



Chester County  
Intermediate Unit  
Education Association

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## NEA's new guide for educators: The Puzzle of Autism

NEA is pleased to announce the availability of a new guide for educators entitled *The Puzzle of Autism*.

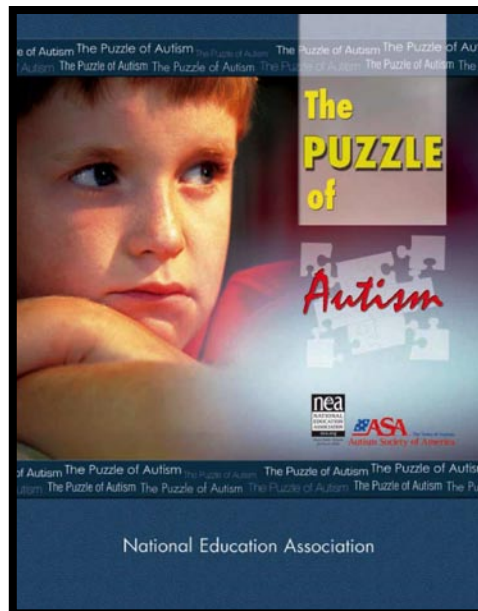
Across the country, the number of children diagnosed as having autism has increased substantially and many of these students are primarily educated in general education classrooms. How can general education teachers and other education professionals who are unfamiliar with autism and autism spectrum disorders (ASD) address the complex communication, social and learning needs of these children?

To assist educators in their daily work with children who have autism, NEA has produced a new resource in collaboration with the Autism Society of America, the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association and the National Association of School Psychologists.

Teachers and related service providers need this resource. *The Puzzle of Autism* is a succinct informational guide for all education personnel who work with students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). This 38-page guide explains common

autistic characteristics and suggests effective classroom strategies for improving communication, sensory, social, and behavioral skills.

To receive your complimentary copy email [gapsinfo@nea.org](mailto:gapsinfo@nea.org).



You can also download the PDF at <http://www.nea.org/specialed/images/autismpuzzle.pdf>

## Upcoming Events

— April 7 —

### Advisory/Rep Council

3 PM - ESC  
Downingtown, PA

— April 19 —

### SER Coordinated Bargaining

4:30 PM

### SER PACE Committee

5:15 PM

### SER Executive Committee

#### Meeting

7:00 PM



To submit information or an article for publication in *The Open Door*, send an e-mail to the editor at [alberttucker@verizon.net](mailto:alberttucker@verizon.net) or send via courier to Al Tucker at CAT Pickering

# Flexible Spending Account Meeting Dates

DATE	Time	Building Location	Room Number
April 17, 18, 19	10:00-4:00	CDC	Staff Lounge Room B202
April 24,25	10:00-4:00	CASE	Staff Development Room
April 28	12:00-4:00	Headstart	
May 2	12:00-2:00	CC Middle College	Administration Office
May 2	2:30-4:00	CC High School	Staff Meeting Room
May 15,16,17, 22, 23, 25	11:00-5:30	ESC	Cafeteria

## The Enrollment Deadline for Flexible Spending Account is June 1st, 2006!

If you have questions about enrollment in this plan please contact our Kades Margolis Representative  
 John McCauley • 610-971-1080  
 1-800-433-1826 Ext 126  
 e-mail: [jmccauley@4kmc.com](mailto:jmccauley@4kmc.com)

For information about current accounts in the Security Flex 125 Program the web site is [www.securityflex.com](http://www.securityflex.com)

Instructions say to click on the “Security Flex 125 Program” icon.

There is also a 24-hour interactive voice response system at 1-888-473-5572. Personalized telephone support hours are Monday -Friday 7:00 am - 5:00pm central time 1-888-662-3646.

certificate of non-compliant educators will become “Inactive.” The five-year notification will provide the forms and directions for an educator to appeal that status. If an educator files a valid and timely appeal, the educator’s certificate will remain active until the appeal is resolved. The educator will be able to continue employment as a professional educator during that time.

8. Act 5-2006 was passed February 3, 2006 and takes effect April 3, 2006. It waives Act 48 responsibilities for retired PA certified educators, and additionally waives Professional Development requirements for the first 180 days if a retiree returns to school service in a full-time position or returns to service due to an emergency or a teacher shortage. The responsibility for Act 48 requirements returns on the 181st day and continues until that educator returns to full retirement status. All educators with an inactive certificate may substitute up to 90 days/school year.

A second aspect of Act 5-2006 provides all PA certified education professionals access at no cost to the Department’s sponsored online programs of study. These are available through the Department’s website [www.pde.state.pa.us](http://www.pde.state.pa.us) using the links “Teaching in PA” and “Act 48 Professional Education.”

