



Rijksdienst Caribisch Nederland
OCW

ENGLISH

WHAT'S NEW ...

IN CARIBBEAN NETHERLANDS EDUCATION



11

December 2018
Number 11

CONTENTS

2	Colophon	6	Interview Lessons in Equality at the Sacred Heart School	16	Dutch Language Union NVT Activities on St. Eustatius and Saba
3	Introduction Nolly Oleana	7	Highlights 2018	18	A week full of waste!
3	Entries anniversary story contest Wouter de Waal	12	Chances for all children Unique experience in nature park	20	New all-round technical training at SGB
4	Continuation Entries anniversary story contest Rhea Courtar	13	An introduction ... Rayann Ramdin	22	Conscious discipline Workshop on St. Eustatius
5	Short News	14	Report Team Bonaire wins silver in World Skills Competition in Chile	23	A day with ... Martijn Baptiste

COLOPHON

This magazine is a publication of RCN/OCW and aims:

- to provide background information about education developments for education professionals in the Caribbean Netherlands
- and to promote the exchange of knowledge and experience between the islands.

Editorial team: Anna Lautenbag and Elaine Marchena (including final editing)

Photography: Tim van Dijk, Anna Lautenbag, Jet van Heijnsbergen, SGB, Marie St. Jago and Elaine Marchena

English Translations: John Amarica

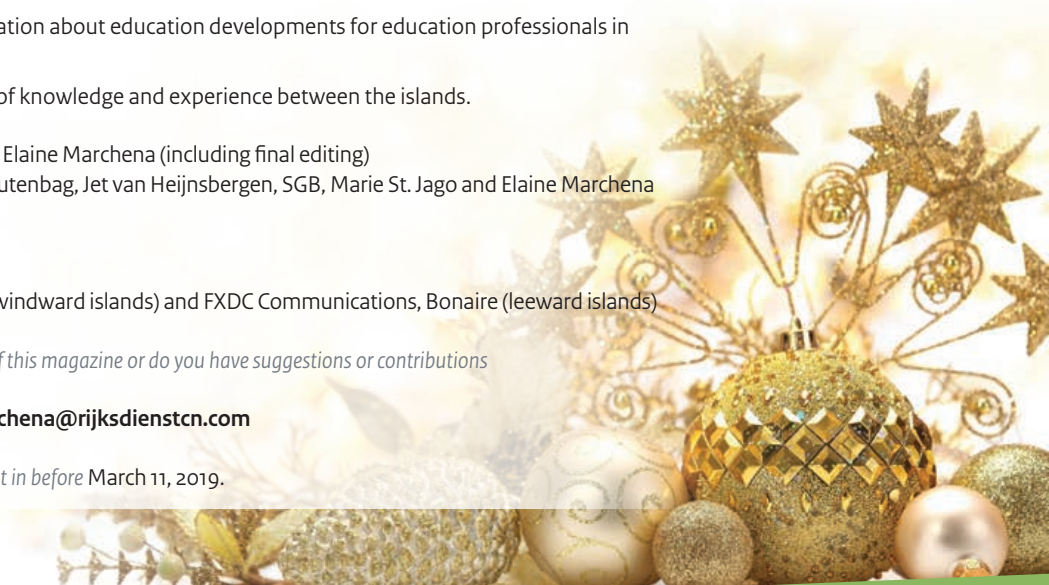
Design: I-Design, Ivonne Zegveld

Printing: Print 2000, Sint Maarten (windward islands) and FXDC Communications, Bonaire (leeward islands)

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

Please send an e-mail to: Elaine.marchena@rijksdienstcn.com

Copy for the next edition should be sent in before March 11, 2019.





PREFACE

2018 was an eventful year. The year-in-review article elsewhere in this magazine speaks for itself. A very important development that was initiated during the past year, was integrated collaboration. The collaboration between the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, educational institutions and partners (in the chain of youth care) in areas such as healthcare, youth care and childcare. This integrated approach was included in the Second Education Agenda as one of the preconditions for improving education in the CN.

During the coming two years, manpower and resources will be made available in close cooperation with all local partners in the education chain to work on this issue.

Another important development is working with secondary schools to collaborate regarding the promotion and improvement of vocational education, in accordance with priority #5 of the Second Education Agenda: "Education that is geared towards continuing education and/or the labour market". Just like everywhere else in the world, there's also a big need for well-trained tradesmen in the Caribbean Netherlands' labour market.

On the windward islands, because of St. Eustatius' and Saba's limited size, they cooperate with St. Maarten. And last but not least, I want to focus on language education. During the past year, primary schools worked together with secondary schools on Bonaire to come up with a different approach to Dutch lessons. The starting point is that Dutch is a foreign language for students, but it's also the language in which they acquire knowledge. On St. Eustatius and Saba, Dutch is also a foreign language. Although school is now taught in English, Dutch also remains an important language there, with an eye on the future, to possibly continuing to study in the Netherlands. In the coming two years, much attention will be paid to and resources will also be available to be able to achieve priority #3 of the Second Education Agenda: "More Effective Language Education".

I want to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you for your efforts during the past year.

*On behalf of the RCN/OCW team,
I wish you and your loved ones pleasant, relaxed
and happy holidays and a prosperous 2019!*

¹ The Second Education Agenda for the Caribbean Netherlands, 2017 - 2020, "Working together on the next step", is the policy agenda that the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and all local education stakeholders have committed to. This current Education Agenda is a follow-up to the First Education Agenda for the Caribbean Netherlands: "Working together on quality (2011 - 2016)". The Education Agenda contains a blueprint for the improvements necessary to ensure that students in the CN receive the same education as students in the European Netherlands.

First entries jubilee story contest

The jubilee story competition on the occasion of the 10th edition of 'What's new ...' has yielded two stories. You can read them below.

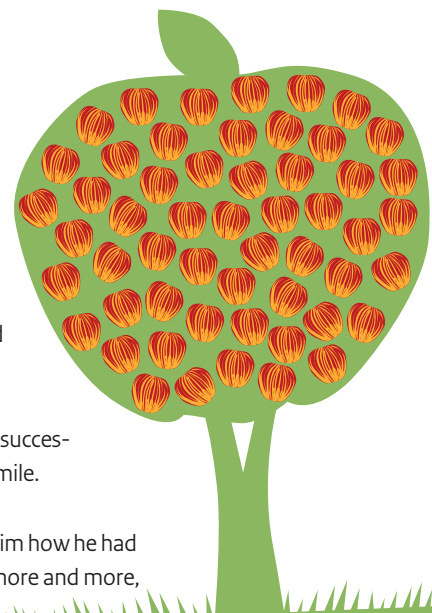
'How apple sauce can help change someone'

By **Wouter de Waal**, Teacher group 7 Golden Rock Roman Catholic School

When I started teaching group 7, I was told that I would have a very difficult group. The children didn't work and didn't listen to their teacher. There was also one special needs student. They thought he had difficulties stemming from Autism Spectrum disorder. He didn't want to work, was angry all the time (especially during breaks), hit and bit children and he never laughed (he was unhappy).

