

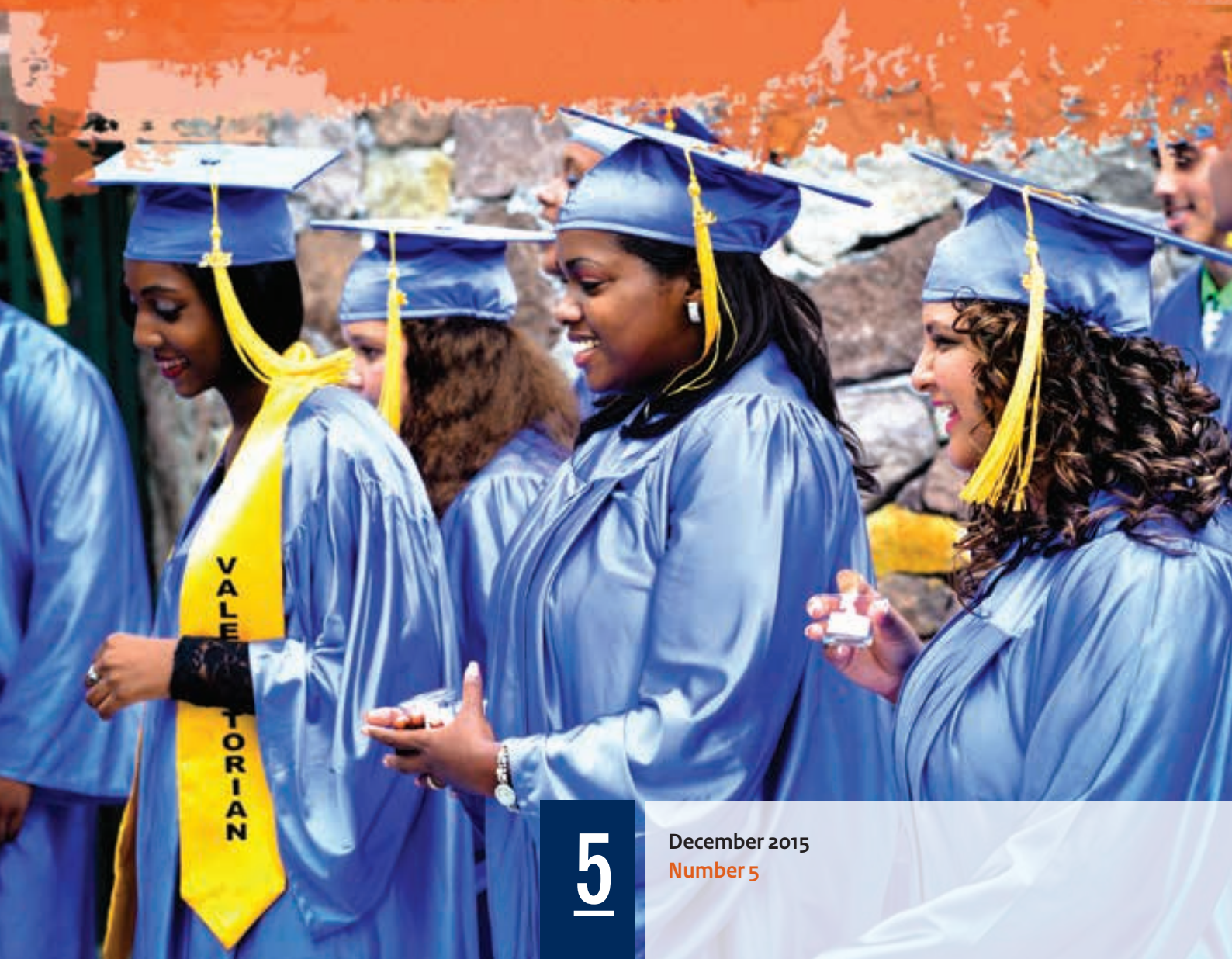


Rijksdienst Caribisch Nederland  
OCW

ENGLISH

# WHAT'S NEW ...

IN CARIBBEAN NETHERLANDS EDUCATION



5

December 2015  
Number 5

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## TRAINING FOR PARTICIPATION COUNCILS SCHOOLS

**The participation councils (MRs) of the schools on Saba, St. Eustatius and Bonaire recently went through an advanced training. The purpose of this training was to deepen and strengthen the knowledge and skills of the MR-members where necessary.**

The topics dealt with included verbal versus non-verbal communication, listening skills, argumentation and negotiation. The programme also included an evaluation of the way participation is developing and which challenges the councils are encountering in their work. This differs per school.

The training was conducted by Marco Sikkel and Alphons de Lange of the knowledge- and service centre CAOP which specialises in labour affairs. In 2014 participation was implemented at the schools in the Caribbean Netherlands on a limited level and the current MR-council members have been active for one year.

This magazine is a publication of RCN/OCW and aims to provide background information about education developments to education professionals in the Caribbean Netherlands and to offer a platform for the exchange of knowledge and experience between the islands.

