BARRIERS TO LEARNING: THE IMPACT OF IT ON TEACHING IN THE CLASSROOM

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES
OVERVIEW

• The principle of Inclusivity
• Looking at the current reality
• Policies guiding inclusion
• Barriers to learning
• Accommodating barriers to learning
• Curriculum Differentiation
• Revised SIAS policy
• Concessions
It is not about learners with disabilities, it is about the needs of all learners.
THE CURRENT REALITY

WHO – Average norm of 3% disabilities in any system
WHO – ± 20% learners will experience some sort of a barrier throughout the schooling career.

2012: 231 459 (1.16%) learners with barriers/disabilities in special and mainstream schools (Total number of learners in the system: 12 513 638)

The implication is that there is about 400 000 learners in the system without any support.
PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF LEARNERS IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN 2012

- Public Schools: 93.2%
- Special Schools: 0.9%
- ECD Sites: 2.0%
- Independent Schools: 3.9%

Source: Education Statistics in South Africa 2012; Jan 2014
THROUGHPUT RATE - 2013

Throughput rate: 2013 National Senior Certificate
POLICIES GUIDING INCLUSIVITY:

• Constitution of the Republic of South-Africa No 108 of 1996 (Bill of Rights, Chapter 2)
• National Education Policy Act, 1996
• South African Schools Act, no. 84 of 1996
• Revised SIAS Policy (2014)
GUIDELINE DOCUMENTS

• Guidelines for Inclusive Teaching and Learning (2010)
• Guidelines for responding to learner diversity in the classroom through curriculum and Assessment Policy statements (2012)
• Guidelines for Full-Service/Inclusive Schools
• Guidelines to ensure quality education and support in Special Schools and Special School Resource Centres
• Integrated School Health Policy (ISHP)
• Care and Support for Teaching and Learning (CSTL)
• Children’s Act No 38 of 2005, and Children’s Amendment Act No 41 of 2007
ACCOMMODATING BARRIERS TO LEARNING IN THE SYSTEM

Level 1 – Low needs
Level 2 – Medium needs
Level 3 – High needs

1. Mainstream schools
2. Full Service schools
3. Special schools

• Academic
• Focus schools
“Barriers to learning refer to difficulties that arise within the education system as a whole, the learning site and/or within the learner him/herself, which prevent access to learning and development.”

Screening, Identification, Assessment & Support Policy 2014
CAUSES OF BARRIERS TO LEARNING

INTERNAL/CHILD
- Neurological
- Physiological
- Genetic

ENVIRONMENT
- Socio-economic

SCHOOL
- Specific barriers to learning

System
DYNAMIC INTERPLAY

Barriers

Emotions/
Behaviour
BARRIERS WITHIN THE CHILD

NEUROLOGICAL
• ADHD
• Epilepsy
• Tics
• Tourette
• Autism
• Obsessive Compulsive
• Depression and anxiety disorders
• Specific learning disorders

PHYSIOLOGICAL
• Deaf/hard of hearing
• Blind/low vision
• Physical disabled
• Multiple disabled
• Developmental delays

BEHAVIOUR
• “Conduct Disorder”
• Anti-social behaviour
• Psychopath
• Emotional problems

GENETIC
• Down Syndrome

LOW COGNITION
• IQ
• Brain injuries
• FAS
BEHAVIOR DISORDERS

OPPOSITIONAL DEFIANT DISORDER

• Seem to say NO on principle
• Deliberately do things to annoy others
• Often loses temper
• Blames others for his/her mistakes or misbehavior
• Often touchy and easily annoyed
• Often spiteful and vindictive

— Do however show remorse
— Includes passive aggressive behavior
CONDUCT DISORDER

• A repetitive and persistent pattern of behavior in which the basic rights of others and major age appropriate societal norms and rules are violated

• Includes aggression to people and animals, destruction of property, deceitfulness or theft and serious violations of rules

• Show no remorse

• Often leads to anti-social personality disorder
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category barriers to learning in Main Stream</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<td>Specific learning disorders</td>
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<td>Category disabilities: Special Schools</td>
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SPECIFIC LEARNING DISORDER