Back in Holland, I worked with many special needs children and my experience was that the way to work successfully with these kids is to become connected. Try to see what they're interested in, what makes them smile.

I found out by accident that he had lived in Holland for many years, so that was my entry point. I asked him how he had experienced living in Holland. At first, he gave me short answers, but along the way he started talking more and more,



First entries jubilee story contest

even in Dutch! He missed Holland very much and wanted to go back. He missed the playgrounds and the McDonald's. I asked him what he really missed the most and what would bring a smile on his face if he could visit that place or have it. He told me with a big smile Appelmooes (apple sauce)! Luckily my wife had bought 8 jars from Holland, so Friday when the class went to gym, I sneaked back into the class and I put a jar of Appelmooes in his bag. He had no idea that it was in his bag. When I arrived at school on Monday, I saw a boy with a big, big smile. I asked him: "What are you smiling about?" He answered: "I ate everything myself and I didn't share it with nobody!" From that moment on, we had a connection!

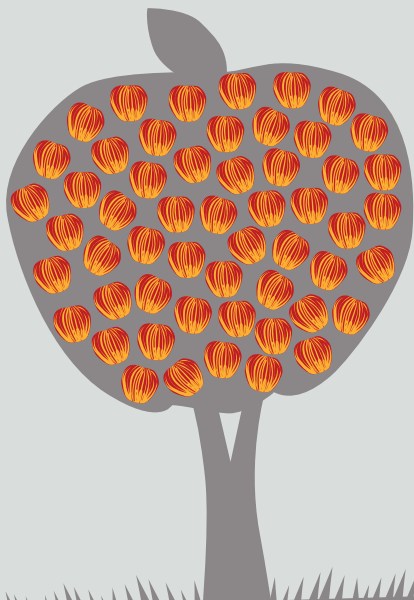
In class he did very well thereafter; he was willing to work, listened well and was happier. He liked my jokes and that was my way of getting to him when he was grumpy or whenever. The only thing he found difficult was gym class. He couldn't handle losing. One day he was screaming and shouting during gym again and the gym teacher couldn't help him. So, I took him with me to my classroom and I tried to calm him down. I managed to quiet him and I asked him what the problem was. He told me with that he hated losing and he started crying. Big tears came out of his eyes and then out of a sudden he asked me if I could please help him and if I wanted to give him a hug. Can you imagine that, from a boy 5 feet 6 inches tall! That moment even brought tears to my eyes and I told him I would help him no matter what.

From that moment on, the gym teacher and I helped him and another boy with autism (so that they could also help each other) every Thursday after school from 3 - 4 pm. We played games, did sports, taught them how to cycle and the most important thing: taught them to have fun and explained to them that it's not only about winning. From that moment on, this boy made a 180 degree turn around. He smiles, makes jokes and is a happy boy!

And it all started with the Appelmooes ...

Wouter de Waal

Group 7, Golden Rock School,
Sint Eustatius.



Diary of a sixth-grade teacher

By **Rhea Courtar**, Golden Rock School St. Eustatius, Dutch Caribbean

It's Monday July 2, 2018, a beautiful day on St. Eustatius. The sky is a perfect Caribbean blue, decorated impeccably by tinges of thin and wispy cirrus clouds. It's a near perfect day. An encouraging sign of what lies ahead.

It's 5:30 p.m. when I arrive at the school. I have to be calm, I tell myself. The contradicting feelings within are immense. Excitement. Emptiness. Flashes of pleasure. Moments of pain. I'm exceptionally happy, yet terribly sad.

And then I see them. Eleven of the loveliest, most adorable students I've ever taught. It's their moment to be in the spotlight, the culmination of seven years of preparation. It's the end of an unbelievable journey, with the most incredible of highs, punctuated with a few lows that can be dismissed as being on par for the profession. My eleven adorable angels are about to take their last steps of this journey. Not long from now they'll be graduates of the Golden Rock Roman Catholic School.

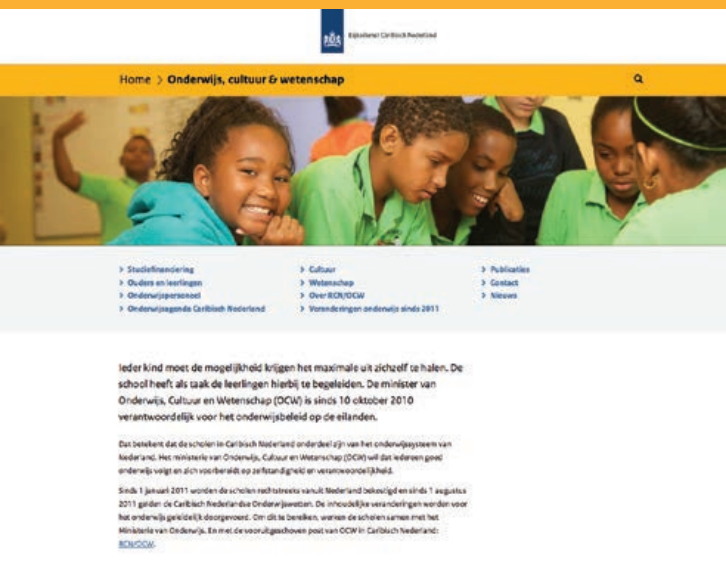
It's time to get them dressed for the occasion. Blue gowns and caps with gold tassels and scarfs. Smart. Impeccable. Radiant. Charming. Wondrous and magical. They're a paradigm of excellence. I look around the dressing room and share a final word of reassurance with the now anxious faces. It's controlled anxiety. They simply want to get on with it. This is the moment to make themselves and their parents proud. I open the door and lead them to the starting point for the grand entrance..

The deejay is set. The music is cued. Miley Cyrus' The Climb begins to play. "I can almost see it. That dream I'm dreaming..."
I prepare my students, my angels, for the count. One...Two...Three...Go!

They take the first step and I can virtually hear myself guiding them telepathically: right . . . step...left...step...breathe...step. They move with such elegance, such grace, such poise.

Miley Cyrus again: "Every step I'm taking. Every move I make..."
The pride their parents feel is palpable. However, my attention is on my students. I'm cheering them along. They can't hear me, but they can tell. When they get to the front, they stand for a brief moment. What an amazing sight these gems are! My heart, full of pride, is pounding.