# ACT 48-1999 Update

www.psea.org

Subject: IMPORTANT ACT 48-1999 UPDATE INFORMATION

To: All LEAs, IUs, Vocational Technical Centers, Charter Schools, School Superintendents, Principals and Current & Former District Professional Employees

From: Division of Professional Development, Bureau of Teaching and Learning Support

This information responds to the majority of questions received by the Department's Division of Professional Development on Act 48. Other information about Act 48-1999, an earlier Question and Answer document and a copy of the law, are available at the website identified in the previous paragraph.

The following items provide the Key Information necessary to understand Act 48-1999 Professional Development and its related amendments.

1. Pennsylvania's continuing professional education law, Act 48-1999, does not impact the validity of a Pennsylvania certificate. An educator may have a valid certificate but the status is either "active/inactive." Only valid certificates in "active" status are appropriate for full-time employment in a PA public school.
2. Act 48 applies to all certified education professionals effective July 1, 2000 or beginning the date a certificate is awarded whether or not the educator is employed in education.
3. Act 48-1999 requires all education professionals to acquire 6 credits/180 hours/a combination of professional development hours/credits equivalent to 180 hours every 5 years to maintain an active certificate. Educators may view their records at [www.pde.state.pa.us](http://www.pde.state.pa.us) then selecting the link to Act 48 Reporting System and selecting the Educator Options box.
4. If requirements are not met the educator retains a valid certificate but it is placed on "Inactive" status. That educator may substitute teach up to 90 days each year on an inactive certificate but may not work full-time in a PA public school. Return to "active" status occurs when the Act 48 requirements are met. A letter is sent to the educator indicating return to active status.
5. The Department has free online programs of study available to all PA certified education professionals. More than 20 programs are now available for those working in education ranging from 15 to 30 hours in length. Eight programs have been modified for substitute teachers and others who do not have a classroom where they may implement a lesson and then submit it as the final product. The modified online programs are 15 hours in length.
6. Act 46-2005 was passed amending Act 48-1999 granting a Grace Period until April 30, 2006 to all educators certified prior to May 1, 2001, who did not meet the Act 48 requirements by the end of the first five-year period. Additionally, that law requires all certified educators to MAINTAIN A CURRENT ADDRESS in the Department of Education's database.

The forms for address change and/or name change may be found at [www.pde.state.pa.us](http://www.pde.state.pa.us) under "Forms" on the list found on the left hand side of the page. The Forms link provides access to the two forms needed. Each form must be printed, filled-in and sent to the address provided on the form. It is the educator's responsibility to maintain accurate information in the Department of Education.

7. Following the end of the "Grace Period", April 30, 2006 there will be a one-month administrative period for Professional Development approved providers to submit records to the Department. Five-year notification letters will be sent to all educators who have not met the Act 48-1999 Professional Development requirements in batches on successive Fridays in June beginning with June 9th. Thirty days after notification letters are distributed, the

# Computer Tech Tip: Turn Your Radio On! - Part One

By Al Tucker

I have spent a good deal of my professional life learning how to work with computer technologies. Before switching over to education, I witnessed the personal computer totally transform the printing and publishing industries. The way in which humans communicate, share information, learn, and do business has drastically changed in the past decade because of these technologies.

In many respects though, I consider myself an old-school guy. I'm passionate about radio and I always have been. I have grade-school memories of listening to Phillies spring training games on a red plastic transistor radio with small ear buds. I can still hear the voices of By Saam, Richie Ashburn and Bill Campbell in my mind. The fact that someone could be playing baseball in sunny Florida while snow was still melting up here in Philadelphia held great promise of spring and warmer weather approaching.

I still listen to the radio during daily commutes to work or whenever I'm in my car. My tastes have changed a little – my radio dial is usually tuned into NPR (National Public Radio) nowadays. Not a week goes by that I don't hear a story that I might use with one of the classes that I teach. The Internet provides radio access wherever a connection is available. Shows like *Morning Edition*, *Cartalk*, *All Things Considered*, and *Fresh Air* are only a few mouse clicks away. I have bookmarked as many radio stories as I have web sites in the past five years.

Listening to these clips on a personal computer can occur in a few different ways. For most users that means downloading a web browser plug-in helper application. The two most popular formats for this streaming audio are *RealPlayer* and *Windows Media Player*. Both of these helper applications work with web browsers like Firefox, Camino, or Explorer.

So far, both applications that I have mentioned are free. *RealPlayer* is one standard player and can be downloaded for free at [Real Player Download](#). *Windows Media Player* (WMP) is required on some sites and can be found at [Microsoft's website](#). Both links provided are for Apple's OSX operating system. One could also link to the Windows versions from these web pages. Both players have extended versions that have features not found in the basic



player – mostly the ability to save and edit the sound clips. Both *RealPlayer* and *WMP* can also be used for watching streaming video. After downloading the helper applications, follow the ReadMe directions for how-to-install the helper applications in your favorite browser.

Examples of radio broadcasts that deal with issues facing education today are the two links listed below:

*Joshua's Tough Questions For His Mother:*

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=5285066>

*Understanding Asbergers:*

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=5285721>

NPR's website has a searchable archives available at <http://www.npr.org/>

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