DSM V:

• Difficulties learning and using academic skills, as indicated by the presence of at least one of the following symptoms that have persisted for at least 6 months, despite provision of interventions that target those difficulties:
SPECIFIC LEARNING DISORDER

1. Inaccurate or slow and effortful word reading
2. Difficulty understanding the meaning of what is read
3. Difficulty with spelling
4. Difficulties with written expression
5. Difficulties mastering number sense, number facts, or calculation
6. Difficulties with mathematical reasoning
Specify:

• **SLD with impairment in reading**
  – Word reading accuracy
  – Reading rate and fluency
  – Reading comprehension
    • Alternative term: Dyslexia

• **SLD with impairment in written expression**
  – Spelling accuracy
  – Grammar and punctuation accuracy
  – Clarity or organization of written expression
SPECIFIC LEARNING DISORDER

Specify:

• **SLD with impairment in mathematics**
  
  – Number sense
  – Memorizing of arithmetic facts
  – Accurate or fluent calculation
  – Accurate math reasoning
    
    • Alternative term: Dyscalculia
• One-size-fits-all does not work!!
• Policies allows for differentiation
• Differentiation w.r.t: Content
  Teaching strategies
  Assessment (and concessions)
One-size-fits-all curriculum does not work!!!
Provided for differentiation in the policies
Differentiation w.r.t:
  - Content
  - Teaching strategies
  - Assessment (and concessions)

SIAS 2014: Curriculum Differentiation seen as a type of concession!! (Straddling)
CONCESSIONS

IMMIGRANT LEARNERS

LEARNERS EXPERIENCING BARRIERS TO LEARNING
CONCESSIONS: IMMIGRANTS

An immigrant learner is:

- A child or dependant of a diplomatic representative of a foreign government accredited in SA, or

- A person who:
  - first enrolled at and entered a SA school in Gr 7 or thereafter
  - began schooling in SA, has attended school outside SA for two or more consecutive years after Gr 3 and has subsequently returned to SA
Gr 4 – 9:
An Immigrant learner must:
• Offer the two official languages as required, and comply with the School-based assessment requirements.
• Pass one of the required two official languages at on at least First Additional Language level and obtain a rating of Moderate Achievement (Level 3) in that language;

Gr 10-12:
An immigrant may offer only one (1) official language on at least First Additional Language Level, provided it is the language of learning and teaching, and obtain a rating of 30% level in that language.
“Barriers might in one way or another prevent the learner from giving a true account of his/her knowledge and skills when assessed and might require adaptive methods of assessment.”

WHY CONCESSIONS?

• To **maximise the academic development** of these learners on an equal basis with others (Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Article 24)

• To **equalise opportunities** for all learners by addressing barriers learners may experience

• To provide support for learners that will enable them to **give a true account** of their knowledge and skills

There should be high expectations of learners, and the **standard of assessment must not be compromised**, nor should the learner be given an unfair advantage over his/her peers.
Learners with low cognitive functioning
Learners with poor language competency because the language of assessment is not the home language of the learner (immigrants excluded)

The purpose of a concession is to bridge the gap between a learner’s potential and his current under-achievement.
**PRINCIPLES**

- **Fairness** (Comply with assessment criteria)
- Do not *compromise* the *standard* of assessment
- No *unfair advantage* over fellow learners
- Apply same *academic requirements* for all learners
- **Equalise opportunities** to give true account of knowledge and skills
- Granted to learners with *potential to benefit*
- Based on *support needed*, not on categories of disability or learning difficulty
- **Address** the barrier, *do not compensate* for it
- Provide support as *early* as possible
Determination of learners who are eligible for differentiated assessment and accommodations in Grades 10 to 12 should have been done as early as the Foundation Phase or at least by October of their Grade 10 year, except in a situation where need arises at a later stage.
Deaf learners and learners with communication and language impairments

Gr 4-9:
- Must offer the two required official languages (SASL is considered an official language)
- May obtain an Elementary achievement (level 2) in the second official official language, and
- Comply with the other promotion requirements
Deaf learners and learners with communication and language impairments
Gr 10-12