Anthem sung, prayers said, speeches shared, it's time to present the certificates. I'm getting emotional as I speak about their strengths, their abilities and their dreams, but I can't allow anyone to notice.



<https://www.rijksdienstcn.com/onderwijs-cultuur-wetenschap>

NEW RCN/OCW WEBSITE

The Department of Education, Culture and Science (OCW) of the Rijksdienst Caribisch Nederland has a new website. The website contains information on everything related to education in the Caribbean Netherlands, from overviews of schools (including contact information), to student financial aid, compulsory education, holidays, the CXC school system (on St. Eustatius and Saba) and more.

The new OCW website is part of the Rijksdienst Caribisch Nederland's webportal: www.rijksdienstcn.com, Education, Culture & Science section. The RCN/OCW department has a new e-mail address: ocw@rijksdienstcn.com. The old e-mail address: vrageveronderwijs@rijksdienstcn.com is no longer valid.



Golden rock School

Post event...photo time! We freeze the moment, but the cameras will never truly capture the special bond between this group of students and me.

I feel a tear now. It's that strange combination of emotions at play - joy, sadness and pride - manifesting themselves. I feel a few more tears and a lump in my throat. My passion and my profession are coming together in perfect harmony.

This sums up this memorable occasion: quirky, emotional and absolutely inspired.

Rhea Courtar

Group 8, Golden Rock School,
Sint Eustatius.



WORKING MEETINGS FOR THE BES(T) 4 KIDS PROGRAMME

Working meetings were organized in June, October and November to prepare for the BES(t) 4 kids programme, which will start in 2019.

The aim of this multi-year programme is to strengthen the childcare, pre-school and after-school facilities on the three Caribbean Islands and to make childcare more affordable for parents. The goal is for 80% of the children in the Caribbean Netherlands to have access to these facilities by 2022. The public entities and the OCW's Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment¹ and VWS² are working closely together in this programme, which will be well coordinated with childcare organisations, schools and organisations in the chain of youth care.

¹ Social Affairs and Employment
² Public Health, Welfare and Sport

By Anna Lautenbag

LESSONS ABOUT EQUALITY AT SACRED HEART SCHOOL

International Women's Day is on March 8 every year. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that women and men have equal rights. Unfortunately, in practice it appears that this is not the case everywhere in the world. That's why this year's International Women's Day was all about equality for men and women. A good reason for guest teacher Danielle Sykes, or teacher Dani, to focus on this theme.

"I taught at the Sacred Heart School in the past", says Dani. "Every time I travel to Saba, I bring a suitcase full of children's books. I knew my visit this time would coincide with International Women's Day, so I went looking for children's books about strong women who have done something for women's rights."

"KNOWLEDGE ABOUT EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS IS A TOOL, A TOOL THAT MAKES IT POSSIBLE TO RESPOND TO INJUSTICE"

The right to learn

"What do you know about International Women's Day; why is it a special day today?" Dani asks the children in grade 2. With great enthusiasm several children raise their hands. "Because we love our moms and because we're grateful for our moms!", several children answered.

"Yes, it's a day to be grateful for our mothers and grandmothers. And also a day to realize that women have done great things in the past and, of course, still do. What do you know about human rights, about the rights of children?", Dani continues.

The answers come from everyone. "The right to learn", "the right to feel safe" and "the right to play" were mentioned by the children.

Dani emphasizes the right to learn and explains that in some places in the world, girls don't have the right to go to school. Like the girl, Malala from Pakistan, about whom a powerful book was written. "One day some men in her country did not allow Malala to go to school, but she went anyway", Dani tells the class. "So, then the men wounded her so badly that she had to go to the hospital, but she recovered and to this day she continues to fight for the right to education for all girls."

Fairness and respect

"I'm convinced that it's important to teach the children on Saba about women's rights, because this provides children with the opportunity to learn how they can treat others fairly and with respect," says Dani after the lesson. "This can help children recognize discrimination and to fight against it." Knowledge about equality and fairness is a tool, a tool that makes it possible to respond to injustice. It's my hope that by telling the children about equality and the rights of others, they'll grow up to be responsible, respectful and compassionate individuals who are able to take steps to make this world a better place." ■

2018

HIGHLIGHTS

FEBRUARY

SECOND CONSULTATION REGARDING THE EMPLOYEE MANUAL FOR CN EDUCATION PERSONNEL

In the second half of February, a second draft version of the employee manual for schools in the Caribbean Netherlands was presented. OCW employees in the Caribbean and the European Netherlands visited the schools and the union. The employee manual describes the terms and conditions of employment for education personnel in the Caribbean Netherlands as stipulated in the education laws. The final version of the Employee Manual was in production at the time this magazine was being produced.



APRIL

WINDWARD ISLANDS TRUANCY COURSE ON SABA

From April 9 to 13, the truancy officers of St. Maarten, Saba and St. Eustatius took part in a training course. This was held on Saba. The aim of the course was to stimulate cooperation within the chain approach. And to further promote professionalism among the truancy officers.

FEBRUARY

TRAINING FOR SCHOOL MANAGEMENT ON SABA AND SINT EUSTATIUS

The PO-Council has entered into a partnership with the Training Professionals International (TPI) company. The aim of this collaboration is to offer coaching to the school principals, school vice-principals and potential members of the management teams of the schools on St. Eustatius and Saba.



¹ De PO-Raad is de sectororganisatie voor het primair onderwijs (PO). De vereniging behartigt de gemeenschappelijke belangen van de schoolbesturen in het basisonderwijs, speciaal basisonderwijs en (voortgezet) speciaal onderwijs.

MARCH

FIRST STEP TOWARDS IMPROVED SGB FACILITIES

The official opening of the **Bonaire School Board's gymnasiums** was on March 26. With this project the first step towards improving SGB's new facilities was taken. And there are two more facility projects planned for the SGB at Kaya Korona:

1. New construction for MBO;
2. New construction for VMBO and Special Apprenticeships.



APRIL

BASIC QUALITY ACHIEVED FOR ALMOST ALL OF CARIBBEAN NETHERLANDS

During the Education Inspectorate's visit to the Caribbean Netherlands (CN) in March 2018, a number of schools and educational institutions once again achieved the basic quality level.

This means that almost all educational institutions in the Caribbean Netherlands have achieved this quality level. This time on Bonaire it was the VMBO & MBO units of the Bonaire School Board (SGB) and the Expertise Centre for Educational Care. On St. Eustatius, it was the MBO-1 department of the Gwendoline van Putten School (GvP) and the social opportunity paths for young people, which are provided by the New Challenges Foundation. This is another important milestone in the process of improving education in the Caribbean Netherlands.