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Copy for the next edition should be sent in before March 25th 2016.

# COLOPHON





It is my pleasure, as Hans Kuilder's successor, to introduce this educational magazine from now on. In that context, I also refer you to the double interview with Hans Kuilder and myself, elsewhere in this issue. But there's still a major change in the leadership at RCN/OCW to report: Rosa Hoes, in addition to being the new study finance coordinator, is also the new deputy head of RCN/OCW. And last, but certainly not least, in the "An Introduction" section you can become acquainted with the new director of EOZ Bonaire: Natasha Rach.

And the great news is that this year a total of nine educational institutions have achieved the basic quality level! The successful ones this time are the Bethel Methodist School, the Lynch Plantation SDA school and the Expertise Centre Education Care (ECE) on St. Eustatius, the Sacred Heart School, the secondary education stream of the Saba Comprehensive School, the Expertise Centre EC2 and the Saba Reach Foundation on Saba and Kolegio Rayo di Solo and Kolegio Kristu Bon Wardador on Bonaire. Via this magazine I congratulate these institutions for reaching this milestone and I thank the school teams involved for their dedication and commitment. But the institutions that partly obtained basic quality also deserve to be complimented: keep up the good work and hopefully it's your turn next time!

Students' social-emotional development is one of the aspects that traditionally is not sufficiently recognized in education. To provide teachers with the tools for guiding the social-emotional development of PO and VO students, the EC2 Expertise Centre Education Care organised a Rock & Water Training this past year: a concept that has now become well known and recognised internationally.

In this edition you can read, unfortunately for the last time, the column from PO school coach John de Vlugt. I hereby want to extend my sincerest thanks to John, both for his great columns and for his contributions to PO education on the Windward Islands. I wish him much success in his future career.

Also in this magazine, attention is given to the Saba Comprehensive School, which this year again achieved a 100% graduation rate: hereby a big congratulations for this great achievement!

## PREFACE

**At the end of this successful year and the start of a new year, RCN/OCW thanks you for the trust you have placed in us and for your great cooperation.**

**We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!**



## ➤ Assertiveness and effective anti-bullying programme

DURING THE PAST YEAR THE EXPERTISE CENTRE EDUCATION CARE SABA (EC<sub>2</sub>) ORGANISED A ROCK & WATER TRAINING FOR STAFF OF THE SCHOOLS AND OTHER PARTNER ORGANISATIONS SUCH AS THE AFTER-SCHOOL CARE CENTRE AND CHILD FOCUS ON SABA. THE TRAINING TOOK PLACE IN THE GYMNASIUM IN ST. JOHN'S AND WAS CONDUCTED BY FREERK YKEMA, WHO DEVELOPED THIS TRAINING. THE AIM OF THE ROCK & WATER TRAINING IS TO STRENGTHEN CHILDREN'S PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT. WHAT'S IMPORTANT IN THIS TRAINING IS THE FACT THAT EVERY PERSON SHOULD BE ABLE, DEPENDING ON THE SITUATION, TO POSITION THEMSELVES TO BE RESILIENT AND STRONG - LIKE A ROCK - OR INSTEAD TO BE COMMUNICATIVE, FLEXIBLE AND ACCOMMODATING - LIKE WATER - IN ORDER TO WORK AND PLAY TOGETHER WITH OTHERS AND TO COEXIST.

"In both primary and secondary education we are seeing more and more social-emotional issues," says Jet Heijnsbergen, EC<sub>2</sub>'s director. This can manifest itself in various forms of behaviour. While one child may develop into a "bully", the other child might suffer from insecurity, quickly isolating himself or behaving selfishly. Jet explains: "At the core of every child's well-being is the feeling of safety. Where safety is lacking, violence can occur."

The starting point of the Rock & Water programme is for every child to use his or her own strength and to learn the social skills needed to feel safe and be able to fully develop as a person. This can not be easily taught in school with text-

The group during one of the many practical exercises. The trainers (with the orange shirts), f.l.t.r.: Freerk Ykema, Jelline Ykema and Bram Schenkelaars.

books or a grade given for behaviour and motivation. In the Rock & Water programme teachers learn how to create a safe environment for the children at their school."

### Physical approach

That's why EC<sub>2</sub> chose to introduce this course on Saba. The first day of the course was intended for the 31 professionals from all educational and youth organisations on Saba to become acquainted with the Rock & Water approach. Subsequently there was a two-day train-the-trainer course for a total of 15 faculty and staff from the Laura Linzey Daycare Centre, the Sacred Heart School (primary education), the Saba Comprehensive School, the Saba Reach Foundation (Social Opportunity Pathways for youth), the Centre for Youth & Family, the Body, Mind and Spirit Foundation and EC<sub>2</sub>.