-may offer one (1) official language at First Additional Language level which is the language of learning and teaching, provided that another subject from Group B is offered in lieu of the one official language that is not offered.
New regulation changes propose:

- Two official languages, of which SASL may be offered at Home Language Level in lieu of the language at FAL level,
- Pass SASL on at least level 4 (50%)
- Deaf learners not offering SASL, may pass one of the two official languages on level 2 (30%)
Dyscalculia

- In FET phase learners may be exempted from the offering of Mathematical Literacy or Mathematics, provided that another subject from Group B is offered in lieu of these subjects
- Must further comply with the promotion requirements
Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support

- Government Gazette No. 38356 of 19 December 2014

The main focus is to manage and support teaching and learning processes for learners experiencing barriers to learning.

It outlines the role functions of staff appointed in district as well as school structures responsible for planning and provision of support.
CONCESSIONS: BARRIERS

National Policy on the Conduct, Administration and Management of the National Senior Certificate Examination (Annexure C1)

SIAS Policy: Government Gazette No. 38356 of 19 December 2014
ADAPTED AND ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT

- Adaptation of questions
- Additional time
- Digital player/recorder
- Braille
- Computer/voice to text/text to voice
- Enlarged print
- Handwriting
- Medication/food intake
- Oral examination
- Personal assistant
- Prompter
ADAPTED AND ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT

- Reader
- Rest breaks
- Scribe/Amanuensis
- Separate venue
- Sign language Interpreter
- Spelling
- Transcription of Braille
- Video/DVD/recorder/webcam
- Endorsed NSC
- Exemption from a language
- Curriculum Differentiation (Straddling)
AD HOC CONCESSIONS

- Injury/illness sustained before or during assessment/examination (especially Gr 12 – submit to Province without delay)
- Severe trauma
- Imprisonment
- Pregnant learners
- Emergency/crisis situation
Learners who experience one or more of a range of barriers to learning may not fit comfortably within a particular phase or grade. In such cases straddling must be implemented. Straddling is when a learner or group of learners at a specific grade or level work towards attaining assessment standards from more than one grade within learning areas or learning programmes.

In terms of curriculum differentiation where learner accessed the knowledge, concepts and skills on a lower level (straddling) the report card has to reflect on the levels on which knowledge has been gained and skills mastered.
Do take note that in cases where no curriculum modifications take place but only concessions in terms of assessment procedures (e.g. amanuensis), **NO ALTERATION TO EXISTING REPORT CARDS** should be undertaken and **CONCESSIONS IMPLEMENTED** should **NOT** be reflected. However, all documentation on history and reasons why concessions had been granted, have to be recorded in the **LEARNER PROFILE**.
ENDORSED NSC

• National Policy Pertaining to the Programme and Promotion Requirements (2012, bl 24)
• Regulations Pertaining to the conduct, administration and management of the National Senior Certificate Examination (2014)

Gr 10-12 learners either in:
• Special Schools who experience extensive barriers to learning, or
• Who are in ordinary schools and experience barriers to learning, or
• Learners who experience barriers to learning who were unsuccessful in obtaining a NSC, or who cannot meet the programme and/or promotion requirements
THE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SBST

• To respond to teachers’ requests for assistance with support plans for learners experiencing barriers to learning.

• To review teacher-developed support plans, gather any additional information required, and provide direction and support in respect of additional strategies, programmes, services and resources to strengthen the Individual Support Plan (ISP).

• Where necessary, to request assistance from the DBST to enhance ISPs (SNA 2), or support their recommendation for the placement of a learner in a specialised setting.
SBST FUNCTIONS

• Study report provided by educator on barriers identified and support provided/implemented and the impact of the support
• Assess support needed and develop a programme for educator and parents
• Provide training/support to be implemented in classroom if necessary
• Evaluate/monitor
• Identify further SBST assets and mobilise help
• Encourage collegial/peer support
• Determine the level of support needed
Let US shut the back door!!!