



MADSEC Newsletter

Spring 2009
Volume 1 Issue 3

Maine Administrators of Services for Children with Disabilities
675 Western Ave., Suite 2, Manchester, ME 04351
www.madsec.org info@madsec.org 626-3380 (Ph) 626-3347 (Fax)

President's Article

By Dominic DePatsy

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1-2** Presidents' Article
- 3**
- 4** Regional Rep Board
- 5** MADSEC Calendar
- 6**
- 7-8**
- 9**
- 10**
- 11-12**
- 13**

In the past few months there has been a constant wave of new information coming out of Washington and Augusta, in reference to the stimulus money for IDEIA monies for students with special needs. We received our numbers from the State recently and just got information from Tom on how to use the money. Even though we are all confused on this process and we get different answers from different people, take a deep breath and view this as a great chance to help build the capacity of our staff. Here is one way to use this money to institute and sustain what I feel is the next "trend" in education, the teacher leader or what we call the Instructional Strategist.

What is an Instructional Strategist? Very simply an Instructional Strategist provides teacher leadership and support for the instructional support or special education department in each of your schools. The goal of the position is to blend special and regular education together in a seamless structure or get them married. The Instructional Strategist is in several districts like Yarmouth, Gorham and RSU 1. Yet, Portland developed the Learning Strategist years ago. Here are a few job responsibilities of the Instructional Strategist in my district:

- 1) Provide scientifically based researched instructional strategies and methodologies.
- 2) Consult with regular education mainstream teachers and special education.
- 3) Sit on the schools pre-referral team to provide information and expertise on Response to Intervention (RTI)/Curriculum Based Measurements (CBMs).
- 5) Provide all Standardized Testing for referrals and some reevaluations.
- 6) Sit on the school's Day Treatment Team and other committees that Director and Principal deem necessary.
- 7) Consult with staff on how to graph the progress of students in the pre-referral process.
- 8) Have knowledge and training in multiple scientifically based research methodologies such as Wilson, Linda Mood Bell, Saxon math.

Please see President's Article on page 2

(Continued from Page 1)

9) Facilitate Individual Educational Programs (IEP's) meetings, where Written Notices will be completed.

10) Develop Behavioral Intervention Plans and Functional Behavior Assessments and also provide social skill training when necessary.

By creating an Instructional Strategist in each building, you are strengthening leadership skills and practices through this position with your staff. It also supports your teachers and staff to sustain the energy and focus on building exemplary instructional practices requires. It can build strong, supportive working relationships with parents and parent groups as well. The Instructional Strategist allows teachers and staff do what they went to University for, teaching and working with students with disabilities and students at risk.

As leaders in our districts, we are charged with awesome responsibilities: to define reality, provide appropriate services for each learner, and provide support needed for staff. Strategists are one way of providing support. "Leadership is communicating to people their worth and potential so clearly that they come to see it in themselves." Stephen Covey, 8th Habit.

Here is a great resource if you are interested in developing teacher leader positions in your districts. *Taking the Lead, New Rolls for Teachers and School Based Coaches* by JoEllen Killion and Cindy Harrison, is a book that gives great strategies and roles for teacher leaders. Here are 10 roles for a teacher leader to follow and are nicely outlined in the book:

- Resource Provider
- Data Coach
- Curriculum Specialist
- Instructional Strategist
- Classroom Supporter
- Mentor
- Learning Facilitator
- School Leader
- Catalyst for Change

➤ Learner

MADSEC Executive Board

Dominic DePatsy	President
Erin Chase	President-Elect
Frank Sherburne	Vice President
Sharon Goguen	Secretary
Dorothy Marecaux	Treasurer
Carrie Thurston	Past-President

MADSEC *NEWSLETTER* is published three times during the school year by the Maine Administrators of Services for Children with Disabilities (MADSEC). Executive Director: Jill V. Adams; Administrative Assistant: Pamela Ouellette.

This publication is available in alternate formats to accommodate the needs of individuals with disabilities. It is also published on the web at: www.madsec.org.

MADSEC Publications Committee members: Jill Adams (MADSEC), Anna Perkins (Good Will-Hinckley).

Kennebec Centre
 675 Western Ave., Suite 2
 Manchester, ME 04351
 Phone 207-626-3380 • Fax 207-626-3347
 E-Mail: info@madsec.org
 Web: www.madsec.org.

Offering Maine's only
**Unified General Education/Special Education
 Extended Teacher Education Program (ETEP)**
 Graduate-level programs for those aspiring to be
 highly qualified educators in inclusive
 elementary and secondary school environments

Contact: USM's teacher education
 advisor at (207) 780-5413 or
pmew@usm.maine.edu
www.usm.maine.edu/cehd/ted



UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTHERN MAINE

MADSEC grants permission to copy articles that appear in this publication, unless otherwise noted. The material published in this newsletter does not necessarily reflect the opinion or views of MADSEC.