JUNE

REINSTATEMENT OF PENSION RIGHTS IN EDUCATION COMPLETED

The Dutch Caribbean Pension Fund completed an extensive investigation into reinstating the individual pension rights of education personnel. As a result of this investigation, the pension rights of approximately 150 education personnel in the Caribbean Netherlands were reinstated.



APRIL

HERITAGE INSPECTORATE VISITS THE CARIBBEAN NETHERLANDS

From April 16 to 26, the Heritage Inspectorate visited Bonaire, Saba and St. Eustatius. This inspectorate supervises the management of information and the archives of both the European and Caribbean Netherlands. The purpose of their visit to the Caribbean Netherlands was to inventory the quality of their information management. And, of course, to become acquainted with the organizations that manage the information and the archives on the islands.



MAY

ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 16, THE RENOVATED KOLEGIO RAYO DI SOLO ON BONAIRE WAS OPENED FESTIVELY.



JUNE

CARIBBEAN NETHERLANDS DIRECTORS AND MANAGERS IN THE HAGUE

Managers and directors of the educational institutions in the Caribbean Netherlands visited The Hague in June. The purpose of their visit was to talk with various policy advisors about further improving the quality of education on the islands.

Minister Arie Slob of OCW also briefly joined them.

During the first working day of the visit, the administrators and directors talked in small groups with their OCW policy colleagues about themes that are very important to implementing the Second Education Agenda and improving quality that is a central theme. Subsequently, the group from the Caribbean Netherlands were guests of the PO Council for an entire week of study, including visiting schools, master classes and workshops.

The visit ended by participating in the annual PO Council conference.

AUGUST

FESTIVE OPENING OF KOLEGIO SAN LUIS BERTRAN AND HARDIN TIA SUS DAY-CARE



In August it was time to celebrate at the Kolegio San Luis Bertran in Rincon.

The completely renovated school building and the renovated building of the Hardin Tia Sus day-care that is also located there, were opened festively. The school's 40th anniversary was also celebrated on that occasion.

SEPTEMBER

GROUND-BREAKING FOR RENOVATION AND NEW BUILDINGS

Mid-September the Seventh Day Adventist School on Sint Eustatius celebrated the ground-breaking for the renovation and the construction of new buildings.



JUNE

FIRST CXC EXAMS ON ST. EUSTATIUS

In June on St. Eustatius the first English Caribbean Examination Council (CXC) exams were given at the Gwendoline van Putten School (GvP). These were the final exams for the lower grades in the secondary school. Since the CXC school system was introduced, there are now three lower grades in the secondary school. These lower grades are called CCSLC, which stands for Caribbean Certificate of Secondary Level Competence.





SEPTEMBER

EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT FOR CN EDUCATION PERSONNEL FOR 2018-2020 SIGNED

On September 20, 2018, the education commissioners, the school boards, a representative delegation of the personnel and the labour unions from Bonaire, Saba and St. Eustatius signed a new employment agreement for 2018 - 2020.

Topics included in the agreement are:

- a total 3.75% wage increase over 2 years;
- phased-in conversion of the end-of-year bonus into a thirteenth month salary;
- the pay-out dates of holiday and year-end bonuses;
- committing extra resources for employment conditions in primary education;
- extra resources for the work load in primary education;
- exploring opportunities to realize a full-fledged system to create better employment conditions for education personnel.

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER

PRINCIPALS AND PERSONNEL IN CN WANT MORE SAY REGARDING THEIR OWN EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS

On October 23 and 25, during a conference on negotiating collective bargaining agreements, representatives of the school boards, management and personnel on Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba, respectively, discussed the contents of collective bargaining agreements and employee participation. The education labour union, Simabao, was also present on Bonaire. The conference highlighted points for improvement, which should specifically lead to more say for the local schools regarding their own employment conditions. Supported by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, output from the three meetings is being translated into a plan of action to implement the desired improvements, for both the employment conditions and employee participation.

OCTOBER

BES SECONDARY EDUCATION SCHOOLS ESTABLISH A TECHNOLOGY REGION

In October 2018, the directors of the Gwendoline van Putten School (St. Eustatius), Bonaire School Board (SGB - Bonaire) and the Saba Comprehensive School (Saba), signed a collaboration agreement to join together as a Technology Region.

The schools are joining forces to familiarize young people with technology and to make more students enthusiastic about studying technology and afterwards to work in the technological field. The schools hope to formalize a sustainable, comprehensive and high-quality range of technical courses. The collaboration is made possible by an extra financial injection from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science because quality technological education is desperately needed. The demand from the business sector for well-trained technical personnel is increasing. At the same time, schools are confronted with declining enrolment and a decrease in the percentage of students choosing for a technical education.

Before April 1, 2019, schools must submit a joint vision in a regional plan for 2020 - 2023.

NOVEMBER

OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE LISEO BONERIANO EXPANSION

Director-General of Primary and Secondary Education, Ms. Alida Oppers of OCW, officially opened the Liseo expansion at the end of November. The expansion was completed in May 2018 and was used for the first time at the start of the new 2018 school year. Since August 2018, the MAVO, HAVO and VWO students are in one location.

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER

LABOUR CONDITIONS AGREEMENT EDUCATION PERSONNEL SIGNED: PREMIUM ADVANTAGE FOR PERSONNEL

In the week of November 26th 2018 the commissioners of Education, the (deputy Kingdom) commissioner, school boards, representatives representation of the staff and the Trade Union on Bonaire, Saba and Sint Eustatius signed a complementary agreement for an extra income raise per January 1st 2019.

NOVEMBER

MEETING VOCATIONAL & TRADE SCHOOL NETWORK

On November 26th the second C-VET (Caribbean Vocational Trade School Network) meeting was organised on Saba. C-VET (<https://c-vet.com/>) is a platform for the improvement and promotion of vocational education in the Caribbean area, with a primary focus on the islands of the former Netherlands Antilles. Participants came from St. Maarten, Saba, St. Eustatius, Curaçao, Bonaire, Barbados, Jamaica and the European Netherlands. The first C-VET meeting was in 2016, on St. Maarten. The main goal of the 2018 meeting was to discuss with all education stakeholders from St. Maarten, Saba and Sint Eustatius what is needed for a successful implementation of the CVQ vocational education programme of the Caribbean Examination Council (CXC) in the schools for vocational education on these three islands.



www.seasidenaturepark.com

UNIQUE EXPERIENCE IN A NATURE PARK THANKS TO OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL CHILDREN

By Elaine Marchena

Thanks to a subsidy from Opportunities for all Children¹, eight Saba students were able to travel to St. Maarten on July 20 & 21, together with their parents and chaperons from EC2, for a visit to the Seaside Nature Park (SNP). This nature reserve is located by the sea, including a beach (Cay Bay), and it includes an equestrian school, a petting zoo and a group of horses. For a day the children were immersed in nature in this oasis of tranquillity.

