

SET-BC Synergy Final Project submission – Elphinstone Secondary School Building  
Bridges to Inclusion

Tuesday, May 29, 2018

General description of the project: *Building bridges to inclusion – supporting students in an intensive intervention program in the general education community*

Who was involved: *Eran Foreman, Emily Sheridan, EA support staff (Jay-Ann Van der Linden, Carol Thorsteinsson, Val Caton and Lesley Horat), Sarah Tompkins and her classmates in an intensive intervention program (10 other students) and those in the general education community (English 10 – 28 other students).*

i) What were the goals:

- *To be able to effectively include 3 students from an intensive intervention program in academic secondary school classrooms*
- *To be able to collaborate, co-plan and support classroom teachers in their journey to include ALL students in academic secondary school classes*
- *To be able to build capacity and leadership for inclusion in a secondary school*

What were the anticipated outcomes:

- *By February 2018, classroom teachers' capacity for including students in an intensive intervention program will increase by 50% of the baseline*
- *By February 2018, Classroom teachers and Intensive Intervention teacher's capacity for collaborating, co-planning and developing access and opportunity within the academic curriculum for ALL students will increase by 50% of the baseline*
- *By February 2018, data collection (i.e. Videos, pictures and student interviews) will demonstrate increased access to and opportunity with academic curriculum by 50% of the baseline for students in an intensive intervention program*

What curricular themes/activities took place:

- *Identify essential questions and goals for ALL and the modified goals for students with extensive needs from the big ideas of the curriculum*
- *i.e. Science 8: big idea: the electron arrangement of atoms impacts their chemical nature -essential questions for ALL: Why does matter matter? Or What are you made of?*

*i.e. English 10: big idea: language, and story can be a source of creativity and joy - essential questions for ALL: How can a story transform a reader? Or How can a story make you feel?*

What specific technology was used:

*1 Eye Learn rolling package with Windows laptop and Clicker 7 software*

ii) A description of how the project proceeded: what if any, training took place:

*-teachers were trained at SET BC for 1 day at SET BC*

*-ongoing training support from Bridges Canada and SETBC via email and phone consultation*

*-consultation with SD#46 Tech Support Team*

How was the technology introduced to students:

*-initially the technology was informally introduced to students in both the protected setting and general education classroom as a tool for helping all students learn*

*-teachers and EAs honored individual student requests to try technology in both settings*

*-the technology was introduced systematically to the target student for training and skill development and she worked up to a daily practice with the technology*

How was it used during the project by the teacher (s) and the student (s)

*-teacher used the technology to train target student and to train 4 EAs on how to use the technology to support the target student*

*-students in the general education community used the technology to trial different activities and tasks*

*-the target student used the technology to trial different activities and tasks with the goal of developing her Eyegaze skills*

How were the project activities completed:

*-the project activities were not completed*

iii)a description of the main challenges encountered during the project and how they were overcome

*1) minor glitches when using the technology and the challenge with troubleshooting technological issues (e.g. the "red dot" disappeared for a while)*

*-issues were overcome by ongoing training and support via email with SET-BC, conference calls with Bridges Canada and consultation with SD#46 Tech Support Team*

*2) finding time to complete 2 blog posts per month*

*-issue were overcome by assigning blog responsibility to target student*

3) *structural barriers within the school building*

*-when moving the Eye Learning station from the protected setting into one of Sarah's classrooms in the general education setting it had to be rolled outside of the school building as there wasn't any accessibility inside the school*

*-issue is unresolved yet*

4) *finding training time in target student's schedule was problematic and occurred intermittently*

*-issues were overcome by training the 4 EAs who support Sarah throughout her day, and scheduling Sarah's Eyegaze training time into her daily timetable*

5) *the Eyegaze technology can be finicky at times. This technology is contingent on a few different variables and the target student being in a perfect position for it to work optimally. This can be difficult and frustrating to achieve and may take extra time to calibrate.*

*-issue is unresolved yet – you just gotta keep on trying!*

iv) a description of the main success of the project and what was achieved overall

*There were two main successes of the project:*

*1) increase capacity amongst teachers, target student, EAs and students in the general education community in learning the Eye Gaze technology and*

*2) Sarah has built new connections with students in the general education community due to sharing the experience of trialing the Eyegaze rolling station with her peers.*

*Overall a start has been achieved. Sarah is currently in a learning dip - that place when learning a new skill requires a lot of effort and produces little results. We have started a journey with Sarah that is a very unique and new one (how much more unique can writing with her eyes be???) and she has found the training difficult and frustrating at times. I know with time and practice she will move into the stage of skill acquisition that feels more rewarding and natural, but we are not there yet.*

v) any recommendations or advice for other teams or educators conducting a similar project – what might you do differently next time?

*There were two key components that promoted Sarah's capacity building and skill development with the Eyegaze technology and increased her training time from an intermittent practice to a daily one:*

- 1) training the 4 EAs who support Sarah throughout her day to set up and calibrate the Eyegaze station and*
- 2) scheduling Sarah's Eyegaze training time into her daily timetable.*

*I would strongly recommend scheduling the technology training time into the target student's timetable and training the support staff in the technology straight away.*