MADSEC invites readers to submit articles for consideration for publication in this newsletter. Contact Jill Adams, Executive Director, if you are interested. In addition, if you have a need that can be met through this newsletter, please contact the MADSEC office.

MADSEC is grateful for the financial support of the providers of goods and services advertised in this publication. MADSEC solicits paid advertisements for the purpose of helping defray the costs of this publication and other services provided for our membership. The association does not intend to create a public forum for the expression of ideas by advertisers or any other segment of the public. As set forth in policy, MADSEC reserves the right to refuse to publish certain advertisements which may not serve its best interests. Publication of advertisements should not be considered an endorsement by MADSEC of the goods and services therein.

Mission Statement

The Maine Administrators of Services for Children with Disabilities (MADSEC) believes in, and advocates for, the right of all students to receive a free and appropriate public education. We provide support to our members, opportunities for professional growth to Maine educators, and leadership in shaping policies and practices which impact the quality of education for children with disabilities.

The Special Education Quarterly

An essential tool to keep Maine Special Educators up-to-date on the latest developments in Special Ed law, published by Drummond Woodsum's Special Education Team!

Subscribe on line at www.SchoolLaw.com.

The MADSEC website is a good source of information. Check it out to find things like:

- Professional development calendar
- Interesting and important articles written by fellow educators



spurwink
services

*Special purpose schools for
children and adolescents*

Going the distance,
Changing lives.

Auburn	Casco	Cornville
Brunswick	Chelsea	Portland
		So. Portland

1-888-889-3903
www.spurwink.org

ACCREDITED
COA

|

MADSEC Regional Representative Board

Aroostook	Rick Umphrey - Caribou School Department
Bridges	Will Burrow - Union # 44 - Sabattus Alt./Lisa Hanson - MSAD #61 -- Naples
Capital	Deb Marshall - Monmouth School Department Alt./Donna Madore - Augusta School Department
Central	Stacy Shorey - MSAD #53 - Pittsfield Alt./Cheryl Mercier - MSAD #47 - Fairfield
Cumberland	Alison Marchese - Scarborough School Department
Hancock	Kelley Rush Sanborn - Union #98 - Mt. Desert Alt. / Lynn Maddocks - Ellsworth School Department
Katahdin	Cheryl Morin - MSAD #67 - Lincoln
Merrymeeting	Susan Matthews - Union #30 - Lisbon
Mid-Coast	Judy Gove - MSAD #28 - Camden Alt./Karen Ethridge - MSAD #50 - Thomaston
So. Penobscot	Lesley Snyder - MSAD #23 - Carmel & #38 - Etna Alt./Sharon Brady - Union #87 - Orono
Tri-County	Janet Morse - MSAD #48 - Newport Alt./Norleen Fleming - MSAD #48 - Newport
Waldo	Sharon Goguen - MSAD #56 - Searsport
Washington	Mary Maker - Union #102 - Machias
Western	Brian Foster - MSAD #9 - Farmington Alt. /
York	Ruth Venell - MSAD #60 - N. Berwick Alt./Jean Beetz - York School Department

Liaisons Who Serve On The Representative Board:

Special Purpose Private Schools - Anna Perkins - GoodWill Hinckley
Child Development Services - Greg Armandi - CDS-Franklin

MADSEC 2008-09 Calendar

May 2009

15 Rep. Board Meeting

June 2009

22 - 23 Summer Institute, Orono

**Pine Tree
Society**

DISCOVERING
ABILITIES TOGETHER

**Offering a full range of services
designed to support the education of
Maine children with special needs.**

Complete Assistive Technology and
Augmentative Communication services

High-quality, affordable adaptive
equipment

Case management services

Accessible recreation opportunities

(207) 443-3341 • www.pinetreesociety.org



GEM School Software, Inc
www.gemschoolsoftware.com

**GEMCare for MaineCare billing
Reduce overhead
Start saving immediately**

P.O. Box 622 Searsport, ME 04974 (207) 548-0169
sales@gemschoolsoftware.com

Keeping Kids Connected - Tutorial Services for Hospitalized Students

With the recent notification by Spurwink that their organization will not be providing tutorial services to students who are hospitalized at Spring Harbor after this school year ends, I have become involved in a planning group at Spring Harbor for taking over those services. This responsibility has caused me to look closely at what currently exists for programming and to attempt to evaluate how the two hours of tutoring supports the treatment plan for each child.

Ideally, children who are hospitalized would be involved in educational programming beginning on the first day of hospitalization as long as they are able to productively participate. This allows them to remain connected to an aspect of their life that is familiar. For some students, it will help relieve anxiety about what they might be missing while they are out of school. For others, who may not care about missing classes, it gives a clear message that school is important. For all, it allows an opportunity to participate in a structured and productive learning experience as part of their daily routine while in treatment.

Realistically, students do not have access to programming from the first day of admission to the hospital. Those students stay back on the unit while others “go to school” for two hours. Indeed, some students never obtain approval for tutoring during their hospitalization. The vehicle for obtaining funding for this programming is through the public school system and is supported by special education law. The process for obtaining approval for each student is cumbersome. In most cases, the contact person for approval within the school system is the Special Education Administrator.