The Rock & Water programme follows psychophysical teaching methods: starting with a physical approach, including lots of physical exercises and mental and social skills are taught and learned. The choice of this teaching method is based on the fact that boys in particular are physically oriented. Jet: "They have a tremendous amount of energy that they want to get rid of and more often than girls, they have difficulty verbalising their thoughts, emotions and



For more information about 'Rock & Water Training' visit our website:

[www.rotsenwater.nl](http://www.rotsenwater.nl)

# ROCK & WATER TRAINING ON SABA

feelings." In the Rock & Water programme they not only learn how to manage and focus their energy, but also how to work on developing more focused verbal communication skills, using a physical approach. Action (playing games and simple self-defence techniques) is interspersed with moments of self-reflection (grounding oneself and mindful breathing) and group discussions.

When asked, 'so what about the girls?', Jet replied: "The programme was originally set up for boys, but is now also used for girls in Holland and elsewhere abroad. Depending on the situation, the girls in this programme learn how to assert themselves in a natural manner or precisely how to present themselves as being flexible and accommodating." The participating teachers found the training to be valuable. According to Jet the eye opener was especially the awareness and use of both your hard and soft sides. "Especially since traditionally many women work in education." To ensure that everyone remains actively engaged using the knowledge and techniques from the course, participants meet regularly to exchange their experiences. ■



## MORE ABOUT THE ROCK & WATER TRAINING

Rock & Water is a Dutch programme developed by Freerk Ykema and was initially applied in New Zealand and Australia. The effectiveness of the Rock & Water concept has been proven by empirical research and the programme is currently being used worldwide to guide boys and girls.

**The Rock & Water programme can be regarded as an assertiveness and effective anti-bullying programme.** It differs from other programmes due to its multiple objectives and the broader educational perspective, in which training to be resilient goes hand in hand with developing positive social skills. Resilience and solidarity - rock and water - are presented and are trained in balance. The physical activity builds upon the learning needs of boys.

**The Rock and Water programme aims to improve self-control, self-reflection, self-confidence, communication and social skills.**

Other important topics are preventing violence and sexual aggression, learning to make one's own choices and learning to find one's own way. Another fundamental theme is preventing bullying and tackling bullying in the classroom and at school.

# COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE CN IN PLACE

**On August 1 this year the complaints procedure for schools in the Caribbean Netherlands (CN) came into effect. This means that each school funded by the Kingdom Government now adheres to a standard procedure for handling complaints by parents, students and personnel. In addition, a central Complaints Committee (Complaints Committee Caribbean Netherlands) has been appointed.**

As stipulated in the complaints procedure, the first step is always to discuss the complaint with the person or persons directly involved internally at the school. If the matter cannot be resolved between the parties, then the school management and, if necessary, the school board can become involved. If this does not result in a satisfactory solution then as of August 1, 2015 an official complaint can be submitted to the Complaints Committee CN. This is done by filling out a standard complaints form, available at the schools or RCN/OCW. It is mandatory for schools to provide information about the complaints procedure, via their school guide or website, for example.

The committee handles complaints confidentially and will respond within four weeks. Based on the Complaints Committee's advice the school board can take action. The advice of the Complaints Committee is not binding, but may result in new insights on the matter. The Complaints Committee consists of 1 representative from each of the three Caribbean Netherlands islands.

For general questions about the complaints procedures or the Complaints Committee, you can contact RCN/OCW via e-mail: [vragenoveronderwijs@rijksdienstcn.com](mailto:vragenoveronderwijs@rijksdienstcn.com).

## What is the situation with the Arithmetic Test?

It is well known that the purpose of the arithmetic test is to ensure that students complete their secondary education with an adequate command of the necessary arithmetic skills. For what types of schools does the arithmetic test count and for these schools, how much does it count and starting when?

How does the Arithmetic Test count?	vmbo	mbo	havo	vwo
In the pass-fail regulation and in de cum laude regulation				Starting 2017-2018
On the report card	Starting 2017-2018		Starting 2017-2018	Starting 2017-2018
No arithmetic test yet		Decision to be made in 2020		



## Digital exams for vmbo

Starting in the school year 2017-2018, the digital exams for vmbo will be available for general educational subjects. Schools should ensure they have adequate ICT systems, such as a server, sufficient computers, etc. After taking the exams the results will be available immediately. Not all students have to take the exams at the same time. Per exam session there will be different, yet similar questions. The exams all count the same. ■

## NEW AT RCN/OCW: ROSA HOES

Since September 1, 2015 Rosa Hoes is the Study Finance Coordinator and deputy head of RCN/OCW. She is also responsible for the school facilities, emancipation, youth policy, studying abroad and children rights dossiers. Rosa Hoes has been working since 1995 on the islands of the former Netherlands Antilles. She is an experienced manager with experience in education and health care policy. The past three and a half years she worked at the Island Government of Bonaire as the Society and Care director.





AN INTRODUCTION ...

