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OCW

ENGLISH

WHAT'S NEW ...

IN CARIBBEAN NETHERLANDS EDUCATION



Photo: Ingrid Zegers

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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, Stephanie van der Heiden-Derksen and Elaine Marchena (final editing)

English translation: John Amarica

Column: Martin van den Oetelaar

Photography: Malachy Magee, Ingrid Zagers, Stephanie van der Heiden-Derksen, Anna Lautenbag, Dirkje de Jong, Theresa Leslie, Shurandy Thodé and Elaine Marchena

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Do you want to react to the contents of this magazine or do you have suggestions or contributions for a next edition? Please send an e-mail to: elaine.marchena@rijksdienstcn.com

Copy for the next edition should be sent in before before September 10, 2018.

IN THE NEXT EDITION OF 'WHAT'S NEW'

- More about the "Kids' councils" in the Caribbean Netherlands
- The greenhouse project
- The child rights film festival

And more!

COLOPHON



During the Education Inspectorate's last visit in March 2018, once again three educational institutions¹ achieved the basic quality level. This means that almost the entire education system in the Caribbean Netherlands has achieved the basic quality level: an achievement to be proud of! Another milestone is you are now reading the tenth edition of the "What's New ..." educational magazine. To celebrate this, we started a competition; more about this in the next article on this page.

In the meantime, in Dutch Caribbean education, we are steadily working on meeting the objectives of the second Education Agenda. We still have two and a half years to meet these objectives. Whereas the primary focus of the first Education Agenda was

on achieving the basic quality level, this Education Agenda is about maintaining and strengthening the quality and increasing educational output.

That's why I want to conclude with the following two requests:

- that every educational professional continues to cooperate enthusiastically and constructively to achieve the desired improvements in education. After all, better education means a better future for our islands' youth, and
- that as many teachers as possible participate in the anniversary competition, to mark the occasion of the tenth issue of "What's new ...".

Once again, I also wish you much reading pleasure,

"WHAT'S NEW" ANNIVERSARY STORY CONTEST

Your story in the "What's New ..." and on OCW's Facebook page!

This is already the tenth edition of "What's New ..."

We'd like to look back on this accomplishment, including the following competition: Send us your most special, moving or funny story about an actual experience in education. It should be a story that can inspire others in the field of education. We don't want long stories: your entry must be between 300 and 500 words. An accompanying photo or other visual material is also welcome, but it won't be the decisive point for deciding the winner.

All entries will be judged by a jury. The jury will consist of educational professionals from all three islands in the Caribbean Netherlands (1 per island) and an OCW policy advisor in the Netherlands.

The winning story will be published in the next edition of "What's New" and on the facebook page of OCW in The Netherlands!

The deadline for submissions is: **Friday, August 24, 2018.**
We wish you success with your writing!



GETTING REAL HOSPITALITY EXPERIENCE ON SABA

Shelly and her student Hillary prepare a delicious "Pasta Alfredo"

SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THIS SCHOOL YEAR, STUDENTS FROM THE SABA COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL (SCS) HAVE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO GAIN REAL HOSPITALITY EXPERIENCE WITHIN THEIR OWN SCHOOL. THE PROFESSIONAL KITCHEN, CAFETERIA AND BED & BREAKFAST MAKE THIS POSSIBLE. THE AIM OF THE PROJECT IS TO CONNECT THEORY TO REAL WORK EXPERIENCE. HERE THE STUDENTS IN THE LOWER GRADES, PRACTICAL EDUCATION AND LEVEL 2 MBO LEARN ALL ABOUT HOSPITALITY ON THE JOB.

Upon entering the professional kitchen, Hospitality teacher Shelly Zagers-Hughes is busy with student Hillary, who she's teaching to prepare "Pasta Alfredo". Shelly explains to Hillary: "A delicious, simple meal, perfect for when you only have a little bit of time". After the dishes are done, there's time for a conversation with "What's New ...".

Every school day starts by preparing the school breakfast, which has been made available to the students thanks to the "Opportunities for all Children" subsidy. They're all welcome. Daily between 3 to 10 students actually take advantage of this. Breakfast includes bread, spreads, fruit, yoghurt and tea. Thanks to the school breakfast, all students can start the school day with a full stomach and lots of energy.

Students themselves have a say

Later in the morning, under Shelly's supervision, students prepare meals that are sold in the adjacent cafeteria. "In my job, the biggest challenge is planning" says Shelly. "Sometimes students are absent due to illness, so tasks have to be reassigned. But above all, we have to improvise when planning the weekly menus. Not all ingredients that we need for our dishes are always available on the island."

The students have a say in preparing the weekly menu. This way, they learn how to make a plan and to take into account the shelf life of products and how much ingredients cost. This week lasagna, sandwiches and macaroni are on the lunch menu. "In addition, we always offer fresh fruit, which is becoming more and more popular with the students," says principal Anton Hermans.

"THE STUDENTS HAVE A SAY IN PREPARING THE WEEKLY MENU."

The kitchen offers many opportunities to learn. Hygiene is an important topic during the lessons, for example by using cutting boards with different colours for different foods. "The white cutting board is for bread and the red one is for meat", explains Hillary, a student. She takes a laundry basket off the floor to go wash the kitchen towels that were used this morning. "It's nice to have different tasks in the kitchen, but I like cooking the most," she says enthusiastically.

Interested in staying
at the B&B?

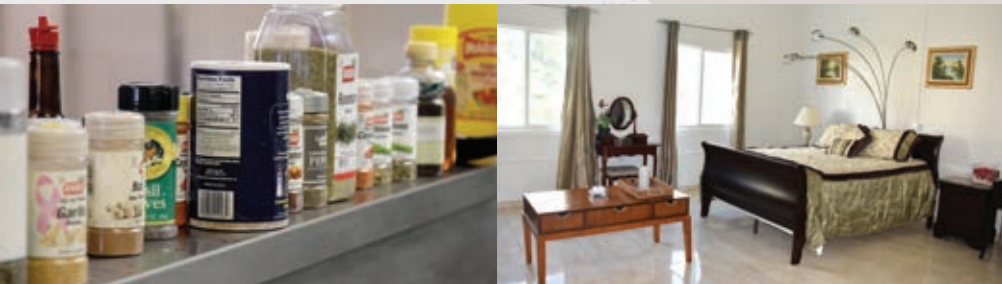
Then contact the school via:

administration@learningsaba.com

Preparing for a future job

“We have access to professional equipment, so that the students gain experience that is actually applicable on the job. This prepares them well for an internship or a future job”, says Shelly. “The meals prepared by the students in the kitchen are sold to teachers and students, which means that the students have a big responsibility for the final product and they receive feedback from customers on their work”. Except for lunch meals, the kitchen is mainly used for learning how to prepare all sorts of other dishes.

