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# Learning Services Newsletter

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## Challenging Conversations

As many of us have experienced, it can be very challenging to communicate concerns and information to our children's teachers. The way that some learners present at school can be very different from home. Parents and school staff sometimes have very different perspectives on events that have transpired at school, and it can sometimes be difficult to get all of the necessary information on the table.

Open communication between school and home is essential for students' success, and research is showing that trusting and positive relationships between parents and staff benefit the entire school community.

Because schools are such busy places, important conversations are best held at times, when we are able to properly focus on the concerns and ideas being shared, and are not being distracted by other demands of the day. Where you have something important to discuss with us, please give us a call or send an email to make an appointment ahead of time.

It's also helpful to provide the teacher with a bit of information about why you are coming that way, if there is some information to be gathered, or a decision to be made during the conversation, you've both had some time to think about things a bit ahead of time.

Opening up the conversation can be the hardest part. One thing that is sometimes helpful is to make a list of your main concerns and questions before heading in- a few bulleted points can help you to remember everything that was important to you once you get there.

Your child's teacher is the person who holds primary responsibility for your child and his/her educational program, the case manager is the person coordinating the individualized goals for an IEP or Learning Plan. Where you have a concern about something with respect to your child and his/her learning, it's some-

times helpful to ask if both people can be available for the meeting.

Sometimes concerns arise because of a misunderstanding between the school and parents, or because our students are not able to fully explain the details of situations that have occurred. It's really helpful to hear from you as soon as possible after a concern has been raised, and to open the conversation with a bit of information gathering. It is much easier to collect accurate information, and make timely decisions, when things have not been left for several days or weeks, and the basic facts have been clarified.

If you are working with someone on your home team, or have a friend who you would like to bring with you as an advocate, you are more than welcome to include them in meetings at the school.

Support is also available through community advocates- such as the FASD Keyworker, or Family Social Worker at the Family Resource Association.

We work hard to provide individualized support and flexible options for our learners, but as parents, you know your child best- so if you have a suggestion about something that might benefit your son or daughter, we welcome your input. The opportunity to talk allows us to work together to ensure that supports and suggestions are implemented in a way that fits not only for your child, but for the other students in the learning space as well.

If you would like more information and strategies for handling "**Challenging Conversations**" at your child's school, please join us at the next LSAC evening, held in the **Winchelsea Place library**, (140 Renz Road, Parksville), on **January 20, from 6:30-8:30 pm.** Both school district staff, and community resource people, will be on hand to answer questions.

## Talking in Code

Over the years, a number of folks have commented on all of the "secret code" that's used in education these days. For those of us within the system, we don't even hear all the acronyms after a period of time. This fall, we had a number of staff arrive from other provinces, and we've shared a few smiles over the confusion, as we've worked through some of the details in reports and emails that have come across our desks. It occurred to me that if our staff is still learning the lingo, there are likely members of our community unfamiliar with some of it as well.

On the back is a list of terms commonly used in Education that you may find helpful when working with the school- please let me know and I'll add them!

### *Did you know?*

If your son or daughter is supported on an IEP, and qualifies for additional supports in high school (for example, has a reader, or digital text, or a scribe for exams), these services may also be available for him/her at college or university?

Registering with Disability Services allows access to supports such as exam accommodations, a note-taker in class, on-campus scooter access, access to technology and tutoring services.

For students to access these services, they must register in advance, and provide copies of assessment and relevant medical documentation.

Contact VIU at 250-740-6446 for more information.



# Talking in Code: Acronyms in BC Education

<b>ADD</b>	Attention Deficit Disorder	<b>CYSN</b>	Children and Youth With Special Needs (Social Worker, MCFD)	<b>PDP</b>	Professional Development Program
<b>ADHD</b>	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder	<b>DART</b>	District Assessment of Reading Team	<b>PISP</b>	Provincial Integration Support Program (now PIOP- Provincial Inclusion Outreach Program)
<b>ARC</b>	Accessible Resource Centre	<b>DPA</b>	Daily Physical Activity	<b>PLNET</b>	Provincial Learning Network
<b>ASCD</b>	Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development	<b>DPAC</b>	District Parent Advisory Council	<b>POPARD</b>	Provincial Outreach Program for Autism & Related Disorders
<b>ASD</b>	Autistic Spectrum Disorder	<b>ESD</b>	English as a Second Dialect	<b>POPFASD</b>	Provincial Outreach Program for Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder
<b>BCAAN</b>	BC Autism Assessment Network	<b>ELL</b>	English Language Learners	<b>PT</b>	Physiotherapist
<b>BC CASE</b>	BC Council of Administrators of Special Education	<b>FASD</b>	Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder	<b>RTI</b>	Response To Intervention
<b>BCCPAC</b>	BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils	<b>FBA</b>	Functional Behaviour Assessment	<b>EA</b>	Education Assistant
<b>BCCT</b>	BC College of Teachers	<b>FRA</b>	Family Resource Association (local)	<b>SETBC</b>	Special Education Technology British Columbia
<b>BCELC</b>	BC Education Leadership Council	<b>FSA</b>	Foundation Skills Assessment	<b>SLP</b>	Speech-Language Pathologist
<b>BCPSEA</b>	British Columbia Public School Employers' Association	<b>GSA</b>	Gay-Straight Alliance	<b>UDL</b>	Universal Design for Learning
<b>BCPVPA</b>	British Columbia Principals and Vice Principals' Association	<b>HELP</b>	Human Early Learning Partnership	<b>WITS</b>	Walk away, Ignore, Talk it out, Seek Help
<b>BCSSA</b>	BC School Superintendents' Association	<b>IEP</b>	Individual Education Plan	<i>*An even more extensive list can be found on the ACT BC website at:  <a href="http://www.actcommunity.ca/files/pdf/act/manual/PM_acronyms.pdf?v=2015">http://www.actcommunity.ca/files/pdf/act/manual/PM_acronyms.pdf?v=2015</a> </i>	
<b>BCTF</b>	British Columbia Teachers' Federation	<b>LGBTQ</b>	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning		
<b>CAPP</b>	Career and Personal Planning	<b>LIF</b>	Learning Improvement Fund		
<b>CSF</b>	Conseil scolaire francophone de la Colombie-Britannique	<b>LST</b>	Learning Support Teacher		
<b>CYMH</b>	Child and Youth Mental Health (MCFD)	<b>MCFD</b>	Ministry for Children and Family Development		
		<b>MOE</b>	Ministry of Education		
		<b>OECD</b>	Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development		
		<b>OT</b>	Occupational Therapist		
		<b>PAC</b>	Parent Advisory Council		