“COMING SATURDAY I’LL HAVE BEEN ON BONAIRE FOR EXACTLY 4 WEEKS,” SAYS NATASHA VAN DEN HEUVEL-RACH. SHE RECENTLY BECAME DIRECTOR OF THE EXPERTISE CENTRE EDUCATION CARE (EOZ). AND SHE’S ENJOYING HERSELF. SHE POINTS OUT HER WINDOW AT THE SALINA BEHIND THE EOZ OFFICE. “YOU HAVE TO SEE THIS! FLAMINGOS! I’VE EVER HAD SUCH A BEAUTIFUL VIEW AT MY WORK.”

that have the intellectual ability to achieve, but have failed because of language, their situation at home or because of specific learning difficulties.”

It was not an easy situation when Natasha started working at EOZ. In the meantime, during the centre’s four years existence, there have been just as many directors and there has been a high turnover of staff. One of the first things that she wants to do is to restore tranquility within the team: “There are incredibly passionate people here. Now someone is needed who will provide them leadership and who will give them an opportunity to flourish.”

Natasha also wants EOZ to become better known on Bonaire; “we are not well known enough in the field.” She has already made a number of work visits, to schools, FORMA and the Bonaire School Board (SGB). Thus, she also sought contact with partner centres on Saba and St. Eustatius: “It is good to see if there are opportunities for cooperation. And to learn from each other, where are the problem areas, what are the successes.”

*The Education and Care Centre of Expertise was founded four years ago for children who need special attention and support at school.*

She considers it an advantage that she knows the culture: “In Holland, I was used to being direct. Here I know you can get the message across better if it fit within the prevailing cultural context. I know where I want to get to. But that doesn’t happen overnight. The direction that I want EOZ to go in will be a combined effort of the team, management and the field. I feel positive.” ■

These flamingos weren’t the reason they traded Holland for this Caribbean island. “Actually,” she laughs, “my husband is to blame. In the nineties we lived together in Curaçao and then we moved to Holland. I worked there as the care manager in a mental health facility (GGZ). My husband was already back in Curaçao working. I then also went to check out the labour market here in the region and found this job. Something tells me that at EOZ I found what I wanted.”

The Education and Care Centre of Expertise was founded four years ago for children who need special attention and support at school. “That can range from learning and behavioural problems to social, emotional problems. EOZ has people in house - special education experts, school social workers and a support teacher - to provide that support. This can sometimes be a short-term process. Suppose a child has trouble concentrating. Then the school social worker visits the classroom and looks at various things: the place where a child sits, how the teacher responds to the student. Not only the child receives help, but also the teacher. But sometimes problems are more complex and longer-term processes are necessary.”

Although in recent years she worked with adults in Holland, she has a background as a child and adolescent psychologist. “At the time I was also working in that field in Curaçao. Many problems that occurred there at the time, I see now here again: for example, children who get stuck in their education because of language. It really gets to me when I see people



## INTERVIEW WITH THE 'OLD' AND NEW RCN/OCW DEPARTMENT HEAD

### HANS KUILDER

HANS STARTED HIS CAREER WITH THE MUNICIPALITY OF EDE. IN 2000 HE TRANSFERRED TO THE OCW MINISTRY. THERE HE HELD VARIOUS FUNCTIONS, INCLUDING HEAD OF CONTROL, BUDGET AND FUNDING DURING HIS LAST YEARS THERE. HANS WAS THE RCN/OCW DEPARTMENT HEAD FROM AUGUST 2013 UNTIL JUNE 2015. MILESTONES THAT WERE REACHED DURING THIS PERIOD INCLUDE THE BASIC QUALITY LEVEL BEING ACHIEVED BY FUNDASHON FORMA\*1 ON BONAIRE AND BY FOUR ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS, ONE ON ST. EUSTATIUS AND THREE ON BONAIRE. BEGINNING DECEMBER 1, HANS STARTS AT THE SZW (SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT) MINISTRY AS THE HEAD OF INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL.

\*1 Centre for adult learning and education, including social opportunity pathways for the youth.

**Reynolds (Nolly) Oleana has been the head of the RCN/OCW department since last summer, when Hans Kuilder stepped down. How was Hans' experience during the past three years as RCN/OCW (Rijksdienst Dutch Caribbean/Ministry of Education, Culture and Science) department head and how does his successor, Nolly, view his new position?**

"First of all I am very proud of what we have achieved as a team during the past three years, both together with the educational sector, as well as within the team," Hans says without hesitation. "It now (ed.: June 2015) looks like that by the end of this year, the majority of the educational institutions will have achieved the basic quality level." But Hans also sees a lot of progress within the team, "in the knowledge and experience of the team members, the way things are done and how we work together." According to Hans, OCW's approach has always been to invest locally and resolve issues locally as much as possible. The Educational Agenda is the best example of this. "We are the only ministry in the Caribbean Netherlands that works based on an agenda (ed.: The Educational Agenda for the Caribbean Netherlands: working together on quality) and that has benefitted us so far, although of course we aren't there yet."

#### All eyes are on us

The RCN/OCW department head is a very important player in realising the educational agenda, according to Hans.