“GUESTS OF THE
BED & BREAKFAST
ARE IMPRESSED
BY THE WELL-
FURNISHED
ROOM.”



The school's Bed & Breakfast

“Today I’m going to make cupcakes with a group of students. They really want to learn how”, says Shelly. “We are expanding the learning kitchen even more,” says Anton. “We want to offer students the opportunity to work with as much professional equipment as possible. In a few weeks, we’ll be able to bake our own bread here, once the new bread oven has been delivered. We also recently repaired the slicing machine and our goal is to use a professional ice machine again. So we’re developing completely.”



The school breakfast is available to all students

Bed & Breakfast

Since the beginning of this school year, the school also has a real Bed & Breakfast. “We already had the hotel room, but because no one ever slept in it, the possibilities for learning were limited”, says Anton. “When we used to ask the students to clean the hotel room, at most there was some dust. Now the students experience how it is to clean a room when the bed is unmade and there are hairs everywhere. And what needs to be done to clean a bathroom that’s been used.” Here too, the combination of working and learning is central.

The spacious double room, overlooking Saba’s green landscape, can be rented by guests at cost. Of course, breakfast is also served, if desired. The guests’ experiences have been positive. They indicated that they were impressed by the well-furnished room.

Livens things up

In addition, the school has entered into a partnership with the Organopónicos Vegetable Garden, a social employment facility of the Saba Reach Foundation. Students in the PrO 1 and PrO 2 classes will have access to a vegetable garden here and the flower boxes on the school grounds will also be used for growing vegetables. Naturally, these vegetables will then be used in the school’s kitchen. This is how the students learn about the full cycle that is part of preparing a meal.

This new form of learning livens things up at school. Anton regularly hears his colleagues say: “Does it ever smell good in here.” “The kitchen and the cafeteria are the new heart of the school, as it were”, he concludes with a proud smile. ■

UNIDAT PA ENSEÑANSA BONAIRE (UNITY FOR EDUCATION BONAIRE)

IN 2017, 4 ENTHUSIASTIC, YOUNG PROFESSIONALS IN EDUCATION ON BONAIRE PUT THEIR HEADS TOGETHER. THEY WANTED TO HELP PROFESSIONALS IN EDUCATION ON BONAIRE BY CREATING A PLATFORM WHERE KNOWLEDGE, INSPIRATION AND NEW DEVELOPMENTS COULD BE SHARED. THIS IS HOW THE IDEA FOR THE “UNIDAT PA ENSEÑANSA” (UNITY FOR EDUCATION) FOUNDATION CAME ABOUT. UNTIL NOW THREE EVENTS HAVE ALREADY BEEN ORGANISED AND THE PARTICIPANTS AND BOARD MEMBERS ARE ENTHUSIASTIC.



“As teachers in education, we noticed that professionals in education on Bonaire sometimes face the same types of challenges”, says Davy Terwindt the foundation’s treasurer and a teacher at the Amplio Papa Cornes school. Chairperson Melanie Pop of the Kolegio Rayo di Solo school adds: “The search for a suitable solution can be a long and sometimes frustrating process, while there’s a good chance that someone else has already found a suitable solution for what you’re being faced with. Because there’s so much practical knowledge and experience among the professionals in education on Bonaire, which is not always shared ...”

That’s how Davy Terwindt, Melanie Pop, Jemila Nur-Ahmed and Demelza Tjon came up with the idea to create a platform for professionals in education where they can share their experiences so that others can also benefit from them. In addition to the events, the foundation has a Facebook page, where the activities are announced and where photos and videos of activities and articles to stimulate education on Bonaire are shared.

First Education Café

The foundation was launched on August 22, 2017. On October 4, 2017, the first “Education Café” was organised in the University of Curaçao building in Kralendijk. The invited guests were all professionals in education who have a connection with primary education on Bonaire. Of course, a first meeting like this is always exciting, especially for the organisers. But the turnout was great! It was a lively evening and there was a nice ambiance right from the start, so it was good beginning.

The programme started with a game of bingo so that the attendees could get to know each other. In addition, there were two guest speakers. The first was Shirley Bernard, a teacher at Kolegio Rayo di Solo school, who, in an inspirational way, talked about her passion and about working with the “Conscious discipline1” educational program. The next speaker was Cynthia Pourier. In her passionate presentation, this teacher at the Kolegio San Luis Betrán school emphasised how important it is for a teacher to, above all, observe well in the classroom.

All attendees were enthusiastic about the meeting and several professionals in education immediately signed up to be a guest speaker the next time.

Education café 2

The second education café was held on January 24, 2018. On the Unidat pa enseñansa's Facebook page, a "live" invitation was posted by none other than Jandinoz. The effect was immediate: professionals in education who had attended the event approached the board members. They told us that every day while they're working, they think back to the education café and what was presented there. During the second education café, guest speaker Henk Pepping, an educational consultant and a school principal, spoke passionately about the importance and effect of focusing on the child. A statement that is frequently made, but what does this actually mean for your actions as a professional in education? Finally, guest speaker Zulaika Winklaar, a teacher at the Amplio Papa Cornes school, spoke enthusiastically about motor skills in preschool children and the importance of developing these well. A wonderful, larger turnout with a number of well-known faces, but also new ones. Once again it was a very pleasant and enjoyable evening!

A mainstay

For the 2017-2018 school year, the idea is to organise a meeting at least four times a year, with a few guest speakers who, to inspire others, share their knowledge, experiences and passion with the other attendees. During the production of this magazine the third, successful event was organised. The foundation principally focuses on primary education, but wants to organise more events in the future, possibly for secondary education also. The foundation is also open to cooperation with other organizations/agencies.

The board's wish is that "Unidat pa Enseñansa" becomes a mainstay on Bonaire, supported by the entire community. "If you as a teacher are faced with a situation or want to know something, then you should be able to count on this network," says Davy. Melanie adds: "There's so much expertise and knowledge on the island." According to her, it's unfortunate that this knowledge is often so fragmented or hidden, rather than coming together. For example, by sharing all the successful experiences which occur daily with Bonaire's children. "By offering a platform for sharing experiences, knowledge and passion, we hope to contribute to having professionals in education reinforce each other: together we know and achieve more," says Melanie. ■

¹ "Conscious discipline" is a scientifically based educational and social-emotional programme for classroom management. For more information visit: www.consciousdiscipline.com

² Jandino Jullian Asporaart is a Dutch stand-up comedian, actor, television presenter, singer, producer and impersonator born in Curaçao, who is on the islands regularly for performances and other projects.

