

# INSIDE *inclusion*

The Council for Inclusive Education Newsletter

Volume 1, Number 2 | July 2016

## The State of Inclusion in Alberta

Alberta teachers have been consistently and insistentlly describing the conditions of inclusion as being one of their biggest areas of concern. Responding to this concern, the ATA's 2013 Annual Representative Assembly passed a resolution to strike a Blue Ribbon Panel on Inclusive Education in Alberta Schools, which would facilitate an arm's-length investigation and report on this topic of critical importance. The panel was charged with reviewing the data on the current state of education in Alberta and making recommendations that would ensure that inclusion occurs in ways that support all learners.

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## Modifying the Curriculum for Students with Moderate to Severe Disabilities

In Alberta, we want every student in our schools to succeed, feel valued and become a productive citizen. Our students with disabilities deserve the same opportunities as their able-bodied peers. Teachers embrace diversity in their classrooms and want all students to reach their full potential. We believe in a system that allows them to do this through inclusion. However, in practice, teachers often find themselves in a position in which they need additional support in teaching students with moderate to severe disabilities and find they are hindered in their ability to provide quality instruction.

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This art work was created by Will Carpentier, a high school student from Red Deer Public Schools, and is reproduced with permission.

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**Preconference**

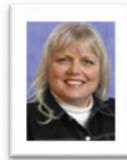
**Dr Bryan Kolb**

Dr Kolb is among the world's leading researchers in an area that is critical to advancing the brain health of Canadians.



**Dr Robbin Gibb**

Learn about how early experience influences brain development and overall physical and behavioural outcomes, and what effect those changes have on subsequent experience.



**Keynotes and Featured Speakers**

**Dr Bryan Kolb**

**Jennifer Buchanan**

An in-demand keynote speaker and highly regarded trailblazer in the music therapy field, Jennifer has, over the course of the past 25 years, witnessed the remarkable power of music to transform the lives of thousands of people.



**Conference Strands**

1. **Mental Health/Behaviour** (trauma, anxiety, depression, neglect, mindfulness etc)
2. **Inclusionary Practices** (ASD, Gifted, ELL, FASD, ADHD etc)
3. **UDL** (differentiation, personalization, learning coaches) and technology (SMART, AAC, adaptive equipment etc)
4. **Diversity** (multi-disciplinary teaming/collaboration, girls, boys, cultural, FNMI)



*Additional speaker information will be featured on the Council for Inclusive Education website.*

**Social Events**

**Thursday Evening—Wine and Cheese—ART and APP walk**

**Friday Evening—Join us for our favourite band—Fun in the Front Seat—Dinner and Dance**

**Theme—“It’s a Beach Out There!” Let’s have some fun while we soak up the sun and play in the sand!**

<b>Preconference Rates</b>	<b>By Sept 15</b>	<b>After Sept 15</b>
Inclusive Education Council member	\$150.00	\$200.00
Not an Inclusive Education Council member (includes one-year membership/subscription to CIE)	\$175.00	\$225.00
Individuals ineligible for specialist council membership	\$300.00	\$400.00
<b>Conference Rates</b>		
Inclusive Education Council member (regular and subscription)	\$275.00	\$325.00
Not an Inclusive Education Council member (includes one-year membership/subscription to CIE)	\$300.00	\$350.00
Individuals ineligible for specialist council membership	\$550.00	\$600.00
Student (includes one-year membership to CIE)	\$150.00	\$175.00

**More Information**

**Registration opens** Tuesday, May 17, 2016

**Phone:** 403-615-5212 (please call after 4 pm)

**Contact** Janis Bekar, conference director, at [conferencesouth1@cieducation.ca](mailto:conferencesouth1@cieducation.ca) or Darci Fulton, program director, at [celebratethechallenges2011@gmail.com](mailto:celebratethechallenges2011@gmail.com)

**Visit:** <http://specialeducation.ab.ca>

**Inclusive Ed:** <https://cieducation.ca/>



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## President's Message



The year, as always, has flown by. Teachers are busier than ever meeting the needs of students in classrooms. Occasionally when I hear teachers discuss how busy they are and the work that they are doing, they seem tired or overwhelmed. More often, though, when I ask colleagues how they are doing, they respond that they are busy and have so much on their plate—with a huge smile and a glow in their eye!

