> <li>• To recognize the importance of strategies to enhance student learning</li> <li>• To define the differences between adapted and modified programs</li> <li>• To recognize the keys elements of an adapted or a modified activity</li> </ul>	<p>District personnel; face to face instruction</p>	<p>\$800  includes DVD: How Difficult Can This Be (F.A.T. City)</p>
<p><b>Introduction to Autism Spectrum Disorders (30 hours):</b> This learning option provides an overview of the characteristics of autism spectrum disorders. Participants will acquire knowledge and skills about evidence-based interventions to support students with ASD in the school setting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To develop a basic understanding of how ASD is identified and assessed</li> <li>• To develop an understanding of how to interpret behaviour</li> <li>• To develop a support plan for students</li> <li>• To develop a range of strategies and instructional techniques to support the learning and emotional needs of students</li> </ul>	<p>POPARD; face to face instruction</p>	<p>\$4800 (pre set rate)</p>
<p><b>Understanding Behaviour (24 hours):</b> This learning option will describe the process and the major features of positive behaviour support plans. Participants will explore key intervention strategies. In addition, participants will discuss the role of the Education Assistant as a member on the interdisciplinary team.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To recognize the values, elements and outcomes of positive behaviour support</li> <li>• To explain the key components of the functional assessment process</li> <li>• To describe instructional practices to promote behavioral successes of students</li> <li>• To describe intervention strategies to promote behavioural success of students</li> <li>• To outline the roles and responsibilities an education assistant has in the development and implementation of positive behaviour support plans</li> </ul>	<p>District personnel; face-to face instruction</p>	<p>\$1200</p>

Learning Option	Learning Outcomes	Provider	Delivery Cost
<p><b>Assistive Technology (24 hours)):</b> This learning option is designed to provide EAs with an overview of the field of assistive technology. Participants will develop an understanding of how to implement various technology solutions, and examine specific technologies when creating technology-enhanced activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To develop a general understanding of the field of assistive technology</li> <li>• To match assistive technology features to student need</li> <li>• To understand how assistive technology can be used to support teaching and learning needs</li> <li>• To utilize assistive software and access additional online resources to support their developing technology skills</li> </ul>	<p>SET BC; blended (online &amp; face-to-face instruction)</p>	<p>\$1800</p>

## Best Practices in Professional Development

*"Paraeducator training programs should be long-range, comprehensive and systematic. Often the impact of training is lessened because it is based on available speakers or the current "hot topic" rather than on progressive development of an identified set of knowledge and skills" (Pickett and Gerlach, 1997)*



### What Works

- ❑ Attention must be given to follow up strategies for learning to go from professional development / training to sustained learning or practice.
- ❑ 20% of participant's learning will occur inside the training room and 80% will come from practicing outside the training setting.
- ❑ Studies on professional development state:
  - Traditional workshops, with no follow up, will result in only 5-10% change.
  - A group of schools working together, with follow up, will result in 75-90% change.
  - The most effective ways to develop change in practice are interactive experiential learning activities connected to real work situations, reflective activities, practice in the actual training, followed by onsite observation and feedback.
  - Follow up supports are critical when there is an emphasis on skill development and transferring those skills to the classroom.
  - The use of technology supports educators to learn new practices.
  - Ongoing, intensive and rigorous opportunities for learning make the most difference.
  - Systematic and comprehensive plans are foundational for educators to enhance their competency.
- ❑ Follow up support can be face-to-face or virtual. Examples include problem solving discussions, study groups, focused team meetings, blogs, modeling, coaching, practice with feedback, mentoring
- ❑ Distributing learning over time i.e.: taking a workshop and dividing it into parts with work place related practice activities conducted between the scheduled sessions supports the development of changes in practice.

### References

- Fogarty, R. (2007). *From Staff Room to Classroom*. Thousand Oaks: Corwin Press.
- Garmston, R. (2003). Group wise: as trainings grow shorter, follow-up plays a bigger role. *Journal of Staff Development* vol. 24, no.4.
- Pickett, A.L. & Gerlach, K. (1997). *Supervising paraeducators in school settings: A team approach*. Austin, TX: PRO-ED.
- Richardson, J. (2003). *Build a bridge between workshop and classroom*. Tools for Schools.

## Application Form

### Education and Skill Development for EAs

The purpose of this document is to assist Boards of Education and local support staff unions to plan for and deliver training to education assistants working within the K-12 system. It is also to ensure all parties are in agreement with the proposed training initiative.

