



Rijksdienst Caribisch Nederland
OCW

ENGLISH

WHAT'S NEW ...

IN CARIBBEAN NETHERLANDS EDUCATION



1

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COLOPHON

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*Do you want to react to the contents of this
magazine or do you have suggestions or
contributions for a next edition?*

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Copy for the next edition should be sent in
before March 7th, 2014.

WANTED: EDITORS!

“Never a dull moment” is the best characterisation for the dazzling education scene in the Caribbean Netherlands. A lot is happening in a short span of time. This is why we are looking for enthusiastic editors, who would like to contribute to the description of all these developments and to the production of the regular features for this magazine. The idea is to form an editorial team, that will ensure that “What’s new ...” can be issued three times a year.

Are you interested? Please contact Elaine Marchena,
tel. (+599) 318 4509 or elaine.marchena@rijksdienstcn.com

Hans Kuilder
RCN/OCW head of department.



PREFACE

First of all I wish you all a healthy and dynamic new year. We are starting the new year with a new initiative: this magazine. Why this magazine? During the second Education Conference in April 2013 we had already concluded that there is a lot going on in Dutch Caribbean education. The conference participants took the opportunity to catch up on and share information on a lot of things, but at the end of the conference they had not really finished discussing everything. As RCN/OCW we wondered how we can structurally respond to this growing need to exchange knowledge and information between the schools and the islands. RCN/OCW already publishes a digital News Flash to provide you with the latest news. But a newsletter can convey relatively little information. This is how the idea arose to create a magazine in which education professionals can inform each other about initiatives and developments in education.

The magazine presents developments and offers a glimpse into the educational kitchen of all three islands. It also includes fun, creative developments that may be an inspiration to colleagues on the other islands. In addition to this preface, regular features in the magazine include the column of school coach Nienke Deelstra, the column "An introduction", in which a newcomer introduces him/herself and, as of the next edition the column "A day in the life of ...", in which we follow an education professional for a day. The magazine aims for an even distribution across the three islands and between primary and secondary education subjects. A magazine is the kind of thing that develops depending on what you, the reader, think of it and the contributions you provide. We therefore look forward to your comments and to receiving suggestions for new columns and articles.

Enjoy!

EDUCATION AND CARE GO HAND IN HAND AT FORMA

THIS YEAR, ON OCTOBER 18TH, RCN/OCW AND FUNDASHON FORMA TOASTED WITH CHAMPAGNE AND CAKE TO CELEBRATE THE INSTITUTE REALISING THE BASIC QUALITY STANDARDS FOR EDUCATION AND QUALITY ASSURANCE FOR BOTH THE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION (MBO1) COURSES AND THE SOCIAL OPPORTUNITY PROGRAMMES (SOCIALE KANSTRAJECTEN JONGEREN OR SKJ). THERE WAS CERTAINLY A GOOD REASON FOR A PARTY: FUNDASHON FORMA (ABBREVIATED TO FORMA) IS THE FIRST SKJ INSTITUTE IN THE CARIBBEAN NETHERLANDS THAT HAS REACHED THIS MILESTONE - WELL BEFORE THE DEADLINE IN 2016! SO HOW DID FORMA MANAGE IT?



Photography:
Marika Ringnald

Inge Berben
Director of FORMA

"I believe that the main reason we achieved this is the fact that we methodically implemented all new changes in our processes," states Fundashon FORMA director Inge Berben. "Each new change was based on a well-considered plan. This included putting a lot of thought and time into the further development of our care policy. FORMA's strength lies with the relationship between the individual action plans and the care plans. In our pathways, education and care go hand in hand and are equally important."

Growth

When Inge Berben became the director of FORMA in 2006, she encountered a small organisation with only a few employees. Due to a shortage of funds, the organisation was not able to achieve the growth necessary to meet the significant demand for education and literacy in Bonaire. Under Inge Berben's leadership, the organisation worked hard on the further development of the processes, and with great success. In addition, substantial subsidies were obtained from organisations such as Samenwerkende Fondsen, Katholieke Noden, YNCDP and USONA. For the three main products (SKJ, Literacy, and Courses) knowledgeable coordinators were appointed, and a new social worker, several educational trainers and a number of teaching assistants were recruited. Nowadays, FORMA has 32 permanent staff and 16 freelance teachers. Together, they work with 335 students and participants in total: 73 for SKJ, 84 for mbo, 42 for Literacy and 111 for the courses.

Inge explains: "Until the political transition in 2010, we were still in the pioneering stage, we still had to realise a fixed approach. Since 2010, FORMA's performance as implementing body of the SKJ Act has been subject to assessment by the Education Inspection for the Dutch Caribbean. During the first audit in 2010, it became clear that FORMA had completed the pioneering stage and that it was time to start the stabilisation stage and secure the processes. For this reason, we began with the implementation of a quality care system in 2012, lead by the quality manager who became part of our

team in February 2012. In addition, as directed by the Education Inspection, we formulated an improvement process in order to ensure that the social opportunity pathways and the vocational courses realised the basic quality standard for SKJ and Secondary Vocational Education before 2016. I am therefore delighted that it only took us only three years to achieve the basic quality standard for our SKJ product, MBO level 1 and our quality approach."

"The quality of teaching has improved significantly since 2012. The quality of education at FORMA has reached a sufficiently high level to comply with the basic quality standard regarding education and quality assurance. What's more, where education is concerned, all nine quality aspects meet the basic quality standard. It is certainly a FORMA-dable achievement. FORMA is able to efficiently integrate assistance, guidance and education. Because FORMA's management has a good overview of the quality of its teaching, the inspectors are confident that the institute will be able to develop its education even further..."

From: the "Report of Findings", based on the inspection visit to FORMA on 24th September 2013.



Lianne Dam FORMA mbo coordinator

"As mbo coordinator I am responsible for the secondary vocational courses within the SKJ pathway. After following a basic programme, our students move on to one of our vocational courses, where they will prepare for further studies or a place in the labour market. Over the past school year, I worked with our passionate educational team to completely renew our educational programme. We methodically examined all facets of our courses, from examination to educational programmes and from internship supervision to customisation. At the heart of our educational programmes is the connection to the developmental needs of the individual student by ensuring that tailored education and care go hand in hand. In practice, this means we make home visits, work with a flexible educational programme that we can tailor on the basis of structural tailor-made POP meetings, and work with both group and individual training programmes.