Jet van Heijnsbergen, director of EC2 on Saba, says that the park's owner, Alexandra Halley, is a developmental psychologist and that therapy is often provided at SNP. Therefore, to EC2 it seemed like a great opportunity to take some of their clients to SNP for a therapy session with the animals there. There are miniature pigs and horses in the park. These animals are by nature small and remain so. Because of their small size, the children approach the animals easily and are they're not intimidated. Still, Alexandra visited the children on Saba and spoke with their parents to ensure that the children would have a beneficial experience. And that's exactly what happened. "The children really looked forward to this", says Jet. She says that the visit was originally supposed to take place in November 2017. However, Hurricane Irma caused a lot of damage to SNP's buildings and facilities, which meant that this activity couldn't take place until July 2018.

The visit began by sitting in the shade right on the beach. The children were given the opportunity to get used to this new place while enjoying a drink. Then it was time to visit the petting zoo. The children visited the animals in two groups of 4, accompanied by four park guides and four parents. Among the guides were two psychologists, who watched closely how the children reacted to the animals and who could intervene if the behaviour of any of the children had to be adapted. The children were first allowed to "get acquainted" with the small pigs and to feed the small horses with open hands.



**"THE CHILDREN WERE
EVEN ALLOWED TO PAINT
THE HORSES WITH
WATERCOLOURS"**

Then it was time for the full-sized horses. Every child was assigned a horse to take care of by brushing their mane and tail. The children were even allowed to paint the horses with watercolours and to top it all off, they were allowed to ride them for half an hour with a guide next to them.

Everyone looked back on a successful day. "Communicating with the animals, but above all, also the confidence and self-esteem that the children gained, made this a very valuable experience", according to Jet. ■

¹ Opportunities for all Children is an annual subsidy from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment. The subsidies are intended to help combat poverty in the Caribbean Netherlands by making activities possible for children, that otherwise would not be feasible financially. Local social organizations, educational institutions or entities involved in youth care can submit applications for activities. It's all about services in kind, so that children can participate in culture, sports, school and social activities.



Rayann Ramdin is a Social Youth Worker at the EC2 on Saba. A former active member of the Trinidad and Tobago Association of Psychologists, Rayann studied Behavioural Science at Andrews University in Michigan, USA, followed by getting a Master's of Arts in Educational Psychology at the University of the Southern Caribbean in Trinidad. Rayann is responsible for executing EC2's social and emotional intervention activities, geared towards school age children, and outreach support for their parents.

“Giving birth to a child doesn't mean that someone will automatically know all the correct things to do for that child; they need the right parenting tools”

“The starting point at EC2 is that we don't sit and wait for parents to come to us, but we actively reach out to them, inviting them to our events”, says Rayann. A recent example of these events was a series of “Café Conversations” discussions with parent. The sessions are organised in the evening hours, in an informal setting that encourages parents to relax, discuss and share ideas about any parenting concerns they may have. They're not lectures or workshops and attendance is completely voluntary. The first few sessions were well attended and included topics such as: creating a positive environment for children, positive discipline strategies and understanding behaviour in children and teenagers.

Rayann explains that care in education should be tackled from different angles. In order to create a coherent and safe environment for the children, it's important that teachers, as well as families and the EC2, are all on the same page and work together. She explains that traditionally EC2 has worked a lot with the teachers and the students, but until recently, collaborative efforts involving parents were missing. “My work is all about empowerment”, says Rayann.

“Giving birth to a child doesn't mean that someone will automatically know all the correct things to do for that child; they need the right parenting tools. To provide them with these in an accessible and easy way, we're posting a series of “Partners in Parenting” vlogs¹ that offer them strategies for communicating effectively with their children. These videos are accessible via EC2's Facebook page.” Rayann also conducts Social Skills Training with youths who are experiencing socio-emotional challenges that impact their academic experience.

“It's a simple mantra: service before self”

Rayann was born and raised in Trinidad. She's been on Saba since June 2018. When asked how she's experiencing Saba, she says: “It's been a process of adjustment; Saba is quite different from Trinidad or anywhere else that I've travelled to, for that matter. Saba is a beautiful, quaint island and I appreciate the very unique and interesting culture. I decided to make the move here because of a simple mantra: ‘service before self’. I am humbled by the opportunity to be a part of the society here where I can contribute knowledge and skills in practical and hands-on ways and I look forward to making a positive impact in the lives of youths; this being my most elusive professional ambition.” ■

¹ A vlog is a blog (online published diary) in video form.

TEAM FROM BONAIRE WINS SILVER DURING THE WORLD SKILLS COMPETITIONS IN CHILE

From September 25 to October 7, MBO students Kenrick Bernabela (level 3) and Richmend Anthony (level 2) were in Chile for the World Skills Americas competitions. They participated in the “Solar panels skill”. Despite being the smallest team by far, they managed to win a silver medal.



Nyana Faneite, technical trainer at the SGB’s MBO chose and prepared the students. She says that, in addition to the team from Bonaire, in Chile four other teams also participated: from Colombia, Brazil, Peru and Chile. “They were big teams,” she sighs. “They even had their own psychologist with them. For the young people who participate in these competitions, it’s really serious. They’re there to win.” Bonaire almost

allowed to consult with them daily, at the beginning and at the end of the day and at lunchtime. I used those moments to advise them and also to encourage them. Because the days were quite tough. We had agreed beforehand that primarily it was all about the experience and not necessarily about winning. That put the youths more at ease, compared to the other teams which were under a lot of pressure.”

“FOR THE YOUNG PEOPLE WHO PARTICIPATE IN THESE COMPETITIONS, IT’S REALLY SERIOUS. THEY’RE THERE TO WIN”

fell short compared to the professionally equipped teams from the big countries: “our youths actually only had T-shirts with a logo. And the tools: whereas our team had simply taken the tools with in their luggage, the tools of the big teams were shipped in advance. But I had prepared them well in advance and, in accordance with the rules, I was

Head Start

In preparation, the students received a crash course from a local solar panel supplier. That company even provided an employee for a few days, to instruct the students at school. They learned, among other things, how these installations work, how to make a connector and under supervision, they installed a



solar panel themselves. According to Nyana, it was mainly the fact that the students had a good basis in electrics, which gave them a head start on the other participants.

The first day was meant to meet other participants and to explore the local area a bit during a tour. During day two, they became acquainted with the tools and materials that they would have to work with. "They then became acquainted with tools they had never seen before, so for some tools, they had to quickly learn how to work with them." In addition, there were also materials that are not used on Bonaire, such as galvanized pipes (on Bonaire PVC pipes used). And everyone had to adhere to the safety rules and standards of Chile.



