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The Council for Inclusive Education Newsletter

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President's Message



It is hard to believe 2017 has come and gone. It feels like summer blew in and blew out. A new school year began with exciting adventures and challenges. The council's year began, as it usually does, with our Celebrating

the Challenges conference. It was a great success. The conference was held in Edmonton at the Fantasyland Hotel this year. We were fortunate to have some amazing speakers like Shelley Moore, Chris Ulmer and Lisa Hilsenteger. Our conference committee did a tremendous job, and we are incredibly thankful for their hard work and dedication to providing CIE members and other teachers, support staff and parents with exceptional professional development.

As we welcome 2018, we look forward to new opportunities, and we are reminded that as educators our roles and responsibilities are constantly evolving. Report cards and IPPs seem to always be around the corner, and the diversity of our classrooms continues to challenge us. We have recently completed the update of our Diversity Kits, which will be available through regional councils and the ATA library. These kits will provide a snapshot of some of the challenges faced by some students in our schools.

In addition to new resources, we look forward to partnering with other councils and developing our workshops to meet the needs of our members. We hope that we will see and hear more from you throughout the year. What are some of the challenges, memorable moments and successful strategies you see in your classrooms? How can CIE continue to support your professional growth?

While our lives are incredibly busy, I hope you take time to celebrate the great work you do every day for your students. Often we are so overwhelmed by the numerous demands and challenges we face as educators that we forget or simply lose sight of the amazing work we are already doing.

I hope that 2017 was memorable and that your holidays were filled with love, family, friends and a bit of quiet. The council is very excited about our move to Canmore for the 2018 Celebrating the Challenges conference and also about several regional PD events. I look forward to the work ahead as your president and any opportunity to collaborate and work with you in the new year. Happy 2018!

Michelle Dow

Provincial Executive Council Report

Bargaining

As the bargaining agent for all teachers employed in Alberta's public education system, the Alberta Teacher's Association is engaged in bilevel negotiation with respect to salary, benefits and employment conditions with the government at central table bargaining and with local school boards.

Professional Development

- The new coordinator of Professional Development is Mark Swanson.
- Communities of Practice Inquiry Grant: Ten grants are offered for groups of teachers to develop a community of practice that will address an issue of professional relevance using an inquiry model. Applications are accepted between September and March. For more information, contact Gaylene Schreiber: gaylene.schreiber@ata.ab.ca, 780-447-9447 or 1-800-232-7208.
- The Committee on Convention Review is currently surveying teachers and will begin discussion groups to address and possibly reshape the current convention format across the province.
- Strategic planning grants are available for specialist councils.
- The Well-Being of Children and Youth Conference will be held on May 4, 2018, in Red Deer.

Government

Bill 28

Introduced by Education Minister David Eggen, this bill will make a variety of changes to the *School Act*. The bill includes proposed changes to enable the minister to set certification requirements for principals and superintendents; authorize the minister to establish standards for education service agreements; establish a common age of entry to kindergarten of five years of age by December 31; revise the process for establishing a separate school

district; and ensure that the government can provide clear and updated transportation eligibility criteria prior to the 2018/19 school year.

Bill 24

Introduced by Education Minister David Eggen, this bill sets out to strengthen existing legislation requiring schools to have a policy on GSAs and prohibits staff from telling parents that their children have joined such an organization.

SLAs (Student Learning Assessment)

In practice, teachers have had autonomy to decide whether they will use this instrument this year. Some teachers have used a part of the performance task to assist their students. The key takeaways are opportunity and latitude.

Campaigns

- The Political Engagement Committee is launching a political engagement campaign with MLAs that focuses on class size and diversity. The primary message is that class size + inclusion = complexity. #MyClassSizeIs #AbEd
- Public Interest Alberta has initiated a "Poverty to Progress" campaign. Please consider signing the petition. Read more at www.pialberta.org/from_poverty_to_progress.

Member Services

There has been an overall increase in call volume from teachers to Member Services. Of note, there has been an increase in calls regarding violence against teachers and their assistants.

Don Brookwell

Don Brookwell is District Representative for the Central South region, and can be contacted at don.brookwell@ata.ab.ca.