In addition, we take the requirements of the businesses in Bonaire into consideration. For example, we pay close attention to the supervision of the internships of our students and we adjust our educational programme to the requirements of the businesses in order to increase the opportunities for our students on the labour market. We have worked hard on the development and implementation of our teaching and I am incredibly proud of the results so far. I am looking forward to future innovations."

FUNDASHON FORMA OFFERS THE FOLLOWING PATHWAYS AND COURSES:

1. Social Opportunity Programmes for Youth

In conformance with the Wet Sociale Kanstrajecten Jongeren (Social Opportunity Programmes for the youth or SKJ) unemployed young persons without basic qualifications get another opportunity to obtain these. They can realise this through an SKJ pathway. An SKJ pathway at FORMA usually takes two years and consists of a basic programme (6 months) and a vocational, Mbo-1, course (12 months) or a programme tailored to the individual (12 months) and a follow-up (6 months). Once a pathway has been completed, a young person can move on to the labour market or to secondary vocational (Mbo) level. Mbo-1 courses, Mbo-1 Bouw (Construction), Mbo-1 Horeca (Hospitality) and AKA-1 courses, in collaboration with the Scholengemeenschap Bonaire.

2. Literacy courses

These courses are designed to enhance a number of skills required in order to function independently in society, including: oral and written skills, listening and reading skills, telling the time and practical arithmetic skills.

3. Adult courses

- English for beginners and advanced English
- Papiamentu for beginners
- Papiamentu conversation
- Basic course Computer skills & WORD
- Dutch as a second language
- Basic Bookkeeping
- Basic Calculation
- Budgeting
- Welding
- Electrical Engineering
- etc.

FORMA'S MISSION

To offer adults and young adults (and the future generation) an opportunity to develop themselves so they can perform optimally in the labour market and society, whilst always considering and anticipating the demands placed by society. Also: informing and advising organisations, institutions and governments on the situation of the target groups.

FORMA wants to ensure that, after completing a sociological educational training programme, each participant has a personal perspective in which he or she:

- Has sufficient communicative and interpersonal skills
- Has a positive work attitude
- Is self-reliant and has sufficient problem-solving skills
- Has professional competence.



Pierre Perigault Monte
FORMA SKJ coordinator

"In my position I am responsible for the organisation and running of the SKJ courses. Where my colleague Lianne Dam is responsible for the content of the secondary vocational courses, my work concentrates on the basic programme. This means that I am responsible for things such as the recruitment, intake, placement and monitoring of the SKJ participants during the basic programme.

For the quality improvement process of the SKJ pathways, I worked on further structuring the pathways and enhancing things such as the basic programme, the development of the Individual Educational Programme and care needs of the student, the dossier compilation, the form book, the lesson preparations and the mentor meetings. The entire process was based on the following question: "How do I get students involved in their own development?"

To me, the Inspection's positive assessment is the pinnacle of the work done over the past year. As FORMA, we also apply our knowledge and experience to further shape the SKJ pathways on Saba and Statia. Realising the basic quality standard for the Social Opportunity Programmes on Saba and Statia is our next target!"



Photography:
Adam Watkins

Mariëtte Zuidgeest Teacher Coach for Secondary Education Sint Eustatius and Saba

MARIËTTE ZUIDGEEST IS THE NEW TEACHER COACH FOR SECONDARY EDUCATION ON SINT EUSTATIUS AND SABA. SHE WAS APPOINTED ON MAY 1ST 2013, ON BEHALF OF THE OPEN UNIVERSITY AND THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, IN COLLABORATION WITH MAESTRO KOMPAS. SHE LIVES ON SINT MAARTEN AND WORKS ON SINT EUSTATIUS EIGHT DAYS A MONTH AND ON SABA FOUR DAYS A MONTH. THE WORK HAS BEEN DIVIDED THIS WAY BECAUSE THERE ARE TWICE AS MANY TEACHERS ON SINT EUSTATIUS AS THERE ARE ON SABA.

The assignment

Mariëtte's assignment consists of two parts:

1. She coaches, guides and trains teachers in the development of their teaching skills, in relation to the SBL competences.*1
2. She supports teachers who have to obtain a teaching certificate.

Mariëtte's background

After secondary school, Mariëtte studied German and French in Amsterdam and Berlin. As a German teacher she taught in Amsterdam for many years at havo/vwo, vmbo (T) and mbo, levels 3/4. She also worked as a student counsellor. After training as a school leader, she worked as education director on school development and integrated human resources. In this context, it was important that the skills and talents of the teachers were utilised to their best advantage in order to shape the education of the pupils as effectively as possible. Over the past five years, she has worked as a consultant, trainer and coach at CPS, a commercial bureau for education development. Her areas of expertise are the primary process in all its aspects (basis, student-activating teaching, differentiation), mentoring, language-oriented vocational education, the RTTI system, language in exams, career orientation and guidance, and modern foreign languages. Mariëtte now owns her own company, Edusprit, which is specialised in coaching and training education professionals.

Saba and Statia

At the Gwendoline van Putten school and the Saba Comprehensive School Mariëtte

supports the management team in the development of the school, concentrating on the teaching staff. She provides training on subjects that require substantive expertise or skills enhancement. In addition, teachers can contact her for individual coaching related to their own learning needs, such as didactics, acting with pedagogical awareness, welfare or time management.

Mariëtte really enjoys working as a teacher coach: "To me, improving education is something that can only be realised when you combine people- and results-oriented work methods. I am convinced people can only accomplish optimal professional development if it is something that comes from themselves and if the goals are clear. If you want to get people to change, this requires a combination of awareness, self-management and a readiness to take responsibility. My strengths lie in allowing teachers and leaders to reflect, challenging them, and supporting them in their development. The satisfaction of good education, where the pupil, teacher and manager put their talents to the best possible use: that is something I want to contribute to, that is my passion for education." ■

*1) SBL competences are competences or competence requirements that have been determined nationally by the Stichting Beroepskwaliteit Leraren en ander onderwijspersoneel (Foundation for Professional Quality for Teachers and other Education Staff, SBL). These seven competences are based on the seven roles a teacher plays in education. For more information, see www.zevencompetenties.nl.