Fairness

"That shows how at these competitions people really think and work fair," says Nyana. "When, for example, a boy from the big teams couldn't continue

"AS THE SMALLEST TEAM FROM A SMALL ISLAND, WITHOUT ALL THE GREAT THINGS AND FACILITIES THAT THE OTHER TEAMS HAD, THEY GOT A SILVER SKILLS MEDAL, WHICH IS AN ACHIEVEMENT TO REALLY BE PROUD OF!"

working because his hand became stiff, the whole competition was stopped until he could participate again." The competition started on the third day and lasted for three days. Nyana recounts how things went when scoring the participating teams.

A team, with so-called "chief experts" (i.e. professionals) from each participating (island) country, discussed each assignment with each other and then gave a score. "Everything was remeasured very carefully, after which a score (points) was given. Now and then I really had to speak up for "my" team to get their scores", says Nyana.

The team from Bonaire distinguished itself in particular during the first two days. They finished the assignments quickly and received good scores. "Day 3 was a bit more difficult," says Nyana. "I think that fatigue also hit them. And it was also pretty cold there. They worked in open tents, without heating and the youths were not really dressed properly."

The first prize went to Peru and the third prize to Chile. "I'm really proud of them," Nyana smiles. "As the smallest team from a small island, without all the great things and facilities that the other teams had, they got a silver Skills medal, which is an achievement to really be proud of!" ■





By Elaine Marchena

DUTCH LANGUAGE UNION'S NVT ACTIVITIES ON ST. EUSTATIUS & SABA

THE MAIN OBJECTIVES OF THIS PROJECT PLAN ARE:

- 1. To sustain the transition to Dutch as a foreign language (NVT).**

With the transition on St. Eustatius to English as the language of instruction, in 2015 Dutch was didactically introduced as a foreign language in the schools on Saba and St. Eustatius. Teachers were coached and trained, using the "Dutch Under the Sun" (NodZ) teaching materials for groups 5 through 8 in primary education (PO) and grades 1 and 2 in secondary education (VO). This material was produced with support from the Dutch Language Union to meet the need for NVT material with a local flavour. However, in order to provide everything that is necessary to maintain NVT education sustainably, teaching materials are required, from pre-school care up to and including the upper grades of secondary education, in addition to standardized tests and evaluations. Furthermore, additional material is needed for secondary education, as well as additional modules for students who opt to continue their education in the Netherlands or on the Leeward islands.



The collaborating persons in the NVT Evaluation for group 8 on Saba. F.I.t.r.: Marjan de Visser (Taalunie), Teaching Assistant miss Patsy (Sacred Heart School), Bianca Versteeg (Taalunie) and Femke Neunzig (Teacher Sacred Heart School).

- 2. To create an encompassing network within which all six islands of the former Netherlands Antilles (N.A.) can exchange expertise and materials.**

During a conference in Aruba, that included education policy makers and Dutch teachers from all the islands of the former N.A., all six islands declared that they want to cooperate within this network.

ONGOING AND COMPLETED ACTIVITIES TO MAINTAIN NVT EDUCATION

- 1.** The Dutch Language Union organised a day in August to prepare new teachers and teachers from the Netherlands going to the islands. During this day, these teachers were updated regarding NVT education on the islands. In addition, they were given practical tools on how to deal with the multilingual situation in the schools. The intention is to continue organizing a day of preparation annually.
- 2.** In 2017 and 2018, a number of NVT workshops were organised on St. Eustatius for teachers of primary and secondary schools. These workshops concerned raising awareness regarding the differences between Dutch as a native language and as a foreign language and how to use the 'Dutch Under the Sun' materials. Much attention was paid to the use of engaging methods for different reading, writing, speaking and listening skills.
- 3.** In order to be able to carry out NVT evaluations locally, examiner trainings were organised for local teachers. The examination training course has been given on Curaçao and Aruba up until now.
- 4.** In 2017 and 2018, the Dutch Language Union conducted a diagnostic NVT evaluation for group 8 students at various schools on St. Eustatius, Saba, St. Maarten and Aruba. The purpose of this evaluation was to get a picture of what level group 8 students are at with respect to the different skills needed for them to be able to successfully enter secondary education in relation to the required level. The evaluation was carried out twice during the school year at a number of schools, so that it could be refined in the interim. The test measures the student's language proficiency in each of the four skills. This evaluation is mainly based on what students can do ('Can do' statements) instead of focusing on what they can't do yet.
- 5.** As of February 2018, Saba is working on developing tasks for the four skills. Eventually, for each level there will be a set of tasks for each skill, from which the teacher can then choose.

6. Together with the Dutch Language Union, a working group of Caribbean teachers is working on St. Eustatius to produce NVT teaching materials for groups 1 - 4 in primary education.

7. The Dutch Language Union is currently working on producing a CXC Dutch syllabus for the lower grades in secondary education.

8. Production of a Caribbean version of “Nieuwsbegrip” (News Comprehension), for secondary education. This year, in collaboration with the CED group (i.e. the creators of the ‘News Comprehension’ method) and local teachers, six editions that included island related themes were produced for the upper grades of secondary vocational education.



Bianca Versteeg (Taalunie) testing a Sacred Heart pupil's command of Dutch on Saba.

ACTIVITIES FOR ESTABLISHING THE NVT NETWORK

1. A digital platform is currently being finalised.

This platform, called “Plek”, will be officially launched in early 2019 and will consist of 2 parts:

- A platform with working groups wherein members of the NVT network can collaborate on ongoing projects
- A platform with a learning resources database for everyone involved (both teachers and policy makers).

2. The next NVT conference will be organized at the beginning of 2019, for teachers and policy makers from all six former N.A. islands. The goal of this conference is once again to take steps to form a network with a common vision and a clear structure, that will be realized by the end of 2020. At the request of the parties involved, the NVT network would then contribute independently to developing high quality NVT education in the Caribbean. ■

“CONTRIBUTE INDEPENDENTLY TO DEVELOPING HIGH QUALITY NVT EDUCATION IN THE CARIBBEAN”



A WEEK FULL OF WASTE!

“The earth was good; the earth welcomes recycling. Recycle, recycle, recycle with me”, is printed on the poster, made by Benjamin, a student. Teacher Femke Neunzig from the Sacred Heart School on Saba gave her students an assignment to come up with a slogan themselves, with the goal of conveying to the children in the European Netherlands the importance of recycling and preventing mosquitos on Saba. It’s an effective way of learning about the benefits of properly separating waste and at the same time they use new Dutch words.