“... THERE'S SO MUCH PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE AMONG THE PROFESSIONALS IN EDUCATION ON BONAIRE, WHICH IS NOT ALWAYS SHARED ...”



SUGGESTIONS?

If you have any good suggestions or ideas or if you want additional information, contact **Fundashon Unidat pa enseñansa** via their Facebook page or send an email to: unidat.pa.ensenansa@gmail.com



LEARNING TO SWIM IN THE CARIBBEAN NETHERLANDS

By **Stephanie van der Heiden-Derksen**

Already since November 2016, the St. Eustatius Sports Facility Foundation (SSFF) and the St. Eustatius Swimming Association (SESA) have been organising swimming lessons for group 3 students on the island. After the hurricane season in September 2017, there was some catching-up to do: students in groups 4 and 8 also received lessons, so that in 2018, all children who finish primary school will have their A level swimming diploma. Safety and quality are at the forefront of this project.



Swimming lesson in Bonaire • Photo: Stichting Openbaar Onderwijs Bonaire

The project is based on a plan, which was already written in 2016 by Michiel Derksen for the SSFF, with the support of all the primary schools, SESA, St. Eustatius National Parks Foundation (STENAPA) and the St. Eustatius government. Meanwhile, there's a new project coordinator: Monique Martis. At that time an amount from the integral funds was reserved, so that the project could start. The project has been running for a year and a half now. Due to teachers requesting swimming lessons, swimming lessons for adults have also begun.

Quality

In order to guarantee the quality of the swimming lessons, swimming instructors on the island have been trained according to the standards from the National Vocational Training for Swimming Instruction (NBZ) in the Netherlands. During these courses attention is paid to hydrodynamics, swimming techniques, didactics for swimming lessons and to the instructors' own swimming skills, in other words, obtaining swimming diplomas A through C and lifesaving. In addition, both instructors and the assistant will take a first aid course in the future.

The lifeguards are clearly recognisable by their bright yellow shirts that say 'lifeguard' on them. The instructors are recognisable by their red swimsuits and a whistle around their neck.



Swimming lesson in Statia • Photo: Stephanie van der Heiden-Derksen

“IT’S AS IF WE’RE GIVING THE CHILDREN A NEW PRESENT EVERY WEEK, THAT’S HOW HAPPY THEY ARE WHEN THEY ARRIVE HERE.”



Thanks to the **Opportunities for All Children** project and the Bonaire government, all group 5 classes on the island now take swimming lessons.

Some innovations have also been made to make the swimming pool safer, such as purchasing new floatation devices to use in the water for teaching and playing.

The swimming lessons

After the students have had swimming lessons for a year, they can take the swimming exam for their A diploma. Once the children have passed, they will receive an additional four snorkel lessons, which will be given together with STENAPA in Lower Bay (i.e. the coastal strip on St. Eustatius where most beaches are located).

Enthusiasm

Not everyone sees the benefits of swimming lessons. However, the organizers hope that the children’s enthusiasm will infect the parents. The most progress is evident in the group 7 classes. One of the teachers: “the students don’t need extra floatation devices to stay above water. In group 3, some children are still afraid of the water. But with them also, you see the children progressing every lesson and they use fewer and fewer of these devices.”

The children - with a few exceptions - are all very enthusiastic. They return every week for more swimming lessons. Students at the Governor de Graaff school confirm this: “It’s super fun!” and “I can swim, even with my asthma!”. A group 7 student adds: “I’m now learning how to swim, I couldn’t do that until now”.

A swimming instructor says that his main drive are the enthusiastic children: “they make your day. It’s as if we’re giving the children a new present every week, that’s how happy they are when they arrive here on the school bus.” The outlook for the moment is that the project will continue in the coming years and the students are very happy about that!

Swimming during school on Bonaire

Two years ago, the schools on Bonaire started giving swimming lessons during school hours for the students in group 5. Here too there was a request to start the swimming lessons. This occurred after it was discovered during after-school activities that few students could swim. The conditions were that there would be continuity and that in the coming years the swimming lessons would be given during school hours.

Students take lessons in the Hillside Hotel’s swimming pool from certified swimming instructors from Swim Academy Splash, which is a member of the National Platform of Swimming Pools (NPZ) and the National Board of Swimming Safety (NRZ) in the Netherlands. This allows them to offer A, B and C swimming certifications. Students who still cannot swim after a year of taking swimming lessons will receive a certificate listing the skills they have learned.

Permission

The swimming exam is taken in the ocean, because the conditions there are different than in a swimming pool. Parents must give their permission for this. Most parents are very enthusiastic, so they attend the graduation ceremony. “What we’ve noticed is that after being involved in this for a few years, continuous success changes parents’ ideas and more and more they allow their children to take swimming lessons,” said Eveliene Coenen, general manager of the Bonaire Foundation for public education..

Saba

At present, swimming lessons are being given on Saba, however the lessons are not arranged by the schools. A few times a year a swimming instructor is flown in. This instructor will give swimming lessons during two weeks. Parents can register their children for these lessons via Child Focus¹. ■

¹ The Child Focus Foundation on Saba offers after-school activities to all school-going youth from 4-18 years of age through care, support and guidance during after-school hours.



By Elaine Marchena



Official statistics indicate that currently 22% of Bonaireans may be classified as having low literacy or being illiterate. In the Netherlands, this percentage is 16%, based on assessments of the population's math, reading and writing skills. According to director Inge Berben of the Formashon pa mañan foundation (FORMA), the aforementioned percentage would be even higher if the same tests used in the Netherlands were applied on Bonaire.

"IT'S INCREDIBLY IMPORTANT THAT OCW PROLONGED THE SUBSIDY FOR FORMA'S LITERACY ACTIVITIES UNTIL THE END OF 2018."

FORMA'S DIRECTOR ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF LITERACY

In the European Netherlands, it has been calculated that illiteracy and low literacy costs the Dutch state approximately 1 million euros every year. On Bonaire this is estimated to be 1 million dollars a year. Illiterate people or people with low literacy usually have more health problems, they may actually benefit less from social services, because they are not able to inform themselves. They usually don't have a job, so the government also misses out on tax revenue from this target group. Calculations have shown that every Euro invested in literacy yields a 29% return.

