

2017 NATIONAL INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AWARDS

FEBRUARY 9, 2017

GOVERNMENT HOUSE
Fredericton, NB

Grade Four teacher at Keswick Valley school honoured with award

She's *that* teacher. You know, the one all the kids adore. The one the other teachers strive to be like.

That's how three teachers at Keswick Valley Memorial School describe Grade Four teacher **Maxine Brewer**, one of the recipients of a 2017 National Inclusive Education Award presented by the Canadian Association for Community Living (CACL). Mrs. Brewer received the award today at Government House in Fredericton. The awards ceremony was hosted by the Honourable Jocelyne Roy-Vienneau, Lieutenant-Governor of New Brunswick and the honorary patron of the New Brunswick Association for Community Living (NBACL). NBACL organizes the annual celebration on behalf of CACL, and this year chose six recipients from New Brunswick, one of whom is Maxine Brewer.



In their letter of support for Mrs. Brewer's nomination, colleagues Caitlin Long, Karen Miller, and Tina McPhee wrote: "It is evident that Max works very hard planning lessons for the diverse needs within her classroom. Her plans are well-detailed and meet the different learning styles of the class. [Each student's] goals are well laid out and easily measurable [and] are specific to that child's learning style and strengths."

School administrator Wayne Annis added: "She truly stretches each student towards their potential. She makes full use of the educational assistants that work in her classroom to further the learning of all students, regularly communicates with parents, and is a strong advocate for each student."

Those who nominated Mrs. Brewer (or Mrs. B, as the students call her) used many examples to illustrate the teacher's inclusive practices. "From the minute you walk into her classroom, you can see that she has the space set up to accommodate all the learners in her room," wrote Carey Estey-Bourgoin. "Her students have opportunities to work at desks, tables, on the floor or at the computers. She uses a variety of technology to assist her teaching and . . . provides [various] manipulatives, resources and sensory items to allow for hands on learning."

Educational Assistant Deborah Ascah reminisced about how, when she first started working with Mrs. B, "I really felt that at any time during the day, a person could walk into her classroom and would not know what students were on a personalized plan and what students were strong performers. All students were learning together in one room. . . [She] works hard to develop an atmosphere where all students are valued and included."

Outside the classroom, Maxine continues to work for her students by "[taking] the time to apply for grants that she knows will benefit the students," wrote nominators Long, Miller, and McPhee. She also

mentors fellow teachers and often sits in to share her insight during problem solving sessions for former students. “Her comments are always positive and looking for a solution, not focusing on the negative and what didn’t work.”

According to Carey Estey-Bourgoin, “It is because of her dedication and her motivation to go above and beyond what’s expected to make sure all of her students receive an education that matches their individual needs that we feel Mrs. Maxine Brewer is deserving of this national recognition.”

“Maxine Brewer certainly *is* ‘that teacher,’” said Krista Carr, NBACL’s executive director, when presenting the certificate with Board chair, Moira Wilson. “The way she works exemplifies what inclusive education is all about – helping every learner, every day, in every way.”

The Canadian Association for Community Living has been recognizing the outstanding inclusive practices of individuals working in Canada’s education system annually since 2006, with local, provincial, and territorial community living associations charged with accepting nominations and selecting recipients.

The New Brunswick Association for Community Living has proudly organized the New Brunswick presentation of the awards since their inception. The awards ceremony has become the focal point for celebrations marking National Inclusive Education Month.

Founded in 1957 by parents whose children were not legally allowed an education in our public schools, NBACL has evolved and grown over the past 60 years and now works on initiatives that touch almost every aspect of the lives of people who have an intellectual disability.

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