“With a project like this, children quickly adopt the Dutch words that are used often, such as paper, tin, empty bottle, cardboard and jar”

“The students were extremely motivated,” Femke said enthusiastically. “All week long the Dutch lessons for grades 3 to 6 focused on recycling and preventing mosquitos, preparing for an island wide campaign the following week. The campaign was about waste separation, preventing mosquitos and it concluded with a big island-wide clean-up campaign. The pupils helped clean up the island the following week. And of course, that’s much more fun when they understand why it’s important and which piece of litter is recyclable or not.”

Aluminium versus tin

The project week began on Monday by examining the subject of waste separation and preventing mosquitos. The topic examined was: what can and what cannot be recycled. Femke says: “almost all children throw away the Caprisun packaging (i.e. pouches with fruit juice) together with the recyclable wastes. But the packaging is made of aluminium combined with plastic, which cannot be recycled. “In a playfully way the children increased their



knowledge about recycling by throwing waste consisting of different materials into the correct bin. During the lessons the risks from littering were also discussed in depth, because litter can easily collect water, creating breeding grounds for mosquitoes. The children learned that mosquitoes lay their eggs in water and why mosquitoes can be dangerous to their health. Femke noticed that the students learned a lot during the project week. "With a project like this, children quickly adopt the corresponding Dutch words, such as paper, tin, empty bottle, cardboard and jar." The children participated enthusiastically during the project week. Recycling was suddenly completely cool and at home they talked about it a lot with their parents. All children brought waste from home to recycle at school during the lesson. "The assignment was to bring ten pieces of waste with you, but one of the students brought 32. 'Look what I have', he said, and all his classmates reacted with great interest. My classroom was really one big mess that week," Femke continued, laughing. "But fortunately, all the students listened to my request to rinse the materials to be recycled clean beforehand at home."

Clothing and robots

In addition to the promotional posters, the children also made clothes and robots from recycled materials that week. That's how they also learned which creative activities are possible using materials that would otherwise be thrown away. For this assignment the children were allowed to bring the materials themselves. Femke said: "One boy proudly told that he had gone to the landfill and found a rusty chandelier that he brought to school to make into a robot!". Another student wanted so much to make one more promotional poster in the evening, that Femke received a message from her mother. "What's the website you used to make the posters? My daughter wants to make another poster", she wrote.

Other activities included making a promotional film about the importance of waste separation and taking a quiz to test their newly acquired knowledge. Afterwards the children received a "Recycle Super Hero Certificate" for their great participation in the project. The following week

Every year on Saba the last week of May is dedicated to cleaning and tidying up. The entire population is invited to participate in clearing up the "Unspoiled Queen". This week's goal is to reduce mosquito breeding sites, to promote recycling and also to prepare the island for the hurricane season. The Sacred Heart School and the Saba Comprehensive School contributed to the clean-up event by engaging students and teachers during this week.

was the project concluded with an assignment to write a report about what was learned during the project week. "Of course, they wrote that report in Dutch," says Femke. "That made the children aware of how many new words they learned during this project." In addition, during the lessons, Femke focussed on having everyone give positive feedback to each other and having a positive work ethic. "For example, I taught the children that they're allowed to help each other when cleaning up and asked them to complement each other on the posters they made."

The local government also supported the project week. The messages that Femke posted on her Facebook page (i.e. Eudem) were shared by the government and on the Friday, Governor Jonathan Johnson paid a surprise visit to the school. The students were given the opportunity to tell him about everything they had learned during the project week. ■



NEW ALL-AROUND TECHNICAL TRAINING AT SGB



Participant Javier Martha:

“ik vindt het leuk om mooie dingen te maken en te leren in de praktijk”



This school year (2018 - 2019), the Bonaire School Board (Scholengemeenschap Bonaire - SGB) started a new MBO training course: “Building and Engineering Maintenance Staff” (SMG). It’s an MBO level 2 program, for practical-oriented young people with an interest in construction technology. Students in this course learn the principles of tiling, plumbing, carpentry and simple electricity: exactly the technical skills that one needs for the most common tasks as the maintenance engineer of a building or complex.

“With this training course, the SGB is responding to the growing need on Bonaire for all-around maintenance technicians,” says Technical instructor Martijn Baptiste. “After all, tourism is a growing sector on the island: there are more and more hotels and resorts. And they all have to be managed. But also think about the technical maintenance of hotels or organizations such as schools, hospitals, the airport, etc.”

During meetings with the ROA and at the MBO, the content of the planned training course was reviewed together with the business community. What should the students learn? When can the internships be planned for and how long should an internship last? We also looked into opportunities for visiting companies and guest lectures. The program has been in place for several months now. “The first reactions from companies regarding the structure of this new training course are very positive”, says Martijn. “Especially the broad employability of maintenance staff is highly appreciated.” Student Javier Martha: “I like to make nice things and learn on the job.”

The course started with a total of 10 participants: nine boys and one girl. The students appreciate the broad-based character of the training course and the variety, according to Martijn.

Student Perla Vorst:

**“I like to make nice things
and learn on the job”**



SHORT NEWS ITEMS

MUSIC EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

The start of music education programmes in primary schools on Bonaire and on Saba is now a fait accompli. The Dutch Culture Participation Fund made this possible through its Impulse Music Education subsidy arrangement.

Teachers received training to integrate music into the general lessons. In addition, students from the schools below receive separate music lessons for basic theoretical knowledge and to learn to play various instruments. The Art and Culture Foundation and the Cultural Platform Foundation, both based on Bonaire, are closely involved as collaborators for music programs in the four Roman Catholic primary schools and the De Pelikaan primary school on Bonaire and the Sacred Heart School on Saba.

St. Eustatius has not yet made use these grants but the schools are currently recruiting a music teacher.

Photo: Fundashon Plataforma Kultural

“Young people normally have to choose very early on in which direction they want to specialize. With this training course, they can see which path suits them best and then in level 3, continue along their desired path. And those who want to work, can immediately join the labour market.” Vocational training courses where you have to work with your hands are still not so popular among young people. As such, this training course had to be “marketed” and this was done by organizing SMG guest lectures within VMBO among other things.

Student Perla Vorst: “I enjoy making and repairing things myself. The SMG training course gives me the opportunity to enrol in level 3 later on. I would really like to learn more.” The students gain a lot of practical experience during the training course. This occurs not only in the vocational training classrooms, but also on-site. The playground plane at the Kolegio Rayo di Solo school is an example of a project that the SMG students built together. At the moment, for a practical assignment, they’re working under supervision on installing a solar panel array. And Martijn says that the MBO is now exploring possibilities to get their own handyman van, so that the students can really do their tasks. “This would be an extra boost for learning on the job,” says Martijn. ■



CONSCIOUS DISCIPLINE WORKSHOP ON ST. EUSTATIUS

Mid-October 2018, the ECE (Education Care Centre) on St. Eustatius organized a two-day Conscious Discipline workshop. Conscious Discipline is a comprehensive and scientifically proven social and emotional intelligence classroom management programme. Participants included teachers from pre-school, primary and secondary school and the after-school programmes. The workshop was guided by two trainers Helen Guda and Regina Ras-de Kort from Aruba.