PIZZA BAKER

I must often explain what I do on Statia and Saba. Very often. When I tell people that I am a school coach and support primary schools to help them improve the quality of their teaching, everyone thinks that is a noble pursuit. But when I explain what this entails in detail, many people switch off. My neighbour in the Netherlands always tells me that the educational terms I use give him lots of inspiration for Word Feud games. I'm not sure if that is a compliment.

In English-speaking regions, the term school coach is sometimes confused with coaching a sports team. My sporting ambitions (if I had any) have been put on hold for a while because of the high temperatures, which I'm still not used to. So then I have to explain once again what I actually do.

Things get a little clearer when I tell people that I try to improve how the children are taught, support the directors so the teachers can do their work properly, work together

with the schools to come up with plans to improve the teaching quality, work together with specialists to train teachers so they can become even better, and try to secure improvements and everything this entails.

So, by now, everyone knows what I do.

Or so I thought.

Of course, the children on the islands know me by now. After all, I am frequently at the schools and in the classrooms, and especially the children on Statia also see me in the shops and in my now famous/infamous Opel - when it works, that is.

Usually they yell "teacher!" and I merrily wave back.

Until one day, when I went to a school where the children at the afternoon school (ed. an extended school day) had eaten a slice of pizza. One of the pupils thought the pizza was really delicious. It seems that my role at the school is not quite clear yet, because he walked up to me and said: "teacher, you made the best pizza ever!"

So here is still a world to be conquered. ■



Photography:
Adam Watkins

JUMP START FOR PO-KIDS ON SABA

A DAUGHTER OR SON WHO IS DOING WELL AT SCHOOL IS THE DREAM OF EVERY PARENT, IS IT NOT? ALAS, IN PRACTICE INCREASING NUMBERS OF CHILDREN STRUGGLE TO MAKE THE SWITCH FROM LIFE AT HOME TO KINDERGARTEN OR PRIMARY EDUCATION. IN ORDER TO HELP CHILDREN AND THEIR PARENTS BETTER COORDINATE THE “HOME” AND “SCHOOL WORLD”, THE EXPERTISE CENTER EDUCATION CARE (EC2) ON SABA HAS DEVELOPED THE JUMP START PROGRAMME.

When you enter the EC2 office, you immediately notice a series of lovely, multi-coloured cuddly toys sitting on a row of colourful little suitcases. These little suitcases and their matching stuffed toys are the pride and joy of both EC2 director Jet van Heijnsbergen and behavioural coach Connie Adkins. Jet explains: “The Jump Start project is a version of the successful American “Head Start” programme especially developed for Saba. There is also a Dutch variant called “Opstap”. This programme helps parents build a better bond with their child by reading, playing games and practising speaking and listening together.”

Kangaroo KT

The programme is all about these little suitcases, which contain materials such as games, toys, books and puzzles. The intention of these is to encourage the parent and child to work together with the contents of the suitcases. Jet: “The

idea is that they play games together, and that the parent, using the materials, interacts with the child and helps him or her learn words and concepts. The stories in the story books are designed to teach children to talk about their thoughts and feelings. It is a known fact that children who are good at expressing themselves verbally have fewer behavioural problems. This bond between parent and child is extremely important: the stronger the bond between parent and child, the better the parent can help the child with his or her development. In short, with Jump Start we offer parents guidance for better contact with their child, which also fits in with the school environment." There is a reason why the programme is personified by Kangaroo KT (pronounced Katy); she carries a baby kangaroo in her pouch, and together they are going to make a jump start. KT also features in the logo of the Jump Start programme and in an introductory TV programme.

return the suitcase in good condition. The cases may only be used under supervision of the parents, by the way. They may only be opened and closed by a parent. The cases are loaned for a period of two weeks. Depending on the possibilities, we either collect the suitcase or the parent(s) drop(s) it off at our office. We will check it and put in new materials (such as colouring pencils) when required. And the cuddly toys get a good wash, of course."

Promotional clip

What are the experiences so far? "We have not been working on this for very long yet; we have three participating families so far. It was an instant hit with one of our little clients: the boy made a clear connection between his own world, his own toys, and the materials in the suitcase. He pretended that he was taking the animals from the suitcase (he had animal-themed case) to school in his own car!



F.l.t.r. Connie, Jet and voice actor Gersh Geenty playing kangaroo KT during the recording.

Contents of a suitcase.

Each suitcase has a theme, varying from fairy tales to animals and from parties to health. A number of cases also contain a simple game computer. The computers work with special cards, which are also in the box. By putting a card with a particular image in the computer, the computer can pronounce the word for you, so the child can get used to the pronunciation of the word and also learn to read it.

Game session

How does EC2 manage to get parents with busy schedules to actually work with their children? Jet: "A parent could be made aware of the programme through school or Youth and Family and referred to Connie or to me. We then make an appointment for the first session, which is when EC2 brings in the suitcase and explains to the parents what they can do with it. Of course, the creativity of the parent and the child also plays an important part in this. Some materials you can use in endless different ways to work on the exercises. We also immediately make an appointment to see the parent(s) and child work with the materials at home. This way, if necessary, we can give parents tips to get the most out of the material. With each case comes a big, colourful cuddly toy in the shape of a number (0 to 10). A deposit of \$5 is required for the use of the suitcase, which will be returned when the parents

"... THE STRONGER THE BOND BETWEEN PARENT AND CHILD, THE BETTER THE PARENT CAN HELP THE CHILD WITH HIS OR HER DEVELOPMENT."