School District No. \_\_\_\_\_

Union Local(s) \_\_\_\_\_

#### Overview of Joint Training Plan

*(Please provide a brief general overview of your training needs and intentions -- one or two sentences only.)*

#### Selection of Training Options

Please review the menu of training options and indicate which options you would like to offer. Enter each option on a separate line even if you are doing the same training multiple times. The sum of approximate costs in the column below should equal your total district/local allocation from the SSEAC for this project. (See the appendix on p. 3)

Learning options (see legend below)	Planned time for training	Approximate cost	Est. number of participants	Do you have an instructor?
				<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Prov. Outreach
				<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Prov. Outreach
				<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Prov. Outreach
				<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Prov. Outreach
				<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Prov. Outreach

#### Learning options legend

1 Foundations of inclusive education	4 Assistive technology	7 Understanding common medical issues
2 Professional and ethical practice	5 Fetal alcohol spectrum disorders	8 Basic sign language
3 Autism spectrum disorders	6 Understanding behaviour	9 Introduction to instructional strategies

**Alternate proposals**

Districts and locals may submit alternate proposals for use of their funding allocation. The latter will be subject to review and must meet the objectives of the project. If you wish to proceed with such a proposal, please provide detail/information in the box below so the SSEAC is able to review and make a determination as to whether it is appropriate. The Committee may request further information.

Estimated cost of alternate proposal \_\_\_\_\_

**Follow-up plans for EA training**

Briefly describe the state of your follow-up plans for the training options you have identified above.

The Committee will review your application and confirm it has been accepted. Once you have received this confirmation, you are responsible for setting up the training. Once training has been undertaken, applications can be made for reimbursement from your district/local budget allocation. If you require assistance or have any questions, please contact:

John Malcolmson (jmalcolmson@cupe.ca or 604-291-1940, ext. 294), or  
Stephanie Mascoe (stephaniem@bcpssea.bc.ca or 604-730-4521)

Both employer and local union representatives have reviewed this application and agree with the approach as presented here. Names of representatives completing this application are presented below.

Employer representative completing form

Local union representative completing form

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Contact information (phone or email)

Contact information (phone or email)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Form completion and signing date

\_\_\_\_\_

Please scan/email this completed form to [EAeducation@sseac.ca](mailto:EAeducation@sseac.ca), or fax it to 604-730-0787.