The goal of this workshop was to empower teachers with knowledge and tools to be able to handle themselves and their own emotions and to create a safe, loving and stimulating environment for their students. As Camelia Berkel, ECE's director, puts it: "We want to change our approach towards children in St. Eustatius education ... we want to create a safe environment for all children to develop. It's not only about the academics, but also about the child as a whole (holistic approach)."

Seven powers

The "conscious" part of Conscious Discipline is based on research into consciousness and mindfulness and consists of seven powers that help adults to guide themselves. The Seven Powers assist adults to become conscious, present, attuned and responsive to the needs of themselves and children. They are:

- 1. Power of perception**
no one can make you feel angry without your permission
- 2. Power of unity**
we're all in this together
- 3. Power of attention**
whatever we focus on, we get more of
- 4. Power of free will**
the only person you can change is you
- 5. Power of acceptance**
accept the moment as it is
- 6. Power of love**
choose to see the best in others
- 7. Power of intention**
mistakes are opportunities to learn.



For more information about the Conscious Discipline programme:

Consciousdiscipline.com
facebook.com/ConsciousDiscipline

Creating the School Family

Conscious Discipline begins with the concept of the "School Family", as the correct context to foster everyone's optimal development. To achieve this goal, the School Family concept is based on building connections between families & schools, teachers & teachers, teachers & students and students & students. Rather than using force, fear and external rewards, the School Family concept helps create a classroom that is governed by intrinsic motivation, helpfulness, problem-solving and connection.

What's next on St. Eustatius?

To engage parents to use the Conscious Discipline principles, the plan is to organise workshops on St. Eustatius twice a year. As a result of this first workshop, the Governor de Graaff School and the SDA School decided to embrace the Conscious Discipline programme.

About the trainers

Helen Guda and Gina Ras-de Kort are certified Conscious Discipline trainers from Aruba. Aruba has been working more systematically with Conscious Discipline since 2011 (following a 2-day workshop by one of the Master Instructors from Loving Guidance, Jill Mollie) with a group of more than 200 teachers and other educators. Both Helen and Gina are part of a group of active trainers and coaches for schools, day care centres, parents and others who are interested in learning and implementing Conscious Discipline.

The Develop to Grow company that they work with (Helen full time and Gina as a volunteer), has been giving training sessions on the other Dutch Caribbean islands also (Bonaire, Saba, St. Martin & Curacao). Results from implementing the Conscious Discipline approach have become more and more tangible in the schools that use it. Visitors to schools in Aruba that are actively using Conscious Discipline are often inspired by the positive changes they see in the classroom and within the children and the teachers themselves. This year some secondary schools in Aruba will also start to use Conscious Discipline. ■

A DAY WITH ...

MARTIJN BAPTISTE



09:00 > First lesson: the smoke alarm

While instructor Arnold de Jong is still working on the speakers, Martijn is looking for a video about smoke detectors on YouTube. Because that's the subject the students from level 2 SMG (Building and Engineering Maintenance Staff) will begin with this morning. "After asking them, it seems that almost none of the students have a smoke detector at home," says Martijn.

"I'm focussing on this subject today, not only because it's part of a service technician's job, but I hope that the students will also install them at home." In addition, he'll soon make an appointment to go to the local fire department with the students for a working visit. "Because the more they know about fire safety, the better." He has chosen a video of the Dutch fire department's campaign about smoke detectors. The students slowly arrive: today there are eight out of a total of nine. Martijn welcomes everyone and announces what the students are going to do today. After the film about smoke detectors, the students get started in groups of 2 or 3 installing smoke detectors. The wooden sleigh that the students sawed themselves must be painted and Superboard must be cut for the new bathrooms in the Special Lessons building.

IN EVERY EDITION OF "WHAT'S NEW ..." WE SPEND A DAY WITH AN EDUCATIONAL PROFESSIONAL IN THE CARIBBEAN NETHERLANDS. THIS TIME IT'S MARTIJN BAPTISTE, TECHNOLOGY TEACHER IN THE MBO SECTION OF THE BONAIRE SCHOOL BONAIRE (SGB).



10:30 > Develop skills in practice

Perla Vorst and Stefandric Angela paint the sleigh with a layer of primer. Martijn explains that this is one of the Christmas decorations for the SGB yard. It was a tough job to cut it with the jigsaw, but the result is nice. "Making a sleigh is more fun than the straightforward assignments that are normally part of the lessons and this assignment also included all of the skills that they need to master," says Martijn. "In addition, with these types of products, we put ourselves in a good light, to promote this training course to other students and to parents. And finally, we hope to make more girls enthusiastic about this training course."



Meanwhile, Gioginnio de Palm, Javier Martha, Geordi Rosaria and Instructor Arnold de Jong are preparing a sheet of Superboard. Instructor Arnold gives instructions when necessary.



13:30 > First internship visit

It's time for the internship visits. Martijn tries to visit the students every week during their internship, even if it's only for a short time. "It's still important to keep up-to-date," he says. It turns out that one of the students has not taken a single photo of his work yet. Martijn repeatedly urges him to do this. Emilio Spanner and Kevin Christiaan are doing an internship at the Divi Flamingo resort. Martijn reports to their internship supervisor, Sandy Alberto. He asks how the interns are doing and where they're currently working. Emilio is helping to lay tiles in one of the small houses. The other intern, Kevin, is already working on painting one of the small houses.



"WE REALLY HAVE TO GET RID OF THE NOTION THAT WORKING WITH YOUR HANDS IS LESS DESIRABLE THAN WORKING IN AN OFFICE"

14:00 > Second internship visit

The second internship visit is at a contractor, BonNed, which is in charge of the new construction at and renovation of the Mariadal Foundation. Isandro Wanga, the project supervisor and also the internship supervisor, explains that the boys are doing well and that the paperwork is in order. The students assist with masonry and carpentry tasks. At the moment we visit them, the students Michael Pemperton and Trevor Maynard, both from St. Eustatius, are working with metal studs on a scaffold inside the new building.

Martijn thinks it's a shame that vocational education still has a less positive image. Students prefer a job in the air conditioning. "Even when you can earn more in a job that requires a technical background. We really have to get rid of the notion that working with your hands is less desirable than working in an office", Martijn concludes.