Three suitcases is not that much yet, we still have to wait for word of mouth advertising around the island. We already have a short promotional clip on the local television channel, but this Friday we will be recording a more extensive commercial, in which Connie and I ask Kangaroo KT about the programme." Jet laughs and shows a Kangaroo KT hand puppet. "During the recording, voice actor Gersh Geenty will sit under the table and make Kangaroo KT move and answer our questions. I am looking forward to it already, because we're bound to have a laugh between takes! Anyway, we expect to get a lot more demand for our suitcases once things have become better known in the area and when - and this is what it is all about - the first results will become visible. It is an exciting process!" ■



FIRST SKILLS COMPETITIONS ON BONAIRE



THE DELEGATION THAT VISITED THE INTERNATIONAL SKILLS COMPETITIONS OF WORLD SKILLS AMERICAS SÃO PAULO IN NOVEMBER 2012 RETURNED HOME COMPLETELY BOWLED OVER BY THE EXPERIENCE. THEY WITNESSED HOW, IN A HUGE HALL, THOUSANDS OF YOUTHS FROM ACROSS THE REGION COMPETED WITH EACH OTHER IN 59 SKILLS FOR THREE DAYS. THE SKILLS WERE DIVIDED INTO SEVEN MAIN CATEGORIES: CONSTRUCTION AND ENGINEERING, HOSPITALITY, SERVICES, TRANSPORT AND LOGISTICS, FASHION AND CREATIVE AND INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY. ALL THE MEMBERS OF THE DELEGATION WERE IN COMPLETE AGREEMENT: STUDENTS IN VOCATIONAL TRAINING COURSES IN THE DUTCH CARIBBEAN SHOULD GET THE OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE PART IN THIS!

The delegation consisted of representatives of all three secondary/vocational schools in the Dutch Caribbean and the secondary/vocational project leader of the Rijksdienst Dutch Caribbean/Ministry of Education. In the delegation, Scholengemeenschap Bonaire (SGB) was represented by educational coordinator for technology Hein van Senten and chairman of the board Frans Lauxen. While in São Paulo, the delegation already decided that there should be a foundation that enables mbo/vocational and TVET-2 students in the Dutch Caribbean to take part in the competition. By April 2013, the "Skills Netherlands Caribbean" (SNC) foundation had become reality. SNC falls directly under the Dutch organisation Skills Netherlands. In July 2013, Secretary of Education Dekker awarded the foundation a grant for the funding of local and regional Skills activities in 2013 and 2014.

"... RESEARCH HAS SHOWN THAT GLOBALLY 85% OF YOUNG PEOPLE ARE BETTER AT LEARNING WITH THEIR HANDS THAN FROM BOOKS ..."

Professional pride

In the Netherlands, skills competitions for vocational students have been organised for more than 50 years. In these skills competitions, students compete with each other to show off their talents, knowledge and skills. Over the years, the skills competitions have grown into successful events in the Netherlands (Skills Masters), Europe (EuroSkills), and

The winning students posing with their certificate, surrounded by some of their skills teachers, students and teachers from Sint Eustatius and Saba, the president of the SGB school board and the general manager of Skills Netherlands, who assisted in the guidance of these competitions.



across the globe (WorldSkills). Skills competitions have the aim to promote vocational education, encourage professional pride and develop talents across the world.

The foundation

For Bonaire, everything begins with the pilot skills competitions that will be held at the schools between November 20th and 22, 2013. Early in 2014 a number of candidates will be elected to take part in the regional skills competitions. The regional competitions will be held in Bogotá, Colombia, from 24th March until 4th April 2014. The global Skills Americas competitions are held every two years in a country in North, South or Middle America or Canada. Because the vocational training courses on Sint Eustatius

¹ TVET-2 is the equivalent of the Dutch mbo system, in a Caribbean adaptation. TVET stands for Technical Vocational Education and Training and is offered in the Caribbean Netherlands by the Saba Comprehensive School.



Student Julio Mercedes (right) in discussion with teacher Arnold de Jong, for the tiling assignment

“... WE NEED TO EVOLVE TOWARDS A SITUATION IN WHICH SCHOOLS AND BUSINESSES COMBINE FORCES BASED ON THE REALISATION THAT WE ARE MUTUALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR HIGH-QUALITY WORKERS IN THE LABOUR MARKET.”

SELECTED SKILLS FOR PARTICIPATION SGB

From the list of skills that will be part of the regional competition of 2014, seven skills have been selected for participation in the competitions, which are all taught at the SGB. The skills are:

COURSE	SKILL
Hospitality	Cooking
Hospitality	Restaurant service
Construction	Plastering and dry wall systems
Construction	Tiling (walls and floors)
Engineering	Welding
Media	Web design
ICT	Information network cabling

and the TVET2 courses on Saba are still in their process of growth, they have not yet received a positive rating from the Education Inspection. For this reason, the students in these courses are not yet allowed to take part in these competitions. In anticipation of the moment when these two schools will have received this positive rating, a teacher of the Windward islands has a seat in the foundation's board. Two students from Saba and Sint Eustatius respectively will go to Bonaire to get a chance to experience the very first competitions at the SGB. It is currently just a pilot competition within the SGB, but once all islands are taking part, there will be competitions between the island to select participants for the regional competitions.

“We were amazed by what we saw in São Paulo,” Hein van Senten explains. “It was all so huge and full of pride. For example, during the car assembly assignment there were around 140 cars, including Volkswagens, Mercedes and BMWs, for the participants to tinker with. And those were the latest models too! The Brazilian branch of Volkswagen is a major financier of the Skills competitions and also of the Brazilian mechanics courses. It benefits Volkswagen if schools produce qualified mechanics. A number of young people will be prepared for a position in the company during their training. That is why Volkswagen provides schools with not just cars, but also with machines, tools and equipment.”

Boost

Other impressive assignments were the construction of several houses, which emerged on the premises over three competition days for the construction and engineering part, and the creation of a number of gardens with irrigation channels, ponds and landscaping. But what really impressed Frans Lauxen was the pride and dedication that the participants showed in their work. “We immediately realised how great it would be if “our” students could experience this. Of course, Bonaire is only a small island, and the same applies to the Windward islands. Many young people have not had the opportunity to see much of the world, let alone experienced what they can achieve within their profession with enough perseverance. Currently



Visuals:
via Eygje Laroo

THE DREAM OF EYGJE

On September 5th, beaming with pride, mbo-coordinator Eygje Laroo of the Gwendoline van Putten School stood in the gardens of Het Loo Palace in Apeldoorn. Not only had her submission for the “Droomboek” (Dream Book) been included in the book: she also had the honour of being there when the book was presented to the king. And her submission was also printed on a huge banner in the gardens of the palace!