Isolation

"It's incredibly important that OCW prolonged the subsidy for FORMA's literacy activities until the end of 2018", says Inge. "This allows us to continue and expand the literacy activities. We hope to be able to also count on additional funding for literacy after 2018."

She explains that our society is so focused on reading and writing, that people without these skills quickly end up becoming isolated. "You have to realise that children living in households with adults with low literacy are not motivated to read or to seek information; there are no reading materials in these houses, only radio and TV."

According to Inge, a whole new world opens

up to people, when they're able to search for information themselves via printed material or the internet.

Pride

According to Inge, the literacy courses have above all had a positive effect on the students' self-image and self-esteem. "Low self-esteem often traps people: that's just the way I am, and they resign themselves to the idea they can't cope on the labour market either. Inge always finds it a wonderful moment when the students take pride that they can read and write and can move on to getting a job or further education.

WHAT DOES FORMA DO?

Fundashon FORMA is a training centre for adult education and education in general. The foundation is based on Bonaire and its goal is to provide adults with opportunities for education, training and/or schooling, so that they can fully participate in the labour market. To this end, FORMA offers social opportunity pathways for the youth, literacy courses, basic courses in Papiamentu, English, Dutch, budgeting, and more. In addition, FORMA currently provides the

SHORT INTERVIEW WITH EOZ BONAIRE

EOZ (Education and Care Centre of Expertise) Bonaire is one of the institutions that achieved the basic quality level during the Education Inspectorate's last visit in March 2018. How did EOZ Bonaire experience the process to achieve this and what are the points of attention for the coming years? An interview with director Rosa Hoes and team leaders Anouk Hansen and Renata Domacassé.

"When I became the director in the autumn of 2017, many good steps had already been taken," explains Rosa Hoes. "We haven't really implemented anything new recently. It was mainly a matter of tightening things up to be able to fully meet the requirements for the basic quality level."

Demand-driven

Team leader Anouk Hansen: "Actually, I have experienced EOZ's entire development. In the beginning, the main focus was on ensuring that the services provided by EOZ were more in demand, that is, based on what the schools requested. In addition, every school has its own needs, so you can't use the same approach everywhere.

As EOZ, we responded to this. So now we're in the schools four times a week. We're less involved with testing and more with being present in the schools. We now work with the schools towards SMART-based goals and together with the teachers we examine what works and what doesn't." Rosa concludes: "As such, it's not only EOZ that has achieved the basic quality level, it has been a joint growth process, together with the schools." According to EOZ, the Inspectorate was also very pleased with the implementation of the new client registration and management system. Rosa explains: "Thanks to this system, we can now monitor each student's progress really well. It's not an EOZ-specific system, but an existing software package that was adapted to meet EOZ Bonaire's wishes. It was supplied by the Caag Software company in Curaçao."

Future

The focus in the coming years will be on maintaining the basic quality level and preserving basic care. What will also receive a lot of attention in the near future are the special facilities that are needed to be able to meet special requests for care. In this respect, EOZ is now facing the limits of what regular education can offer. Renata: "For example, our schools are not designed for highly visually impaired students. As such, there are many instances of students with special care needs for whom you also want to offer proper education. What will or won't we be able to offer in this area in the future? We've been discussing this topic for some time with representatives from primary education, secondary education and FORMA and soon also with the education policy makers in the Caribbean Netherlands." ■

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT FORMA'S LITERACY ACTIVITIES CAN BE FOUND:

On their website: www.fundashonforma.com under the 'FORMA/literacy' tab

By searching on YouTube for the following documentary and film titles:

FORMA Alfa 2017
AmiporBotambepor
TrailerAmiporBotambepor
MisionForma
E bida di Lisa
GRACE Seket 2012

MBO-1 courses on behalf of the Bonaire School Board (SGB). For detailed information about the courses offered, visit: www.fundashonforma.com

Already since 2006, FORMA has continually been offering literacy courses for adults on Bonaire. Since 2017, detainees in the Caribbean Netherlands Judicial Institution can also take courses for up to 16 hours per week to learn how to read and write (better). Via these Literacy courses given primarily in Papiamentu, each person gets the opportunity to develop their reading, writing, speaking, extending vocabulary and expression skills, telling time and arithmetic skills and budgeting in real life situations. Students also learn how to use a computer to master the digital skills that are essential today. For example, students learn how to use an ATM and learn how to use a mobile phone. In order to increase their chances in the labour market, people with low literacy can also take driving license theory lessons via Forma. They can take the exam orally.

Because the target group consists mainly of (young) adults, FORMA has invested in developing teaching materials for this target group.

In addition, the foundation encourages companies and organisations to revise their informational materials, so that people with low literacy can also have access to the information. This can be done, for example, by using more pictograms and pictures in the informational materials, instead of only text. ■



Fourth-year students in the vmbo (preparatory middle-level vocational education) General Construction classes at the Gwendoline van Putten School (GvP) on Sint Eustatius and at the Saba Comprehensive School (SCS) show what they can do at the provincial Skills Competition on Saba. Each school is represented by three students. The winning team is allowed to participate in the national trades competitions in the Netherlands¹ in March 2018.

By Anna Lautenbag

COMPLETE CONCENTRATION DURING THE PROVINCIAL TRADES COMPETITIONS

Today the graduating year students from vmbo-General Construction show off their skills during the provincial trades competition. This is the first time that students from Saba and St. Eustatius are participating in the Skill Competitions. Yesterday, the GvP team arrived on Saba and the students met each other in a relaxed atmosphere during a meal. Today, however, the faces of the students who have just begun the assignment, show their concentration.



Photo: Malachy Magee

“Of course, we pay attention to technical skills, but at least as important are qualities such as mutual cooperation and a positive work attitude, and the pupils must also be able to present their island in a positive way. Whether a wood board is an inch too long is not the only thing that counts”, says Hein van Senten, organiser of Skills Netherlands Caribbean. The winning team is allowed to participate in the national trades competitions in the Netherlands¹.

choice is based on observing the students in my class for two years and I have taken into account the General Construction skills of the students selected, but also other aspects such as work attitude and attendance.”

Organizer Martijn Baptiste is very enthusiastic about the competition’s goal. “Of course students can demonstrate their skills, but they are also inspired by seeing how students from other schools

“OF COURSE, WE PAY ATTENTION TO TECHNICAL SKILLS, BUT AT LEAST AS IMPORTANT ARE QUALITIES SUCH AS MUTUAL COOPERATION AND A POSITIVE WORK ATTITUDE.”