Hans explains: "Not only do you provide leadership for the team which has to ensure that conditions exist in the local educational sector to be able to achieve the policy objectives. In addition, you function as a liaison: you are the link between what is happening in The Hague and on the islands. By choosing Nolly we are certain that policies from The Hague can take shape based on knowledge of the local situation in the Caribbean Netherlands. Through the knowledge and experience that Nolly brings with him and also thanks to his vast network on the islands of the Caribbean Netherlands."

"I am keenly aware that all eyes are on me," said Nolly. "Everyone is curious how the first local RCN/OCW department head will continue doing things, what he will do differently, etc." But above all, he feels it is "an honour to hold the position of RCN/OCW department head." He explains that he was able to thoroughly immerse himself in education on the island during the past 30 years, from different positions, in politics as well as in education.

"The most important thing that I've learned from it is that you can not separate a person's development from his situation at school and at home. This is not possible unless you make a connection between all the activities related to young people. The main challenge is to achieve good cooperation between all organizations involved with youth. Everyone must be convinced of the value of working together."





# FROM HANS TO NOLLY

Cooperation in addressing problems with the youth is also one of the key issues for the development of education in the Caribbean Netherlands for the coming years, according to Hans. "Using an integrated approach for problems with the youth, we can ensure that children get the care they need to progress through school successfully, which is an important building block for a good future. It also requires to good cooperation between The Hague and the ministries involved."

Another considerable problem is the further development of the school boards. Hans: "Although some school boards are functioning well, the administrative efficiency can still be improved on all three islands. Therefore, there are plans to better prepare the school boards for their important management task via additional coaching and training."

## Honesty is the best policy

What's awaiting these men in the near future? Hans: "In the coming months I will be busy moving back to Holland with my family, looking for a new role within the government and afterwards orienting myself." For Nolly this is the beginning of an intensive period in which he will read and thoroughly delve into the material he will have to deal with as the department head. The liaison function in particular is new to him. When asked about his approach, he mentions two things. The first is: Honesty is the best policy. "Be open and honest, both with yourself

and with the people you work with. This is the only possible way to achieve real improvements."

His second basic principle is customization. He explains: "The Caribbean Netherlands consists of three islands, each with its own size and methods and culture. You can not approach things the same way everywhere. For each island you should take the time to get everyone on board with what you want to achieve. But even if you have everyone on board, you will at some point in time have to slow down to a walk and at another moment break into a sprint. This customization principle applies equally well to working within my team."

The new department head is optimistic: "Much has been achieved and we have a strong and dedicated team. This is also true of the educational sectors on the islands. I am confident that all educational institutions will achieve the basic quality level in the foreseeable future. And that in the future, local schools will have the necessary knowledge and skills to continue to provide good quality education on their own, so that, in accordance with our mission, the youth in the Caribbean Netherlands are afforded the best opportunities to develop themselves." ■

## NOLLY OLEANA

AT THE BEGINNING OF HIS CAREER NOLLY OLEANA TAUGHT MATH AND CHEMISTRY FOR THE BONAIRE SCHOOL BOARD (SGB), WHERE HE SUBSEQUENTLY HELD VARIOUS MANAGEMENT POSITIONS. WHEN HE WAS POLITICALLY ACTIVE HE WAS THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION FOR THE NETHERLANDS ANTILLES AND COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION FOR BONAIRE. SINCE MAY 2011, NOLLY HAS BEEN WORKING AT RCN/OCW, AS A PROJECT LEADER AND A SENIOR POLICY ADVISOR FOR SECONDARY AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION, RESPECTIVELY. FROM 2013 TO 2015 HE WAS ALSO DEPUTY HEAD OF RCN/OCW.

**'YOU CAN NOT SEPARATE A PERSON'S DEVELOPMENT FROM HIS SITUATION AT SCHOOL AND AT HOME'**



## TRANSITION TO ENGLISH: WHAT IS REQUIRED?

Since September 2014 considerable efforts are being made on St. Eustatius regarding the preparations for the transition to English as instruction language for education. In order to make this transition, the following sub-projects need to be completed:

1

The development of new plans for what the pupils should learn and when (curriculums), from pre-school education up to the highest class of secondary education;

2

Assessments, followed by in-service training courses for teachers in order to ensure that all teacher have a command of the English language at the level required for their work;

3

The introduction of an exam system in English for secondary education, including vocational education;

4

The development of a learning plan for Dutch as foreign language;

5

The development of a programme for students who will follow their advanced study programme in the Netherlands.

The transition coordinator works together with the Ministry of Education, the local schools and various external specialist institutes on realising the aforementioned subprojects.

In the next edition we will cover another aspect of the transition.