“You might not think so, but I am crazy about the royal family,” says Eygje during lunch at Super Burger in Oranjestad. “My father is not particularly fond of the royal family, but my mother makes more than up for that. As a child, you’re going to choose sides, so I picked the side of Oranje!” When Eygje read the call for the submission of a dream for the new king, her first thought was “I must do something now!” She secretly hoped that there would not be too many submissions from Statia. She really wanted to submit something about the Dutch Caribbean: “It has always been my opinion that all parts of the kingdom are equally important. And thus the idea was born to make all the different parts of the kingdom the same size and combine them as a whole.” She chose the shape of a heart to emphasise the idea of belonging and ‘a heart for the kingdom’. It involved a lot of shuffling and tinkering with maps of the various parts of the kingdom, but she managed it in the end and sent off her submission.

Eygje was ecstatic when she received the mail telling her that her submission had been selected to be included in the dream book. But things got even better: not long after, she received an invitation to be present at the presentation of the book to the king! The school administration and board helped her prepare for her trip to the Netherlands, with a suitcase full of promotional material for Statia, which, incidentally, was snapped up by the other guests at Het Loo Palace. Eygje looks back at a very special experience. “This is something I really did not want to miss and ... I will also be part of the dream book forever!” ■

MIJN DROOM

DAT WE ALS
NEDERLAND
SINT-EUSTATIUS
SABA
BONAIRE
SINT-MAARTEN
CURAÇAO
ARUBA

SAMEN
ÉÉN HART
ÉÉN KONINKRIJK
ÉÉNSGEZIND
ZIJN





Studente Daniëlle cutting a tile for the assignment "wall tiling".

havo (general secondary education) and grammar school are flagship schools on our islands. This means that a lot of the young people at the vocational schools think they have 'fewer chances anyway'. Even though research has shown that globally 85% of young people are better at learning with their hands than from books. I am certain that these skills competitions can give a great boost to the professional pride, working attitude and dedication of 'our' young people in vocational training."

The competitions

On the first competition day on the 20th November 2013, the participating students will be presented with their assignments. This means that they have not done any specific practice for the competitions. Hein van Senten explains: "The principle is that the competitions must fit in with the curriculum and contribute to the qualification dossiers of the relevant courses. This means we are just giving normal lessons. For the technical skills, however, we do make sure that the students can deal with the equipment quickly and efficiently in the weeks before the competitions. It is also handy that the Skills organisation provided us with a number of examples of ways to set up a competition." Participation in the competitions is voluntary: "over the past few weeks, we have provided lots of information about the competitions and showed photographic and promotional materials to prepare the students and engage them in the competitions. I think there will be plenty of enthusiasm for it; a competition is always fun!"

Business

Over the past few years, interest in vocational training and the training being offered has increased significantly: the SGB currently offers no less than 23 certified courses, spanning the Business Services, Hospitality, Engineering and Wellness sectors. Students who complete vocational train-

ing will go out and look for a job in local business. In turn, local businesses benefit from a well-qualified workforce, with knowledge and skills that suit their requirements. It is therefore essential that the courses tie in with professional practice. The ROA CN (Raad Onderwijs en Arbeidsmarkt, Council for Education and Labour Caribbean Netherlands) plays a key part in this. They teach employers within the companies to become instructors able to provide students with proper guidance during their internship or work-based learning experience. In turn, the schools receive feedback from the industry about the extent to which the training fits in with real life business activities.

"On Bonaire we still have to get used to this fairly close collaboration between businesses and the schools," Hein van Senten remarks. "But in the larger countries around us, things are a lot more advanced. The Skills competitions play an important part in this, because it brings the most talented youths together. In fact, in other countries, the skills competitions tend to be largely funded by the industry. We now have grants for the coming two years, which we can use to finance the Skills activities. But we need to evolve towards a situation in which schools and businesses combine forces based on the realisation that we are mutually responsible for high-quality workers in the labour market. In short: we still have some way to go. This is why I hope the upcoming skills competitions allow us to take another step in the right direction."

Meanwhile the competitions have been held and the SGB is looking back on a successful event. The students had experienced it as educational and exciting. For the teachers it had been inspiring and instructive, though they were glad that it concerned a pilot. As Hein van Senten put it: "to organise these competitions well demands a lot from the students as well as the teachers and the organising team."

CREATING AWARENESS OF YOUR OWN BEHAVIOUR THROUGH 'KANJERTRAINING'

Photography:
Kanjertaining

THE TEACHERS OF THE BETHEL METHODIST SCHOOL ARE SITTING IN A CIRCLE. ONE OF THEM IS WEARING A BLACK CAP WITH AN EAGLE DRAWN ON IT: SHE IS THE "BULLY". SHE TEASES AND PESTERS HER COLLEAGUE, WHO IS WEARING A YELLOW CAP WITH A RABBIT ON IT. ANOTHER COLLEAGUE IS WEARING A RED CAP WITH A MONKEY ON IT AND IS HAVING GREAT FUN. SHE SUPPORTS THE BULLY'S BEHAVIOUR. THE TEACHER WITH THE YELLOW CAP FEELS INCREASINGLY CORNERED AND LOOKS HELPLESSLY AT THE REST OF THE GROUP: WHO WILL HELP HER DEFEND HERSELF AGAINST THE BULLY'S ATTACKS?



Parents' evening at the Governor de Graaff School.

"IT IS IMPORTANT TO CREATE THAT ATMOSPHERE OF TRUST AND SAFETY, SO IMPORTANT TO CHILDREN, IN ORDER TO FUNCTION PROPERLY ..."