Many good tradesmen needed

The pre-selection of the students participating took place by the schools themselves. “For us it was simple, the class consists of only three students”, tells Anton Hermans principal of SCS. On St. Eustatius, teacher Dennis van Nielen selected the participants. “My

approach things, and the competition offers students the opportunity to familiarize themselves with opportunities for studying within their field. On the islands, for example, a lot of work is available in the construction and catering sectors. But because there aren’t enough trained workers available on

¹ Unfortunately the trip to the Netherlands had to be cancelled due to problems with the passport of one of the students concerned. The organisation is now focusing on participation in the competitions of next year.

“YOU HAVE TEN FINGERS AND TWO EYES, KEEP THESE.”



Photo: Ingrid Zagers

the islands, a lot of off-island workers are hired. We want to make students aware of the opportunities in the labour market and to put vocational education on the map. For example, at SGB Bonaire we have started a new vocational training, which is very practical. The language of instruction doesn't have to be an obstacle for students from the Windward Islands.”

All participants are visibly focused working on the competition assignment: making a wooden business sign. This way the students can fully put into practice their knowledge in the areas of drilling, sawing, chiselling and measuring. They're encouraged by their parents and fellow students while they work.

“Both teams worked well together”, says Martijn after the lunch break. “We did have to stop the competition once because the students didn't fully comply with the safety regulations, but after we pointed this out to them, things went well again.”

Ten fingers and two eyes

The competition ends at three-thirty in the afternoon and the six students left the classroom looking tense. The jury carefully assesses the work of both teams and then counts the points. “Team St. Eustatius received 34.2 points and team Saba 37.8 points. Both teams have done very well, but team Saba is the winner!”, Hein announces. “Always

remember the importance of following the safety rules”, he stresses upon the students, playing on their conscience. “You have ten fingers and two eyes, keep these.”

The students from SCS will travel to the Netherlands in March, where they will participate in the national competition. Marjolyn, a student at SCS, the only female participant, is proud and delighted. “I've never been to the Netherlands before, but in any case, the cold won't matter to me!” Marjolyn doesn't know yet exactly what she wants to be later on, but as far as she's concerned, it will be definitely be a career in General Construction.

According to Hein, worldwide more and more young women are opting for a career in construction. “In Colombia for example, about half of the students are girls, but this is not yet the case on the islands. But here too, girls are increasingly opting for technical training.”



Photo: Ingrid Zagers

Skills Netherlands Caribbean (SNC)

was founded in 2013 to make participating in (inter)national trades competitions possible for students from the Caribbean Netherlands. The Foundation is subsidized by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW). Hein van Senten is the Technical Delegate and Martijn Baptiste is the Chief Expert at Skills Netherlands Caribbean, both of whom work at the Bonaire School Board (SGB).



BUILDING BOATS AT SCHOOL

“If you live on an island like Saba, it’s only logical to learn about seamanship,” says principal Anton Hermans and MBO (middle-level vocational education) teacher Mike Stamm of the Saba Comprehensive School (SCS). The ultimate dream of both gentlemen is to establish maritime education on Saba. A dream that is slowly but surely starting to take shape. Because constructing a 12 ft Dinghy, a small sailboat, was recently added to the extra-curricular programme. And starting in 2018-2019, it will also be in the after-school programme.

Seamanship lessons

The first sailboat has to be completed before the upcoming summer so that the students can start on a second sailboat during the summer break. Then the school will begin with seamanship lessons as part of the after-school programme. This may include subjects such as rowing and sailing. “But there are many more courses that fall under the “wet part” of maritime education,” Mike explains. “I recently compiled a list of all the maritime related jobs that there are on the island: I counted a total of 32 jobs, not only in sailing and fishing, but also activities in the port, such as unloading containers.”

The students in the lower grades reacted enthusiastically to the new lessons. At the moment the group consists mainly of girls. “We find it particularly important that the students work well together, have fun and discover their talents”, says Anton.

Mike, who teaches the lessons together with General Construction teacher Marlon Sitladin, adds: “I think it’s wonderful that after a few lessons we already see the students progressing. In the beginning, the group was bit awkward, but now we see that the students help each other. In the previous lesson, for example, they were busy sawing and we then noticed the students giving each other tips and instructions. They all do a great job.”

“WITH A MARITIME DIPLOMA, YOUNG ADULTS HAVE A GOOD CHANCE OF FINDING A JOB ON SABA OR ON ONE OF THE SURROUNDING ISLANDS.”

Maritime education on Saba

The ultimate goal is to expand the current activities into a complete maritime education on Saba. Anton explains: “At the moment it’s not possible for our students to do a follow-up study on the island after completing their (V) MBO studies. This is a major concern for many parents, because they, like us, believe that their children are often too young to leave the island. With a maritime diploma, young adults have a good chance of finding a job on Saba or on one of the surrounding islands. For example, there’s a constant demand for diving instructors and an instructor training course would fit perfectly into a maritime curriculum.”

Another goal is to make a positive contribution to the image that vocational education currently has. “Worldwide there’s a huge demand for well-trained tradesmen, but

“WE ALSO FIND IT VERY IMPORTANT TO ESTABLISH A CONNECTION WITH SABA’S HISTORY,”

“Actually, we first wanted to start a sailing club for the students, but we didn’t have any boats. So we thought it was logical to start building a sailboat,” says Mike. “We started looking for a sailboat that could be made by first and second year students. The Glue & Stitch technique, which is used to make the 12ft Dinghy, matches the skills that the students already have or that they can learn relatively easily.”

“We also find it very important to establish a connection with Saba’s history,” adds Anton. “Traditionally, fishing boats and rowboats were made on our island. First and second year students don’t yet have the technical skills needed to make a rowboat, for example. But the older students do. In the future, we want to build a rowboat locally with the older students.”



Instructor Mike Stamm providing explanation



The project is getting more and more shape

vocational education has a negative image. The prevailing impression is that often the job pays poorly, but the opposite is true.”, Mike explains. If maritime education becomes a reality in the future, the intention is to establish an exchange programme with other maritime schools in the Caribbean and the European Netherlands. “Imagine if students can come to Saba for a semester, for Navigation Science, for example, and vice versa, students from Saba can learn specific skills elsewhere.” Wouldn’t that be fantastic?”, Mike concludes enthusiastically. ■

AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMME SCS EXPANDED

In addition to the maritime activities that the SCS has included in their after-school programme, the school will also expand the other after-school activities after the summer. A diverse and instructive programme has been developed, where respect for the island and culture are central.