# TRANSITION TO ENGLISH AS THE LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION



AS PART OF THE TRANSITION TO ENGLISH AS THE LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION ON ST. EUSTATIUS, TEACHERS CAREGIVERS AND YOUTH LEADERS ON ST. EUSTATIUS HAVE BEEN PARTICIPATING AN ENGLISH CERTIFICATION TRAINING SINCE APRIL 2014. THE PURPOSE OF THIS TRAJECTORY IS TO INCREASE THE PARTICIPANTS' COMMAND OF ENGLISH WHERE NECESSARY, FOCUSING ON THE AREAS IN WHICH THEY WERE SHOWN TO NEED EXTRA ATTENTION. THE TRAJECTORY IS ORGANISED AND EXECUTED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF ST. MARTIN (USM), UNDER ASSIGNMENT FROM THE OCW MINISTRY. THREE USM INSTRUCTORS AND LANGUAGE EXPERTS ARE PREPARING THE CANDIDATES FOR THEIR EXAMINATION IN SEPTEMBER 2016, FOR THEM TO OBTAIN A CAMBRIDGE CERTIFICATE OF ENGLISH.



Prior to the training, the individual participants were assessed to establish their command of English. The assessment tested five areas of competence: listening, spoken interaction, writing, reading and English usage. Based on their assessment scores and professional needs, the candidates were subsequently placed in four groups. The groups currently receive 3-hour training sessions weekly from Dr. Rhoda Arrindell (writing and English usage), Dr. Natasha Gittens (listening and spoken interaction), and Drs. Wendie Brown (reading).

### Different aspects

“There are different aspects to take into account in this training,” says Arrindell. “First of all, the skills competence is varied. For example, you may find that participants from the Netherlands may generally be stronger in grammar and usage.” A specific part of the course is writing essays. Arrindell says she sees some excellent essay writers “... in the Dutch essay format, but when writing an essay in English, they may struggle with things like the breakdown of paragraphs and punctuation. These are things that can change the meaning of a text if not applied correctly.” Stating teachers on the other hand, who speak a Creolized dialect of English, “may generally have no problems when speaking or listening to English, but may have weaknesses in their writing skills.” Another aspect to take into account is the importance of subject terminology versus a generally good command of English. Arrindell: “Where a teacher of social sciences teacher, for example, will need a very good general command of English, an ample vocabulary of subject terminology is indispensable for a teacher of Math.”

#### Practical demands

Another important aspect of the teaching approach is the fact that the participants need to be able to pass the exam in September 2016. Arrindell explains the importance of some specific practical demands of the exam: “for example you must be aware of the timeframe in which you have to finish your work, and you must be able to type in the text for your essay, using a computer and keyboard. It is important to be aware of these demands and to practice. For this reason, the course includes a few sessions in which the candidates practice with mock-exams.”

**“I EXPECT A HIGH SUCCESS-RATE FOR ALL THOSE WHO CONTINUE PARTICIPATING ON A REGULAR BASIS”**

How pleased is she with the progress so far? “I am quite pleased with the way most teachers are really working on their areas for individual improvement. I expect a high success-rate for all those who continue participating on a regular basis.” ■

## EMERGENCY DAY

When an elementary school in Holland makes its annual schedule of the yearly lesson hours, two days must be reserved for emergencies. This is appropriately called: an emergency day. This provides the school with the opportunity to give the students a day off due to a heavy snowstorm, for example. Recently I was confronted with the Caribbean equivalent. Because of an approaching storm, all normal daily life stopped for one day. Call it a ‘hurricane day’. It actually happened on two occasions; for Danny and Grace. A ‘hurricane’ can be terrible, there’s no doubt about it. Yet I sensed some disappointment within myself, following all the fuss, after Danny and Grace had actually passed by. It reminds me of a ‘code red’ in Holland; that’s also always disappointing or it’s not so bad, depending on how you look at it.

When I see pictures of the same storm in Dominica, then I count ourselves lucky that we were spared that. Horrible. Then I cherish the luxury of being slightly disappointed and getting a day off; an emergency day though!



Academic graduate Michel Hassell (on the screen) was unable to attend as he is already enrolled in college abroad. He surprised everyone with his presence and his touching Salutatorian speech via Skype and received a special prize from the Saba Educational Foundation.

Jody Morgan graduated as the Academic Valedictorian receiving a special prize from Satel N.V. and delivered her address urging all her fellow graduates to continue to spread their wings across the universe, as their theme said.

The ceremonial moving of the tassel from the right to the left, symbolizing the transition from pupil to graduate.

# FESTIVE GRADUATION AT THE SCS

On Saturday afternoon, October 24, 2015 Saba Comprehensive School (SCS) graduated 18 students - 11 Academic, 3 Vocational and 4 PrO - at their graduation ceremony at Saba University School of Medicine. These results accounted for a 100% pass rate at the Saba Comprehensive School.



Photo in the middle: the graduates during the procession.

Photo below: MBO Valedictorian Lydia Hassell was awarded a one week training with a Master Chef by Queen's Gardens Resort after which she delivered her motivating Valedictorian address.



# A DAY WITH...

SIMONE VAN HENGSTUM

WEDNESDAY

SINCE EARLY 2015 SIMONE VAN HENGSTUM HAS BEEN WORKING AS A SCHOOL FACILITIES PROJECT MANAGER FOR THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT REAL ESTATE AGENCY (RIJKSVASTGOEDBEDRIJF). THE COMPANY SUPERVISES VARIOUS SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION AND RENOVATION PROJECTS ON BONAIRE AS DIRECTED BY THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SCIENCE (OCW) AND THE ISLAND GOVERNMENT OF BONAIRE.