My investigation has shown that there is a broad range of responsiveness to the request for approval of tutorial services for hospitalized students. Having been a Special Education Administrator in the public school setting for nearly twenty years, I understand some of the barriers to a speedy approval of this service. I have had the voicemail or e-mail wait a day for

me to get back to the office and respond (often at an hour at which a person is no longer available on the other end), or I have had the fax sit in a pile of other items that need timely attention. Even though I gave my verbal or written approval as soon as students came to my attention, identifying a way to expedite the approval for hospital-based tutoring was not on my scope.

Having spoken with and listened to my colleagues, I know there are mixed attitudes regarding the benefit of hospital-based tutorial services. These students are typically not here for a long period of time and it is felt that effective communication regarding programming needs and outcomes is not always established with the sending school system. The law allows for a window of time before services legally have to be put in place and some choose to “wait it out”, knowing that some students will be discharged in the time that elapses.

Now that I have worked at Spring Harbor Hospital, meeting the challenges and needs of students who are hospitalized has become an acute issue for me. Always a believer in addressing the needs of the total child, I feel some remorse that any student might have sat in a hospital room waiting for my approval so that he or she could attend tutoring with the group.

As a member of the team charged with staffing and designing the tutorial program that will be offered at Spring Harbor in the coming years, I am committed to putting a process in place that allows for more timely approval of services, more effective communication with sending districts, and improved outcomes for students.

We are currently looking at implementing a blanket contract with each school system that approves tutorial services for any student who is admitted to Spring Harbor Hospital and attends that district.

(Continued on page 7)

The resulting timely access to tutoring will provide consistency and structure for children whose lives are already sufficiently disrupted by the circumstances that require hospitalization. It is also intended that this process will free staff time so that contact with key educators in the sending schools for the purpose of identifying student needs and coordinating instruction will improve. As a result, students will receive more meaningful educational support with better outcomes.

As we all know, school is what kids do. It is not something that should be removed (for any period of time) from the life of a child who is already dealing with stressors that many of us as adults have never had to endure. The important role that consistency and connectedness plays in the lives of students is well understood by educators in the classroom.

Maintaining that consistency and connectedness is critical to the effective treatment of a child with mental health challenges.

If you are in a position to support the changes I have outlined for the tutorial programming of your students while they are at Spring Harbor Hospital, I am asking that you do that. I welcome any suggestions for making educational services for our hospitalized students more effective and efficient. Since I am only part-time at Spring Harbor, it is best to reach me by e-mail at: sawyej2@springharbor.org

Jane Sawyer
Special Education Administrator
Spring Harbor Academy

Spring Harbor Academy at Spring Harbor Hospital

In August of 2008, I became the Special Education Administrator for Spring Harbor Academy (SHA) at Spring Harbor Hospital. As an approved special purpose day program, SHA exclusively serves the patients on the Developmental Disorders Unit of the hospital. Our students typically have a diagnosis of autism or mental retardation and are also unable to function safely outside the hospital setting. The Academy staff has the unique opportunity to work in collaboration with a medical team to address the individual needs of school-aged patients and prepare them to return to their lives outside the hospital.

A major focus of the Developmental Disorders Program is to work to support families. For the Academy, that includes communicating with sending and/or receiving schools to assure that we are appropriately addressing educational needs and providing information that supports a successful school transition when patients leave the hospital. Upon discharge, program booklets and a copy of the behavior plan are provided and strategies which have been successful with the student are outlined. Receiving schools often visit the Academy to observe and our staff visits other programs when feasible. Westbrook is our host school system, and our teaching staff works closely with Bonnie Violette to establish school contacts, maintain communication, and comply with Special Education Regulations.

In addition to addressing the academic needs of students, the development of positive behaviors and effective communication are important aspects of our program. Within the Academy, the behavioral support plan developed by the program team for each student is consistently implemented and reviewed on a daily basis. Data is regularly collected and evaluated. Speech services are imbedded in the daily programming of students, with communication goals being generated for every activity. The intent is that the development of effective communication on the part of students will be supported by all staff during all activities throughout the day.

Having only received DOE approval in August, SHA is a relatively new program and is still having growing pains. We want to become more effective as a staff while getting better at working collaboratively within a hospital setting. We have had to deal with the impact of staff injuries and absences. Some of our staff members came from a public school setting and are adjusting to the reality of working in a year-round program. Our students' average length of stay is approximately 60 days, so we constantly deal with issues around transitions.

That said, our mission at SHA is to serve our students in the best way possible, believing we provide an invaluable educational opportunity for these hospitalized children. Our staff comes together weekly for professional development and to address programming issues. We welcome feedback from schools, families, and other providers. You can reach Spring Harbor Academy at 761-2364, or you may contact me by e-mail at sawyej2@springharbor.org.

Jane Sawyer
Special Education Administrator
Spring Harbor Academy