Saba’s land, water and nature:
snorkelling, hiking, agriculture

History:
boat building, sailing, archaeology, cooking and art

Giving back to the community:
debate club, Change makers club, Leos

Language groups:
Dutch, Mandarin (Chinese) and Spanish

21st century clubs:
Robotics, Technology and IT

Research has shown that students who participate in after-school activities generally miss fewer classes and exhibit better behaviour at school.

¹ Leos is the youth department of the Saba Lions Foundation, a NGO that dedicates itself to the local community.



Photo: Teresa Leslie

STATIA MURAL PAINTING PROJECT: TOGETHER WE CREATE SOMETHING BEAUTIFUL

In the aftermath of hurricanes Irma and Maria, various reconstruction projects have begun or have been completed on the windward islands. In this “What’s New” we spotlight a very creative reconstruction project on St. Eustatius: the mural painting project!

“The existing murals on the sport complex’s wall that were placed there in the past by the Statia Pride Foundation were faded by the ravages of time,” says Fine Arts teacher Chériette van der Lugt from the Gwendoline van Puttenschool (GvP). “For a long time, it’s been planned to paint new murals, but this was delayed due to personal circumstances. By chance, various parties (Mega D Youth Foundation, New Challenges Foundation, GvP and others) came together. This resulted in a collaboration that was funded by the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations (BZK).

Project coordinator Mel Raboen de Sanchez Pacheco: “I mainly strive for socially-supported projects, which everyone in the community can contribute to. The beauty of this project is that not only have schoolchildren worked on it, but also many volunteers of all ages. And in particular, also the New Challenges Foundation (NCF), which coordinated everything.

¹ The New Challenges Foundation provides training programs for young adults and the social opportunity pathways for the youth (SKJ). As part of the SKJ process, NCF provides the mbo-1 courses for the Gwendoline van Putten School. (i.e. a school for mavo, vmbo, mbo and havo).

LEARNING TO OBSERVE

These days, many of the discussions in the teachers' rooms will deal with the workload in education, with administration being the biggest villain. During the hundreds of classroom observations that I have been allowed to conduct in primary education in recent years, another, less frequently mentioned aspect emerges. The image of teachers who are working really hard to give all the lessons in the schedule, and according to the teaching method. Differentiated on at least three levels, of course. And of course, given responsibly, according to a direct teaching method, such as IGDI or EDI or ADI, which clearly state the goal for each lesson.

Now, I have nothing against a well differentiated instructional lesson, on the contrary. But only if it has an effect on the children's learning. And therein lies the crux. If you're in the back of a class, you'll see what the teacher no longer sees under all the pressure: that the students aren't affected by the teaching materials. Zip, the goal of the lesson flashes past on the digibord, without the students making any connection to what they already know. Or when I ask that student why he's not paying attention, he says: "I have 1 star, I'm in the group that gets extra explanation and the teacher will explain it one more time". Teachers run the risk of focussing so much on teaching that they lose sight of the learning.

Therefore, my plea to all teachers is: don't work so hard in the classroom! Make sure you know the teaching guidelines and your teaching methodology well. Prepare your lessons well and look critically at what can be left out. Does every lesson really have a new goal? Does every student need language and math lessons every day? Then don't talk all the time, but put the students to work. Use your time and energy to observe and support the students and their learning. What is that one student doing wrong? What helps him or is distracting him actually? Where in the step-by-step plan does he get stuck?

Is teaching this way difficult? Of course it is!

Is it possible to relax and have fun? Absolutely, that's my wish for everyone. ■

STATIA MURAL PAINTING PROJECT

This really is an example of "together we create something beautiful". NCF Director Francine Harrigan explains: "First we created a painting committee. It included representatives from all of the above-mentioned parties, as well as from the St. Eustatius government (including Cherida Creeburg) and the Globe Foundation (Sara Stone). Sara Stone ran the project on behalf of the NCF, especially by motivating the second chance and mbo- candidates to participate. Every member of the painting committee participated in some way, from arranging the licenses, up to and including the paint, bringing the brushes from the Netherlands and much more."

Togetherness

As part of the theme "Togetherness", drawing contests were organised at schools. This theme was specially chosen to reflect with the students on the need to work together,



Photo: Dirkje de Jong

especially after an event such as a hurricane. The students' drawings were judged by the painting committee and the winners were allowed to paint their drawings on the wall. On the wall you can see that all age groups are represented. During the painting sessions, weekend after weekend, young and old were painting on the wall. And what a fantastic result! On King's Day, the mural was officially presented during a short ceremony by Government Commissioner Mike Franco. He and his closest staff members also contributed their part during the painting, which was a special contribution. ■



INTRODUCING ...
CAROL IRVINE SKINNER

“MY WISH FOR SABA’S STUDENTS IS THAT THEY BECOME WELL-INFORMED, OUTSPOKEN AND ASSERTIVE. THAT STUDENTS HAVE AN OPINION, FOR EXAMPLE ABOUT EVENTS IN THE WORLD, AND ARE ABLE TO HAVE AN INTELLECTUAL CONVERSATION ABOUT THESE. THIS READIES A PERSON FOR LIFE AS A STUDENT AND LIFE IN GENERAL”, SAYS CAROL IRVINE SKINNER, CARE COORDINATOR/CARE SUPERVISOR AT THE SABA COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL (SCS).

AN INTRODUCTION ...

“My job is to make students aware of all the opportunities they have in the big outside world.”

Trinidad en Tobago

Carol is originally from Trinidad and Tobago and studied Educational Psychology. After obtaining her Master Degree, she started working as a care counselor at a girls’ secondary school in Trinidad. Carol started her job at the SCS in September 2016. “On Saba I work with 100 students instead of 800 students in Trinidad. Although I have to say, the issues are generally the same. People sometimes think that I now have more time, but that’s not the case. Because I work in a small team, I simply have more tasks. But I like that,” Carol says with a smile. “Another big advantage of life here is that I have a lot more time for my family. In Trinidad it took me two hours to travel from home to school and visa versa. Now I get to school within minutes and my childrens’ school is next door.”

“I always wanted to contribute to education,” says Carol. “Although recently I considered working with adults as a social worker, but I realised that it’s difficult to change habits when someone is already grown up. So I chose a job as a care provider at a school. In my role I can really create change in a school, through prevention, for example. Sometimes people underestimate the importance of prevention, but by presenting real facts and accurate information, you can help students stay on the right path. Students are often misinformed, which easily leads to making the wrong decisions.”