“Today is a meeting day,” says Simone. She gets in her car heading for the Scholengemeenschap Bonaire (SGB) for her first appointment of the day. The new building at the vocational department (mbo) is on the agenda. This morning she’s meeting with the architect, the local administration and members of SGB’s management. The atmosphere is relaxed. Simone quickly copies the agenda. The project is in its early stages so Simone explains what’s going to happen in the near future: it’s important that future users discuss their visions about the building with the architects.

But scheduling the visit of the Dutch architecture firm Atelier PRO, who will design the building together with Jacob Architects from Bonaire, is not so simple. It leads to significant shuffling of agendas. Ultimately, a compromise is found. Simone: “We will meet with the sketches on the table, so everyone can have input.”

The new building for the vocational department (mbo), where the practical classrooms for the preparatory middle-level vocational education (vmbo) will be located, is urgently needed. The vocational school department of the SGB is bursting at the seams.

However, it will take a while before the school is built, emphasises Simone.

“I can imagine that people sometimes think: ‘this is taking a long time.’ But there is a lot involved in such a project. Now the architects are getting to work together with the future building users. Then comes the tender for the contractor and it will only then be built. The entire process takes at least two to three years to complete.”

The next meeting also takes place at the SGB. Simone discusses more general issues surrounding the progress of the renovation and construction of the school with Chairman Karel Visser of the school board and Interim General Director Lydia Emerencia.

Simone spends a moment at the office between appointments. The drawings for the projects for which she and her colleague Tomiwa Safe-Ade-wumi are responsible hang on the office walls. In addition to the construction of the mbo and the renovation of the SGB’s sports facility, Simone also supervises the renovation of the San Luis Bertran School in Rincon.

A meeting with Streefkerk, the local architect involved in the renovation of the SGB’s gymnasium. On the table are proposals for different constructions and building materials that can be used. The foundation must also be addressed. Architect Harm Streefkerk sketches the options with a pen and paper. Simone, originally an architect, nods. She wants to know what the difference in cost will be. “That’s an important part of my work: monitoring the budget”. Afterwards they take a look at the gym themselves. Streefkerk points to one of the doors: renovation is not an excessive luxury.

Simone likes to go snorkeling or diving in her free time. Or she arranges to meet some friends. But tonight she has Papiamentu lessons. “Although most meetings are in Dutch, I think it’s important to learn the language of the island.” She doesn’t find it easy, such a new language. She laughs: “It wasn’t for nothing that I chose at the time to study something technical.” ■



# HIGHLIGHTS

# 2015

## QUICK SCAN COMPLETED

On Bonaire, a Quick Scan was completed by the Papiamento and Dutch expert groups.

These expert groups were established by the Secretary of State to elaborate on the advice of the Language Union regarding the language of instruction on Bonaire. The next step is now to begin cooperating with the school boards involved to develop a plan of approach for the implementation of the advice.

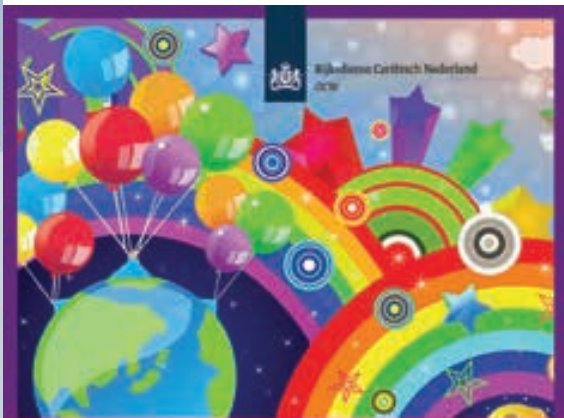
## BASIC QUALITY LEVEL ACHIEVED!

This year no less than nine schools achieved the basic quality level. These are the Bethel Methodist School, the Lynch Plantation SDA school and the Expertise Centre Education Care (ECE) on St. Eustatius, the Sacred Heart School, the secondary education stream of the Saba Comprehensive School, the Expertise Centre EC2 and the Saba Reach Foundation on Saba and Kolegio Rayo di Solo and Kolegio Kristu Bon Wardador on Bonaire.

## GOLDEN ROCK STATIA



On St. Eustatius, the renovation of the Golden Rock School (elementary school) is largely complete. Recently they began using several classrooms, the gymnasium, the administrative area, the playground and the parking area. It is expected that the entire complex will be completed in early 2016.



## CONGRATULATIONS!

RCN/OCW congratulates  
• Sint Eustatius: The Bethel Methodist School, the Lynch Plantation SDA school and the Expertise Centre Education Care (ECE)  
• Saba: the Sacred Heart School, the Saba Comprehensive School, the Expertise Centre Education Care (EC2) and the Saba Reach Foundation  
• Bonaire: Kolegio Rayo di Solo and Kolegio Kristu Bon Wardador  
upon achieving the basic quality standards.