This role-playing game illustrates perfectly what happens in the classroom when a child is being bullied. In many cases a dominant child (the bully) dominates a classmate. The bully regularly makes the others laugh, also amusing the children who are looking for excitement (the monkeys with the red cap). According to trainer Gerard Weide of training institute Kanjertraining, most bullies do not consciously choose to

taunt other children. And the victims of bullying are not pathetic, sad children, but they do have a big problem when they are a target. Luckily most problems can be resolved. Parents and teachers have a natural tendency to be tough on bullying children and punish them for their behaviour. According to popular opinion, those who are being bullied need help and must be protected against their bullying classmates.

"And that is exactly what we must do away with," states trainer Gerard Weide of the Kanjertraining institute. "With our training we try to change the 'mindset' and the ingrained thought patterns of not just teachers and pupils but also the parents. A difficult child is not usually deliberately annoying but is stuck in a vicious circle. The same applies to the victims of bullying. Children who are being bullied can decide to feel sorry for themselves, but they can also realise that they are in a situation that can be resolved. By making a child aware of this, you can help him or her to step out of the role of victim. In our training we try to make the participants aware of ideas and ways of responding to things that will paint them into a corner. This applies to both the bully and the victim.

We try to provide them with ways to break through their ingrained thought patterns. In addition, we also see to it that teachers and parents become aware of their own behaviour. When an adult gets irritated by a child and gets angry, things do not get any better. It is important to keep one's emotions in check. Set a good example as an adult: Be your own boss! This means you are allowed to be angry with a child, but you



Training session with teachers of the Bethel Methodist School.

Tessa Courtar-Thomas Group 5 teacher at the Bethel Methodist School

“What is so valuable about this course is the fact that you learn to analyse behaviour. Not just the behaviour of your child, but also your own. It is important to approach children correctly, so you get to know them and understand what is going on in their lives and how they feel. As teacher you must be able to control your own feelings in order to be truly open to the pupils. What you, as teacher, bring into the classroom determines how the class will react.”

should not humiliate him or her. And that is what happens when you become angry due to feelings of irritation and annoyance.”

Compliment

During the next exercise, the teachers are instructed to ignore the bullying colleague. This produces a completely different situation. The bully does not manage to get through to her colleagues and gives up. “By ignoring the bully, you break the pattern in which he or she receives attention - and with that, power,” Gerard explains. “The solution of the problem is not to teach the bully a lesson. Every child is looking for affection and approval and wants to feel safe: and this also applies to bullies! This is why we train teachers and parents to regularly compliment children. “It is important to create that atmosphere of trust and safety, so important to children, in order to function properly.”

When an investigation showed that – due to behavioural problems in class - many primary school pupils on Sint Eustatius did not really enjoy going to school, the Kanjertraining institute was called in. Director Gerard Weide and his partner Elly Brouwer visited the island for two weeks in August to give a two-day Kanjertraining course at each primary school. During this visit to Sint Eustatius, a baseline measurement was taken at each school to map the behaviour at that particular point in time. Using an especially developed pupil monitoring system, teachers can track how the behaviour of the individual pupils develops over time. During the two-day training, each school also held a parents’ evening to involve the parents in the training and help them set a good example to their children. The trainers will visit the island again next year to measure progress. During that visit, the plan is also to train the teachers and parents of the international bridging classes of the Gwendoline van Putterschool. ■

‘KANJERTRAINING’

Training institute “Kanjertaining” is located in Almere. The institute is 17 years old. Kanjertraining has been held at more than 2000 schools in the Netherlands, and it has become a national household name. Teachers who have followed this training even have an edge when applying for a job. In recent years, Kanjertraining has also started making a name for itself abroad. The training programme is characterised by its practical approach: what parents and teachers learn during training can be applied immediately at home or in the classroom.

For more information, see
www.kanjertaining.nl

“...I CAN REALISE MY DREAM HERE!”

Photograph:
Rens van der Hammen

AN OUTDOOR RESEARCH FACILITY FOR SEA WATER EXPERIMENTS ALONG THE COAST OF ORANJESTAD, EXHIBITIONS FOR ISLANDERS AND VISITORS, A SMALL NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM, A PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTRE, A KNOWLEDGE AGENDA FOR SINT EUSTATIUS, AN ANNUAL SCIENCE FAIR BY LOCAL SCHOOL CHILDREN AND BI-MONTHLY LECTURES ABOUT CURRENT LOCAL RESEARCH PROJECTS: THESE ARE ONLY A FEW OF THE MANY PLANS DIRECTOR JOHAN STAPEL HAS FOR THE NEW CNSI (CARIBBEAN NETHERLANDS SCIENCE INSTITUTE) RESEARCH INSTITUTE ON SINT EUSTATIUS.

To Johan Stapel, it is not an isolated scientific bastion, where scientists come and go incognito to do research that only appears in scientific publications. “What we want to achieve here on Sint Eustatius with CSNI is not ‘science for the sake of science’ but a science centre that concentrates on research that supports the sustainable development of Sint Eustatius and the surrounding region.” According to Johan, the CNSI will facilitate research within all pertinent disciplines (both maritime and on land, and within the natural and life sciences and social and economic sciences). It involves both strategic and applied research.

“The translation from research into information relevant to society will play an important part at this knowledge centre. Education and awareness initiatives are also an important point of interest. A good relationship and a good collaboration between the scientists, the schools and the community organisations on the island are therefore vitally important.”

“SINT EUSTATIUS IS NOT JUST A DELIGHTFUL ISLAND; IT ALSO HAS HUGE SCIENTIFIC POTENTIAL...”

Permanent scientific presence

In April 2012, the then governor of Sint Eustatius, Koos Sneek, and the then Secretary-General of Education, Rob- orgh, signed the Memorandum of Understanding for the establishment of a multifunctional knowledge centre on Sint Eustatius. Before that moment, many things went on behind the scenes. How did Johan get involved? “After I graduated as a marine ecologist in 1991, I got the chance to do research in the tropics several times – mainly in Indonesia – with subsidies from OCW (the Ministry of Education) and the NWO

council. In the run up to ‘10/10/10’, I was one of the initiators for the establishment of AcroporaNet: a partnership formed by the most relevant Dutch research institutes in the field of tropical marine biology. The constitutional reform of 2010 gave the Dutch tropical marine biology world the idea to look into intensifying our activities in the new political entities in the Dutch Caribbean.”