Appendix: Fund allocations by SD		School-age enrolment	% of total enrolment	Fixed allocation (\$ .9 M.)	Proportionate allocation (\$1.8 M.)	Total Allocation
SD	Name					
5	SOUTH EAST KOOTENAY	5,165	0.95%	\$15,000	\$17,156	\$32,156
6	ROCKY MOUNTAIN	3,127	0.58%	\$15,000	\$10,386	\$25,386
8	KOOTENAY LAKE	4,914	0.91%	\$15,000	\$16,322	\$31,322
10	ARROW LAKES	570	0.11%	\$15,000	\$1,893	\$16,893
19	REVELSTOKE	1,025	0.19%	\$15,000	\$3,405	\$18,405
20	KOOTENAY-COLUMBIA	3,975	0.73%	\$15,000	\$13,203	\$28,203
22	VERNON	8,373	1.55%	\$15,000	\$27,811	\$42,811
23	CENTRAL OKANAGAN	21,275	3.93%	\$15,000	\$70,665	\$85,665
27	CARIBOO-CHILCOTIN	5,446	1.00%	\$15,000	\$18,089	\$33,089
28	QUESNEL	3,695	0.68%	\$15,000	\$12,273	\$27,273
33	CHILLIWACK	12,532	2.31%	\$15,000	\$41,625	\$56,625
34	ABBOTSFORD	18,624	3.44%	\$15,000	\$61,860	\$76,860
35	LANGLEY	18,193	3.36%	\$15,000	\$60,428	\$75,428
36	SURREY	66,331	12.24%	\$15,000	\$220,319	\$235,319
37	DELTA	15,832	2.92%	\$15,000	\$52,586	\$67,586
38	RICHMOND	21,923	4.05%	\$15,000	\$72,817	\$87,817
39	VANCOUVER	55,224	10.19%	\$15,000	\$183,427	\$198,427
40	NEW WESTMINSTER	6,705	1.24%	\$15,000	\$22,271	\$37,271
41	BURNABY	23,850	4.40%	\$15,000	\$79,218	\$94,218
42	MAPLE RIDGE-PITT MEADOWS	14,074	2.60%	\$15,000	\$46,747	\$61,747
43	COQUITLAM	29,762	5.49%	\$15,000	\$98,855	\$113,855
44	NORTH VANCOUVER	15,340	2.83%	\$15,000	\$50,952	\$65,952
45	WEST VANCOUVER	6,247	1.15%	\$15,000	\$20,749	\$35,749
46	SUNSHINE COAST	3,255	0.60%	\$15,000	\$10,811	\$25,811
47	POWELL RIVER	2,226	0.41%	\$15,000	\$7,394	\$22,394
48	SEA TO SKY	4,021	0.74%	\$15,000	\$13,356	\$28,356
49	CENTRAL COAST	218	0.04%	\$15,000	\$724	\$15,724
50	HAIDA GWAI	675	0.12%	\$15,000	\$2,242	\$17,242
51	BOUNDARY	1,385	0.26%	\$15,000	\$4,600	\$19,600
52	PRINCE RUPERT	2,332	0.43%	\$15,000	\$7,746	\$22,746
53	OKANAGAN-SIMILKAMEEN	2,497	0.46%	\$15,000	\$8,294	\$23,294
54	BULKLEY VALLEY	2,362	0.44%	\$15,000	\$7,845	\$22,845
57	PRINCE GEORGE	13,656	2.52%	\$15,000	\$45,358	\$60,358
58	NICOLA-SIMILKAMEEN	2,425	0.45%	\$15,000	\$8,055	\$23,055
59	PEACE RIVER SOUTH	4,009	0.74%	\$15,000	\$13,316	\$28,316
60	PEACE RIVER NORTH	5,530	1.02%	\$15,000	\$18,368	\$33,368
61	GREATER VICTORIA	18,767	3.46%	\$15,000	\$62,335	\$77,335
62	SOOKE	8,475	1.56%	\$15,000	\$28,150	\$43,150
63	SAANICH	7,545	1.39%	\$15,000	\$25,061	\$40,061
64	GULF ISLANDS	1,489	0.27%	\$15,000	\$4,946	\$19,946
67	OKANAGAN-SKAHA	6,445	1.19%	\$15,000	\$21,407	\$36,407
68	NANAIMO-LADYSMITH	13,897	2.56%	\$15,000	\$46,159	\$61,159
69	QUALICUM	4,499	0.83%	\$15,000	\$14,943	\$29,943
70	ALBERNI	4,067	0.75%	\$15,000	\$13,509	\$28,509
71	COMOX VALLEY	8,170	1.51%	\$15,000	\$27,137	\$42,137
72	CAMPBELL RIVER	5,463	1.01%	\$15,000	\$18,145	\$33,145
73	KAMLOOPS/THOMPSON	14,255	2.63%	\$15,000	\$47,348	\$62,348
74	GOLD TRAIL	1,327	0.24%	\$15,000	\$4,408	\$19,408
75	MISSION	6,176	1.14%	\$15,000	\$20,514	\$35,514
78	FRASER-CASCADE	1,945	0.36%	\$15,000	\$6,460	\$21,460
79	COWICHAN VALLEY	8,378	1.55%	\$15,000	\$27,828	\$42,828
81	FORT NELSON	865	0.16%	\$15,000	\$2,873	\$17,873
82	COAST MOUNTAINS	5,053	0.93%	\$15,000	\$16,784	\$31,784
83	NORTH OKANAGAN-SHUSWAP	6,723	1.24%	\$15,000	\$22,330	\$37,330
84	VANCOUVER ISLAND WEST	446	0.08%	\$15,000	\$1,481	\$16,481
85	VANCOUVER ISLAND NORTH	1,507	0.28%	\$15,000	\$5,006	\$20,006
87	STIKINE	222	0.04%	\$15,000	\$737	\$15,737
91	NECHAKO LAKES	4,678	0.86%	\$15,000	\$15,538	\$30,538
92	NISGA'A	436	0.08%	\$15,000	\$1,448	\$16,448
93	CONSEIL SCOLAIRE FRANCOPHONE	4,302	0.79%	\$15,000	\$14,289	\$29,289
99	PROVINCE	541,923	100.00%	\$900,000	\$1,800,000	\$2,700,000