Directors, teachers and board members: we are very proud of your achievement. We thank you for your dedication and hope that you will keep up the good work for the youth and the future of the Caribbean Netherlands!

Reynolds (Nolly) Oleana  
Head of the department OCW Caribbean Netherlands

During a festive graduation celebration at the end of October, a total of 18 graduates of the Saba Comprehensive School on Saba received their certificates.

There were 11 from the "Academic stream" (equivalent to HAVO), three from vocational education and 4 from PrO.

Photo by Shanell Heyliger



# GRADUATION





## ‘WERELD- WIJZER’ IS BEING USED

On Bonaire the World Orientation method (“Wereldwijzer”) is being used, also in groups 7 and 8.

Photo by Wilma Böhm

## COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE IMPLEMENTED

The complaints procedure for schools in the Caribbean Netherlands has been implemented. (See also the article on page 6 of this publication).



## HIGHEST POINT CONSTRUCTION

On Bonaire the highest point of the construction of the **Kolegio Strea Briante** (formerly the Watapana School) building was reached in October 2015.

Photo by Patricia Schuette

### On St. Eustatius the transition to English as the language of instruction is in full swing

- In the primary schools and in the first year of secondary education, lessons have been given in English since August 2015;
- The curriculum development for primary education has been **successfully completed for the subjects Dutch, English and Math;** .....
- At the Gwendoline van Putten secondary school preparations have begun to **introduce the CXC school system from the Caribbean Examination Council;** .....
- The training programme for teachers was launched to ensure that teachers speak English well enough to teach in English. The teachers will take a test in September 2016 to obtain the Cambridge Certificate of English.



## BREDE SCHOOL PAPA CORNES

On Bonaire the construction of the new “Brede School Papa Cornes” reached its highest point in April 2015. The project is estimated to reach its completion in May 2016.

Photo made available by the Central Government Real Estate Agency (Rijksvastgoedbedrijf).





Judi Marino, International Admissions Specialist from Flagler College Florida, giving information to Form 5A student, Jordan Every and Form 4A student, Paloma Thode.



Booths of the St. Maarten Medical Center and St. Maarten Laboratory Services.



Group photo of SCS Form 4 and 5 students and accompanying teachers.

# SCS STUDENTS AT JOB FAIR

On November 4th students from the Saba Comprehensive School visited the annual Job Fair at the Bel Air Community Center in St. Maarten. 4th and 5th year students from Academic and Vocational education attended.

Saban students have been visiting this job fair for the last couple of years to inform themselves about university admission requirements, academic orientation and scholarship/ financial aid information in order to make informed decisions for their future careers.

The students were accompanied by five teachers, under the guidance of Tracy Zagers- Johnson (Vocational Department Leader and Spanish teacher).

The group departed from Fort Bay, Saba, early in the morning on the "Dawn II" ferry boat and returned with the same vessel at 6 in the evening.

### Businesses and colleges/universities at the fair:

Customs (Douane) DUO (NL) Fire Department St. Maarten N.V. GEBE Harbour Group of Companies Kustwacht (Coast Guard) Labor Department Mental Health Foundation My Future Career Nagico NAMM N.V. PJJAE SHTA SLS St. Maarten Medical Center (SMMC) Student Support Services Sociale Ziektekosten Verzekering (SZV) Telem Tourism Department White & Yellow Cross Winair Colleges/Universities: ACMNV/AMTS (Bonaire) American University of Integrated Sciences (AUIS) (SXM) Ani Art Academies Anguilla De Haagse Hogeschool (NL) Flagler College (U.S.) Florida State University (U.S.) GED (SXM) IFE (CUR) Johnson & Wales University (U.S.) Monroe College (U.S.) NIPA (SXM) Savannah College of Art & Design (U.S.) St. Maarten Academy CAPE (SXM) UDC-CDC (Cur) University of Aruba University of St. Maarten (SXM) University of Tampa (U.S.) University of the Virgin Islands (UVI) University of Curacao (UOC) (CUR).



Form 5 Academic student, Jordan Every:

*"I was able to speak with a representative of a school that I have been interested in for a few years now, Flagler College. I hope to enroll in their Business Administration programme after I graduate from SCS next year."*

Form 5V Technical stream student, Donovan Johnson:

*"I was very happy with the information that we got at the Job Fair about vocational jobs. For instance, I found out that the NIPA school on St. Maarten offers an ICT course: that is just my thing since I've always had an interest in computers and fixing computers."*

Form 5 Academic student, Kavita Leverock:

*"The information given to me at the different booths really helps me gain an idea of what I'm interested in."*

Mr. Alonso de la Guardia, Vice Rector for University Relations, Florida State University, Republic of Panama Campus with recent SCS graduate Escarlen Rosa Vasquez, Form 5V student Daniela Mosquera Gallego (Hospitality) and recent graduate, Pauline Every.