The Leeward Islands already had a decent scientific infrastructure, with institutes such as Carmabi on Curaçao. But especially on the northern former Dutch Antilles – also islands with a rich cultural history and biodiversity – the scientific infrastructure really needs to catch up. The Ministry of Education could see the merit of a permanent scientific presence on Sint Eustatius as part of a scientific network in the Caribbean region. The Ministry’s ambition to establish a knowledge centre on Sint Eustatius for this purpose was welcomed and supported by the island government and the scientific community of Sint Eustatius from the onset. The ministries of Economic Affairs (EX) and Infrastructure and the Environment (I&M) were also very positive about the plans.

Once several Ministry of Education scouts had confirmed that Sint Eustatius would be a suitable location for a knowledge centre, a quartermaster went to work and the recruitment process for a director was begun. The director’s function particularly appealed to Johan because it seamlessly fitted in with the knowledge and experience he had gained throughout the years: “Sint Eustatius is not just a wonderful island; it also has huge scientific potential; I can realise my dream here!”

Johan Stapel studied Biology at the University of Nijmegen (now Radboud University), graduating in aquatic ecology. In June 1997, he received his doctorate based on a study of sea grass fields in Indonesia. As research assistant, official, project leader and programme manager, Johan Stapel has performed and coordinated tropical marine research in Indonesia and the Netherlands. From February 2011 until June 2013 he was a senior researcher at IMARES in Wageningen.

ORGANISATION KNOWLEDGE CENTRE

- The Ministry of Education has asked the NWO (Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek¹, Dutch Organisation for Scientific Research) and the island government of Sint Eustatius to establish a knowledge centre on Sint Eustatius.
- The NWO tasked one of its institutes, the NIOZ (Koninklijk Nederlands Instituut voor Onderzoek der Zee, Dutch Institute for Sea Research) with realising the knowledge centre.
- In addition to NIOZ, other scientific institutes have also committed themselves to the development of the knowledge centre. This includes IMARES (the Institute for Marine Resources and Ecosystem Studies of Wageningen University), biodiversity centre NCB-Naturalis, KITLV (Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde, Royal Institute of Linguistics and Ethnology) and the Archaeological Faculty of Leiden University. These parties, together with the island government of Sint Eustatius, NWO and the Ministry of Education, are represented in the CNSI steering committee. The partners also include the local Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (Landbouw, Veeteelt en Visserij (LVV)) agency, Sint Eustatius Center for Archaeological Research (SECAR) and the local nature conservation organisation Sint Eustatius National Parks (STENAPA).
- Besides the director, the staff of the knowledge centre will consist of an administrative assistant, a lab assistant and one or more service employees.
- In addition to the board, there are two important advisory bodies: an advisory group composed of representatives from the Caribbean parts of the Kingdom, plus the so-called User Groups. They will advise the director on the research agenda and investments into the necessary facilities and the infrastructure that will be required for the planned research, educational and information activities. At the moment, people are working on the composition of the User Groups for natural sciences, applied sciences, social sciences, education and information respectively.

Talk of the town

In the Golden Rock district on Sint Eustatius, people are currently working hard to turn the former “Talk of the Town” hotel into a centre where researchers will devote themselves to various research tasks starting next Spring. A laboratory will be installed for scientific measurements and experiments. The equipment for this laboratory will arrive on the island in December. In addition there will be office space with a number of work stations with PCs, a teaching/classroom and an information centre in which exhibitions can be held. There will be seven bedrooms, which can accommodate 25 people in total, with sanitary facilities and a kitchen.

The research programme of the CNSI will be announced at the beginning of 2014. Over the past year, researchers have been able to submit proposals in response to a Call for Proposals by NWO. This call was recently closed after the submission of a large number of projects; it is obvious that researchers are very keen to do research within this framework. NWO will make a selection based on scientific quality. In the assessment of the submitted projects, projects with partnerships with institutes in the Caribbean area and projects that are connected with the development of the knowledge centre on Sint Eustatius will have an advantage.

¹ NWO is an administrative body that falls under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education. NWO's statutory duties are established in the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research Act. NWO encourages quality and innovation in science and is one of the largest research councils in the Netherlands. For more information, see www.nwo.nl.

THE MAKING OF A SCHOOL CURRICULUM

IT IS ALL DESCRIBED IN A THICK PAPER ENTITLED “SABA COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL - DRAFT CURRICULUM OUTLINE”, OF WHICH THE FINAL VERSION WILL APPEAR SOON. BUT WHAT DOES IT ENTAIL EXACTLY, AND WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT FOR THE SCHOOL?

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Photography:
Adam Watkins
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“A curriculum is literally a learning plan,” explains Jan Berkvens of SLO (Nationaal Expertisecentrum voor leerplanontwikkeling, Netherlands Institute for Curriculum Development). “A curriculum describes what a school wants children to learn, and which knowledge, skills and behaviour they must master to realise this. I was approached by the Saba Comprehensive School (SCS) in March 2013 and asked if I could help them draw up a school curriculum. The 58 core targets that apply to the SCS are known to be extremely broad, and in the Dutch educational system it is up to the school to draw up a curriculum to realise these targets. The process I am currently working on with the SCS consists of three steps.”

The first step is the determination of the so-called teaching framework. Under the leadership of Jan, the entire team - from teachers to the board of directors and the trustees - together decided what the school's vision and principles are: what knowledge and skills do we find important, and what kind of leadership and support do we want to offer the pupils?

OUR VISION

We offer our pupils access to a broad, well-balanced curriculum that builds on the pupil's knowledge, understanding and abilities. Our curriculum focuses on building knowledge and skills and provides the flexibility needed to help each student bring out the best in themselves.

From: Draft Curriculum Outline SCS, 1 July, 2013

Step two was to establish a five-year curriculum for each subject, and determine how it should be distributed across those five years: which learning content (knowledge, skills, behaviour) do we want to realise each year? The starting points for this are the fact that learning content must become progressively more difficult, and that overlaps between different subjects must be avoided as much as possible. This breakdown was made for both the academic and the vocational subjects.