Proud to Be Celebrating the Challenges

I was very lucky to attend the annual 2017 ATA Council for Inclusive Education conference at the Fantasyland Hotel this past October as a regional council president, as an attendee and as a formal presenter. Ironically, despite having these three roles, it was the first time I had attended this annual conference. I had always wanted to go, but due to calendar conflicts, personal commitments or lack of professional development funds, I had been unable to attend. Colleagues attended and always came back with a renewed sense of commitment to their work and, ultimately, to their passion: inclusive education. This year the theme was “Celebrating the Challenges” and, as a teacher, I wanted to hear more.

My own experience did not disappoint! As I was somewhat new to the provincial council, I had been involved somewhat in the planning of the conference but did not have a full picture of how the event would unfold. I did know that there were many hands working feverishly behind the scenes, putting in many hours to ensure that the participants were renewed, informed and inspired. There were some glitches in the process, but with the dedication of the committee members, each detail was conquered and we had many people sign up for the event.

Early on, I had decided to work up the courage to apply to speak at such a large conference with many notable and well-qualified speakers. I filled out the application and hit *Send* before I had a chance to change my mind. I had presented previously at local teacher conventions, but this conference was a leap of faith due to its prestige and size. I wanted to share my own message of inclusion and the power of finding ways for parents to positively and actively be a part of their child’s educational process as much as possible. The best part was yet to come.

When I was notified that I was to present a breakout session, I felt both excitement and trepidation. It is a privilege to have people choose to hear you out of many other pertinent and timely presentations. I knew that we had many high-calibre presenters and wanted my presentation to meet the needs of any that attended my session.

Speaking of high-calibre presenters, I would be remiss not to rave about our preconference and keynote speaker, Shelley Moore. She had a unique message that spoke to true inclusion, based on her own training, professional experience and interaction with students. She spoke in a professional manner mixed with so much humour that I felt as though I could listen all day to her. I know that I was not alone in that sentiment—many of my colleagues came to the conference and each person had the same feedback. What a gift to an audience to have that kind of appeal. I highly recommend attending any of Shelley Moore’s sessions if you get the opportunity. She was one major highlight of the conference.

Because I was a CIE regional president, I had the opportunity to work as a moderator for other sessions. This kept me on my toes but gave me the opportunity to hear sessions I found very interesting—topics ranging from reference and regulation to how to incorporate art and nature into messy but meaningful work for primary and elementary students. I was so impressed with the wealth of knowledge and competence of the participants, ranging from classroom teachers to those deep into research and treatment.

Another highlight was listening to the story of a principal from Fort McMurray who took care of students and staff after the devastating wildfires that blazed through their area not so long ago. Her emotional presentation spoke to the heart of who we are as educators and what we may do in the face of the gravest of situations for the welfare of our students. She showed such wisdom and grace as she recalled her harrowing experience of trying to protect the students and get them safely to their families. She is a hero in my mind and made me proud to be a fellow educator.

It was finally time for me to make my own presentation. People started to trickle in and I was surprised and honoured when the chairs were full! I had no option to back out now, so I took a deep breath and began. (I am grateful to a few colleagues who came to support me through my presentation and sat

with encouraging faces, helping me to get started.) Once I started, the message came naturally and the audience seemed to be engaged and appreciative of my message. Upon finishing, I thanked them, very sincerely, for attending because there were many other excellent sessions to attend.

Afterwards, I had the best compliment that any speaker can hear, and that is a participant saying that she had so badly needed to hear this exact message and wanted to connect with me further. Having this colleague share with me some of her own personal and professional experiences, hopes and fears was what I will take away from this year's conference. We are in this together: wanting to find a way to genuinely "celebrate the challenges." This is how we

do it. We share our stories, open ourselves up to others, ask for help and ideas, laugh, cry, learn, listen, and get new insight and understanding.

I realized later that I would not have had that amazing experience of connection with my new friend and colleague had I not stepped out into the deep end and offered to lead a session at the conference. I encourage you, today, this week, this year, to find your own way to step out, make a connection and truly find ways to celebrate the challenges.

Carmen Moore

Carmen Moore, MEd, is an inclusive education coach with Peace Wapiti School Division 76 and president of the Northwest Regional Council for Inclusive Education.

Publishing Under the *Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA)*

The Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) requires consent to publish personal information about an individual. *Personal information* is defined as anything that identifies an individual in the context of the collection: for example, a photograph and/or captions, an audio or video file, artwork.

Some schools obtain blanket consent under FOIP, the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. However, PIPA and FOIP are **not** interchangeable. They fulfill different legislative goals. PIPA is the private sector act that governs the Association's collection, use and disclosure of personal information.

