

Special Education Superintendent Update

March 2020



You're invited

Autism Awareness Flag Raising Event

April 2, 2020

9:45 - 11:30

CEC

9:45 - Students arrive and gather - Quigley Hall

10:00- Welcome and Prayers - Quigley Hall

10:15- Flag Raising Event in front of the CEC

10:30- Snacks and activities - Quigley Hall

11:30 - Dismissal





SPEECH - LANGUAGE

The Speech-Language Department launched the new AACcess (AAC Can Empower Students to Speak) Team to help support students who are minimally verbal and/or have complex communication needs. The dedicated team will provide the SLP department with AACcess to current research, assessment /intervention materials, and hands-on support to meet the needs of our students with complex communication needs who require Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC).

The D/HH department celebrated Support Staff Appreciation Day on March 2nd for our Communication Facilitators (CF) and Oral Interpreters (OI) who support our Deaf/Hard of Hearing students.



The Social Work Department held a PD Session:

Jana Vinsky & Diane Hyles - Supporting African-Canadian children

This training focused on anti-black racism and understanding our own invisible biases that may impact our work. The session equipped the department with tools and language to bring to the system in order to support our students and families and further propagate equity efforts. For more on this organization and their work in communities: <http://www.liberationeducation.com/about.htm>



BANCK – Building and Nurturing Capacity in Kindergarten

This inaugural year of the BANCK team has already met great success in supporting students and teachers in ELP. The team, comprised of Assessment and Programming teachers, Speech-Language Pathologists and Social Worker, are using evidence-based strategies to weave emotion regulation, communication development and classroom environment into the curriculum to build connections. To date, four schools have received service with five new schools currently underway. The team hopes to continue to expand service and share results of this exciting intervention with the system.



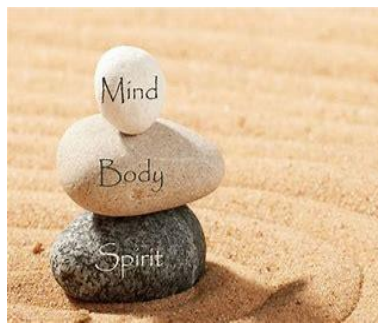


At the end of January, our schools celebrated Bell Let's Talk. They all received posters promoting Mental Health. Stop the Stigma teams in 72 elementary and all 32 secondary schools celebrated the day by launching initiatives such as learning about mental health, making stress putty, mindfulness, mindful drawing, etc.

In February, we launched **STRONG** (Support Transition Resilience for Our Newcomer Groups) program in seven of our secondary schools and elementary schools. This is a resiliency-building group for newcomers struggling with transition. The Mental Health Team met with all of our settlement workers to introduce them to the STRONG program to enhance their collaboration with our clinicians.



In February, we trained several clinicians from Psychology and Social Work in BRISC (Brief Intervention for School Clinicians).



We continued to support *Faith & Wellness: an everyday classroom mental health resource* research project with about 50 of our teachers at the board.

In February, we delivered three SafeTalk sessions, suicide awareness workshop, to 90 support staff members and two Staff Well-Being workshops to 67 support staff members.

The Psychology department has started the pilot for "Feeling Explorers", the social emotional learning program that they are developing with the George Hull Centre. The program is being run in 5 primary classrooms in the west.