Step one and two have now been realised and recorded in the above-mentioned “Draft curriculum outline”. Over the coming period, under Jan's leadership, the school will continue with the development of step three: distributing the learning content across the different grades and terms. A workshop was held on 19th and 20th September in order to realise this exercise.

Jan: “During this workshop, teachers and support staff worked together to further work out the school's curriculum: what will be covered in which year? It is important to do this with the entire team. The teachers come from the Caribbean area, the Netherlands, Belgium and Canada, which means they have all been trained differently and have different ideas about education. They are still jointly responsible for the education of the pupils at their school, however. This is why it is so important that everyone is in agreement about how the education should look, and that clear arrangements are made. And those arrangements are now recorded in the curriculum. This way, the school ensures that its identity does not fade and that the educational process of the students is not interrupted should teachers leave the school. This also applies to other schools in the Caribbean part of the Netherlands, and even in the Netherlands across the ocean. Saba has taken the lead in this. The team is especially excited now it has realised how much freedom it actually has to design the curriculum and tailor it to the local circumstances. We will be working on perfecting the curriculum over the coming months.”



Director Hemmie van Xanten:

“After the political transition of 10th October 2010, the schools on Saba have kept English as their language of instruction. Due to the need to align the English language school systems CXC and TVET*¹ to the core targets of the havo level and vocational education, the school had already had to adapt and translate a lot of its materials. Another factor is the fact that the formulation of the core targets happens to be relatively vague. What do these targets actually mean with regard to what a pupil should achieve for a particular subject, and how do you distribute this across the various school years?

Not so long ago, the school had worked on the development of its new logo. But what was our true identity; the link between what each individual teacher was doing in his or her classroom? On which vision was the education we were giving the SCS children actually based? All questions that did not have a clear answer until recently.

Curriculum development begins with a vision shared amongst the staff. It also needs clear objectives, which is what the teachers base their work on every day. Under the expert guidance of Jan Berkvens, we, as team, have worked hard on clarifying all this over the past year. And the result of all this is that we will soon have a school curriculum with a more consistent and clear leitmotif.”

¹ Pupils in the so-called “academic stream” (theoretical tracks) are preparing to do the exam of the Caribbean Examination Council. Pupils in vocational education are preparing to do the TVET (Technical Vocation Education and Training, equivalent to the Dutch mbo) 1 and 2 exams.

About Jan Berkvens

Jan Berkvens is an international projects researcher at SLO (Netherlands Institute for Curriculum Development, nationaal expertisecentrum leerplanontwikkeling, www.slo.nl). Jan has done research and implemented projects in the field of curriculum development in a number of different countries. Based on his knowledge of curriculum choices in different countries, he helped Saba Comprehensive School to create a tailored curriculum to suit the school’s specific context.



Mathematics Teacher Derrick Goffe

“We have had several meetings and workshops in order to analyse everything properly. It was pretty tough, especially because we had to do this on top of our usual work. But it was a very rewarding task. At least now the work the teachers do will be consistent. When I leave, I know that the next person will be able to continue my work in the same way, based on the same principles.”



Photography:
Rens van der Hammen
Elaine Marchena

SELF-PORTRAIT PROJECT ON SINT EUSTATIUS

IN THE GALLERY OF THE GOVERNOR DE GRAAFF SCHOOL, SIX CHILDREN SIT AT A LONG TABLE. THEY ARE BUSY COLOURING THEIR SELF-PORTRAITS. THIS IS ONE OF THE 31 GROUPS THAT, UNDER ANNEMIEKE JANSEN'S GUIDANCE, IS WORKING ON THE STATION SELF-PORTRAIT PROJECT. THE PAINTING CLASSES, WHICH ARE ORGANISED AT ALL PRIMARY SCHOOLS ON THE ISLAND, WILL RESULT IN A MOTLEY COLLECTION OF AROUND 400 PAINTINGS OF CHILDREN'S FACES. ON NOVEMBER 15TH THE COLLECTION WOULD BE VIEWED IN THE WILHELMINA PARK BY THE ROYAL COUPLE DURING THEIR VISIT TO SINT EUSTATIUS.

What gave you the idea to organise this project on Sint Eustatius?

"I was inspired by a self-portrait project my children did at school. It was educational, but above all a lot of fun. The parents also had a chance to enjoy it, because a slide show was made of the individual children and their self-portraits. When I saw it, I realised this would be great for the children and parents on Sint Eustatius. And this is how the plan for a self-portrait project on Statia emerged."

Most people know you from the e-mail news service Statia News. What is your link with Statia?

"I lived on Statia from 2007 to 2010. I arrived with my partner, who had a teaching position here. I did not have a job myself, and one of my voluntary projects involved setting up the Statia News newsletter. I no longer make the newsletter, but I do still forward messages via e-mail. I had a great time here, and Statia is still in my thoughts every day. That is why I was really keen on taking the self-portrait project here."

How did you manage to realise your idea?

"First of all, the Statia Pride foundation was really helpful when I approached them. Nustar and the Foundation Prins Bernard Culture Fund Caribbean were prepared to sponsor the project. This gave us the funds to buy and ship the paint, brushes and around 400 stretched canvasses that were needed. But a project such as this also needs a lot of long distance organisation. And we would never have managed this without the help of Olga Schats from Statia Pride. She is the one who made and maintained all contacts on the island before I arrived. And the lessons are running smoothly thanks to our team: Olga, Heleen, Ankie, Annelies and Trudy."

What does a painting class look like?

"We start with a short arts lesson. The children study their own faces in a mirror. They learn to look at themselves carefully and ask themselves questions such as: do I have a round or a long face, a round or a pointy chin, etc. They also learn about ratios: what is really the middle of your face, where are your eyes in relation to your nose, etc. Using this knowledge, they draw their face on the canvas with a pencil. Then they mix paint and start painting their face."

How do you look back on the classes?

"The children really enjoyed it, it is amazing how they were all concentrating on their work. Painting is something you do for yourself, not for the teacher. Although most of the teachers really enjoyed it as well and participated with lots of enthusiasm."

Can we expect more of these kinds of projects on Statia in the future?

"I think so, we made so many children happy with this project, I think the schools would love to see us back."