Busy days

Carol’s days at school are generally busy. “I consult a lot with colleagues and cooperating organisations, I like to have personal contact with people. I also have weekly group sessions with every class at school. During these sessions we talk about topics such as self-confidence, sexual relationships and peer pressure. We work with a wonderful programme which presents the students with real life scenarios. For example, we show pictures of a party. Teenagers are dancing, a young man approaches a girl ... We ask students how they think this scenario will play out and discuss personal boundaries. I also have individual sessions with students about their behaviour, opportunities for studying in the future and careers. One challenge is that the students on Saba are usually shy and often are not aware of the larger world around them with all its possibilities. My job is to make them aware of all the opportunities they have and to speak with them about the options that are available after secondary school. I also have conversations with the parents. Finally, I organise meetings with groups of students about a specific theme, for example, about aggressive behaviour.” When Carol is asked what she likes the most about her job, she doesn’t have to think twice.

“What I like the most, is to see the students’ development. For example, when a student is very shy and insecure in the first grade and then a few years later has become assertive and articulate. I think it’s fantastic that I have the chance to help with this process.” ■



SHARK WEEK ON STATIA INSPIRES

During the most recent “Shark Week”, the sharks in the waters around St. Eustatius were the focus once again. Stenapa1 organised, in collaboration with the DCNA - Save Our Sharks organisation, numerous instructional events and activities for young and old. All this was done to make the local residents aware that sharks are important for the ecosystem in the waters around Statia.

This time shark expert Jillian Morris Brake visited the island once again. In addition to being the founder of Sharks4kids, she is a marine researcher and a diving instructor. With her almost white hair, shark clothing and cheerful voice, she is now a well-known figure among local children.

“Underwater lessons”

Together with her colleague, Jillian teaches “underwater lessons” to pre-schoolers on the island. With the children, together they creatively search for the different shark habitats and they see where sharks live and why they live there. At the start of the lesson misconceptions about sharks are

removed. “Do you see that I still have all my arms, legs and fingers? Sharks don’t bite me; they think I taste really bad!”, Jillian laughs. Then Jillian and the children start going on an imaginary underwater adventure, which starts by putting on wetsuits. After that, fins and goggles, and then everyone sits down ready to go into the water. The children are all enthusiastic and become completely involved in the game. This is one of Jillian’s keys to a successful lesson: “by having the children actively participate, they become enthusiastic and they’re open to learning”.

True stories

During Jillian’s lessons, a number of aspects are always reiterated. During the lesson fables are replaced by facts by refining the words the children use. Words like “scary” and “monster” are replaced with “teeth”, “important” and “interesting”. In addition, there is constant interaction during the lesson: children are challenged to give their input and participate. Information about the different sharks is also used to answer questions. Because of the true stories and the photos and videos, the underwater world really comes alive for the children.

1 STENAPA stands for the St. Eustatius National Parks Foundation. This non-governmental organization is committed to preserving nature on and around St. Eustatius.

2 DCNA stands for the Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance and this non-profit organization’s goal is to protect the natural resources of the six islands of the former Netherlands Antilles. DCNA - Save our Sharks is a project within this non-profit organization that focuses on the conservation of sharks around these islands.



LOCAL RESEARCH

Respectful

Jillian is not welcomed with open arms everywhere in the world. This is due in part because catching sharks is sometimes a source of income for locals. A positive attitude and respectful communication typify Jillian. On the organisation's behalf, she is committed to developing alternative solutions and working together with local residents as much as possible.

During the lessons, Jillian explains to the children what the consequences would be if sharks were to disappear from the ecosystem. In addition to the lessons given by Sharks4kids, the organisation has developed teaching materials that teachers can use to get started.

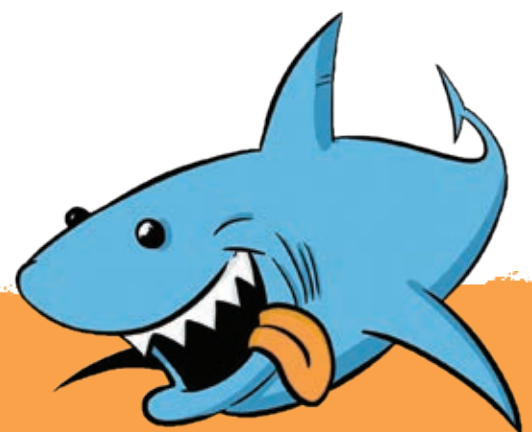
“Shark week on the Caribbean Netherlands islands focuses not only on education, but on the society as a whole.”

Role models

Jillian talks about several successful actions by children to highlight the conservation of sharks: “There was a boy who sent a letter to a local restaurant requesting them to stop serving shark fin soup. And then there was a girl who asked the island government to establish a shark protection zone...” The organization involves children by having them become youth ambassadors: enthusiastic teenagers who themselves want to convey the message to their peers.

Jillian has only good things to say about Shark Week on St. Eustatius: “The Caribbean Netherlands islands are a role model for the rest of the world. Shark week on these islands focuses not only on education, but on the society as a whole.” ■

Also at the Gwendoline Van Putten School, attention was paid to protecting sharks during Shark Week. The Academic 2 classes did their own research and presented their results to Stenapa in a video. The research focused on society and fishermen, and their experiences with sharks in Statian waters. **Stenapa and the students together came to the conclusion that enforcing the protection of sharks would be desirable.**



“Do you see that I still have all my arms, legs and fingers? Sharks don't bite me; they think I taste really bad!”

BASIC QUALITY FOR ALMOST ALL OF EDUCATION IN CARIBBEAN NETHERLANDS

During the education inspectorate’s last visit to the Caribbean Netherlands (C.N.) in March 2018, a number of schools and educational institutions once again achieved the basic quality level. This means that almost the entire education system in the Caribbean Netherlands achieved basic quality.



This time on Bonaire it concerned the vmbo & mbo units of the Bonaire School Board (SGB) and the Expertise Centre for Educational Care. On St. Eustatius it concerned the MBO-1 department at the Gwendoline van Putten School (GvP) and the social opportunity pathways for the youth, which are provided by the New Challenges Foundation. This is another important milestone in the process of improving education in the Caribbean Netherlands.

TUITION FEES CUT IN HALF FOR FIRST-YEAR POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION STARTING IN THE 2018-2019 SCHOOL YEAR

The amount of tuition fees can be a financial barrier for everyone. That’s why the government has proposed a new law to cut tuition fees in half for first-year students.