If you can use the image or information to identify a person in context (for example, a specific school, or a specific event), then it's personal information and you need consent to collect, use or disclose (publish) it.

Minors cannot provide consent and must have a parent or guardian sign a consent form. Consent forms must be provided to the Document Production editorial staff at Barnett House together with the personal information to be published.

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Notify the ATA privacy officer immediately of **any** incident that involves the loss of or unauthorized use or disclosure of personal information, by calling Barnett House at 780-447-9400 or 1-800-232-7208.

Maggie Shane, the ATA's privacy officer, is your resource for privacy compliance support.

780-447-9429 (direct)

780-699-9311 (cell, available anytime)

Connecting You to a World of Information!

Your ATA library has many excellent resources for teachers interested in inclusive education. Below is a list of the newest great titles available in our library. To find even more titles, try out our library catalogue (<http://library.teachers.ab.ca/>). Remember, no matter where you teach in the province, you have access to all of these excellent resources because we mail the materials out to you and prepay the shipping back. There is never any cost for using your ATA library!

Autism Spectrum Disorder in the Inclusive Classroom: How to Reach and Teach Students with ASD
Boroson, B. 2016. New York: Scholastic (371.9 B731)

Creating Autism Champions: Autism Awareness Training for Key Stage 1 and 2
Beaney, J. 2017. London, UK: Kingsley (371.94 B367)

Designing Gifted Education Programs and Services: From Purpose to Implementation
Peters, S J, and D Brulles. 2017. Waco, Texas: Prufrock (371.95 P483)

Educating Children with Velo-Cardio-Facial Syndrome (Also Known as 22q11.2 Deletion Syndrome and DiGeorge Syndrome)
Cutler-Landsman, D. 2nd ed. 2013. San Diego, Calif: Plural (618.920042 C989)

Integrating Intensive Interaction: Developing Communication Practice in Services for Children and Adults with Severe Learning Difficulties, Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties and Autism
Mouriè, A, and J McKim. 2018. London, UK: Routledge (371.9 M929)

Learning Disorders: A Response to Intervention Perspective
Westwood, P. 2017. London, UK: Routledge (371.9 W534)

Motivating Children with Specific Learning Difficulties: A Teacher's Practical Guide
Elbeheri, G, et al. 2018. London, UK: Routledge Taylor & Francis (371.9 E37)

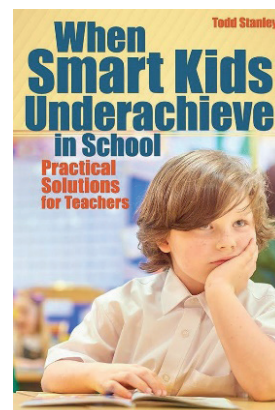
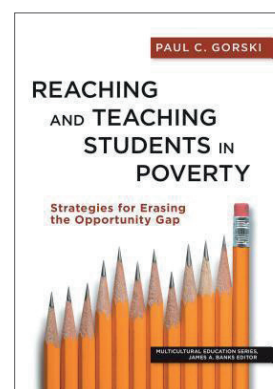
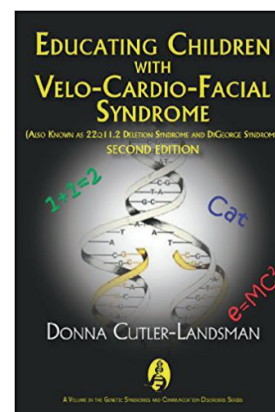
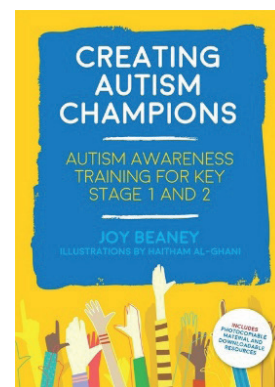
On the Social and Emotional Lives of Gifted Children
Cross, T L. 5th ed. 2018. Waco, Texas: Prufrock (371.95 C951)

Reaching and Teaching Students in Poverty: Strategies for Erasing the Opportunity Gap
Gorski, P C. 2017. New York: Teachers College Press (371.82694 G674)

A Teacher's Guide to Adapted Physical Education: Including Students with Disabilities in Sports and Recreation
Block, M E. 4th ed. 2016. Baltimore, Md: Brooks (371.904486 B651)

When Smart Kids Underachieve in School: Practical Solutions for Teachers
Stanley, T. 2018. Waco, Texas: Prufrock (371.102 S789 2018)

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