In addition, the government wants more people to opt for a job in education. That’s why for students in a teacher training programme, the government even wants to cut the tuition fees in half for the first 2 years of study. This change must start in the 2018 - 2019 school year. The House of Representatives and the Senate still have to approve the plans. **RCN/OCW will keep you informed about this.**



FIRST STEP TOWARDS IMPROVING SGB BUILDINGS



Masterplan SGB

The official opening of the Bonaire School Board’s gymnasiums took place at the end of March 2018. This occurred under the watchful eyes of Nolly Oleana (RCN-OCW department head), Mr. Edsel Cecilia (Bonaire government, Deputy of Society & Care) and Frans van Efferink (General Director SGB). The gyms were completed on October 20, 2017 and the school began using them.

Via this project, the first step towards improving SGB’s buildings has been taken. And there are still three building projects for the SGB in the pipeline:

1. Expansion of Liseo on the Kaya Amsterdam, so that the MAVO, HAVO and VWO can be housed here. This extension will be used starting in the 2018 - 2019 school year.
2. The new building for MBO will be ready for use in mid-2021/2022.
3. The new building for VMBO and the Special Apprenticeships will be ready for use in mid-2022.

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF AVAILABLE SUBSIDIES!

Did you know that schools and educational institutions in the Caribbean Netherlands are also eligible for subsidies from OCW? These are subsidy programmes that are implemented for OCW by the DUS-I foundation (Service to Implement Subsidies for Institutions - Dienst Uitvoering Subsidies aan Instellingen: DUS-I).

It concerns 2 types of subsidies:

- Specific subsidy programmes, intended for OCW-funded institutions with students, i.e. schools. You can apply for these subsidies for various types of initiatives: from equal opportunities in education to the installation of fast internet in primary and secondary education, to reducing the workload in primary education and much more.
- The General Regulation (ed.: “Kader regeling”) for OCW, SZW and VWS, for institutions in the educational sector without students. So, for example, for the EOZ (Education and Care Centre of Expertise) and implementing agencies of the social opportunity pathways for the youth (SKJ). This may involve institutional subsidies (for the institutions) and project subsidies (for specific activities).

For additional information, please contact:

OCWsubsidies@minvws.nl

Parnassusplein 5, PO Box 16006, 2500 BA The Hague
+31 70-340 5566 (option 2 for OCW)

The contact persons are:

- Juriene Atimadora (financial assistant):
j.m.g.atimadora@minocw.nl
- Imro Simmelink (manager):
vi.simmelink@minvws.nl

Inform yourself and select the subsidies relevant to you

On the **www.dus-i.nl** website you will find an overview of all subsidies that are provided via DUS-I. For each subsidy you will find a description, including the conditions and the application period.

Text and Photography: Elaine Marchena



IN EVERY EDITION OF “WHAT’S NEW” WE SPEND A DAY WITH AN EDUCATIONAL PROFESSIONAL IN THE CARIBBEAN NETHERLANDS. THIS TIME IT’S JAN MEIJER. HE TEACHES MATH (IN ENGLISH) TO THE “ACADEMIC 3” STUDENTS AND MATH AND ECONOMICS TO HAVO 4 AND 5 STUDENTS.

A DAY WITH

JAN MEIJER

TUESDAY, MAY 8TH

07:30 am > First hour at school

We spent the day with Jan on Tuesday, May 8: in the middle of the exam period.



Although Jan doesn’t have to teach the first class every day, he can always be found at school from at half past seven. Jan explains that he uses the free hours in his schedule to prepare the lessons, for his administrative tasks or to give extra lessons upon request. “And today I’m using the breaks in-between specifically to see how “my” havo 5 students are doing; they’re taking the final Geography exam this morning”.

08:30 am > Just before the Math Lesson

Jan is sitting with a few students on a wall, right in front of the class where the final Geography exams are today. At the moment Z’Dijah Romney is inside. A little later she comes out. “It went reasonably well, but I didn’t know everything ...”, she says when asked. A short while later, Geography teacher Etienne de Vries and the person from the Netherlands (ed.: the obligatory co-examiner from the Netherlands) come out and Z’Dijah hears her final mark. “A six!”, she says happily to Jan and her waiting classmates. “What a relief!”





09:00 am > Math B Lesson

Jan's first class of the day is a Math B lesson, for havo 4: the pre-exam class. "They're going to graduate next year, as the last havo exam class at this school", says Jan. "havo is now being phased out. What was called havo until now, is going to be called Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) in the future. "It's a small class: only four students, and according to Jan, they're a "nice group". The lesson is about algorithms. The students practice by doing a difficult problem. After some extra explanation, everyone understands. This lesson is in Dutch: these students are still in the Dutch system (this is the last group of students in the old havo system, who are taught in Dutch).



14:00 pm > Third Class

This is Jan's third class today. The 14:00 class seems to have been rescheduled and now a group of 5 havo students are preparing for their Math exam. Occasionally someone asks a question and Jan helps them. And there's one girl from the "Academic 3" class who originally should have had her lessons here. This is because she has to catch up with a Math test. With her, Jan speaks only English. He explains that her "Academic 3" class is the first group that will soon take the final exam in the English (CSEC) system.

14:30 pm > Team meeting

The team meeting for the entire havo team begins. The meeting is chaired by someone different each time; today it's the Dutch teacher, Maaikje Fischer. Ms. Cox from the CXC (Caribbean Examination Council) organisation is also present. She's on the island intermittently for several weeks to supervise the introduction of the CXC system for the lower grades at GvP.



16:30 pm > 'After work'

The workday is over! Almost every day Jan ends the day sitting on the terrace of the Scubaqua diving school, together with his wife Mia. They have a drink, talk about the day together and usually go for a quick swim. Jan says that he started teaching at GvP in 2014 after completing his career as a naval officer. "I've gotten used to it in the meantime and I enjoy it every day", he says. It's clear that the teaching is going well: in the past few years, he has repeatedly been honoured by his students during their graduation ceremonies. "And that's worth a lot to me", says Jan. "It's my goal to see the students leave the school with a diploma so they can have the best start possible in their following education. I don't see it as a burden, the extra hours that it takes sometimes. In fact, it's just fun to do and it gives me a lot of satisfaction!"

JAN HAS REPEATEDLY BEEN HONoured BY HIS STUDENTS DURING THEIR GRADUATION CEREMONIES. "AND THAT'S WORTH A LOT TO ME."