"It is the end of an exciting unit and the kiddos are in the middle of finishing up their projects."

"We just completed rescheduling in our school so students who need extra help can get enhanced support with reading."

Teachers love the work that they do! They love the impact they make; they love seeing young faces pleased with finally understanding the new concept they have been working on. This love of teaching and learning and meeting the needs of students is evident in their faces, their voices and their eyes. Teachers work hard and long hours, and some people may think the rewards are minimal. The teachers I talk to find the rewards of teaching immense! I hope that each of you has time this summer to relax, recharge and reflect. Sometimes, during the busyness of the school year, it is difficult to remember why we got into teaching and some days it is challenging to recall how much we love doing what we do. So my wish for each of you is to enjoy your summer, kick back and relax, read an enjoyable book, do something that you love and reflect on the amazing impact you have, each day, on the young people you teach. You do make a difference!

Thank you for all of the important work each of you does every day in classrooms and in schools. Thank you to the executive of the Council for Inclusive Education and all of your work supporting the needs of teachers in Alberta.

Over the summer, you may want to think about a couple of things for next year. Remember that the ATA Educational Trust supports teachers financially to attend professional development. Visit the ATA website to learn more about the ATA Educational Trust. You can always use it to attend the Council for Inclusive Education's conference in October. Celebrating the Challenges is back in Kananaskis! Also, think of a colleague who works extra hard and deserves to be recognized for his or her hard work. Consider nominating a colleague for one of the Council's Inclusive Education Awards. The deadline comes quickly in the spring, so begin now. Visit our council website to read about each of the awards and to begin the nomination process.

Have a great summer!

*Hayley Christen*

# Editor's Message



## Presuming Competence

Presuming competence in students means that we hold the belief that, regardless of their disability, students are able to understand even if they cannot show you their understanding in a recognizable way.

Sometimes there is an attitude that academic subjects are far beyond the student's understanding. Students with complex needs are often included in general classrooms for social reasons only. They participate in noncore classes but are dismissed from academic classes because there is an assumption that they will not be able to understand any of the material presented.

There may be a view that if students have limited speech, motor difficulties or cognitive disabilities, they are unable to learn academic content in a classroom. As we cannot always know what a student can learn, we must presume competence in all students in the absence of any evidence that they cannot learn. In my position as a learning strategist, I have witnessed a Down syndrome student with limited vocabulary make detailed projects with support from her teacher and EA and present her project to her class.

I work directly with students who have complex needs by supporting each child to be successful in an inclusive environment. In my coaching role I facilitate opportunities for students to have specialized programming in and, when necessary, out of the classroom. I run a daily literacy skills class with six of these students from Grade 2 to Grade 6 with their education assistants for one period every day. We have seven adults and six students in the room. Sometimes students have to leave the group for a quick break, others make loud noises and some cannot sit for more than a couple of minutes. Often, some of the students have to have sound-reducing headphones on to mask the noise in the room. Without skipping a beat, our lesson of the day continues. I have often wondered if

the students will learn or retain the concepts we are teaching.

What I have learned is that they connect to a group. They sometimes sought each other out at recess; they could say each other's name in the group even if they did not know their own classmates' names. They also learned how to wait their turn and sing songs together. I recently had an end-of-year meeting with a parent whose son is autistic with limited speech. She informed us that one day at home last week he kept writing a word out and trying to explain what he wanted to make. She realized the word was *jelly*; we had taught the students through visual pictures and food to make a jelly sandwich, and he wanted to make a jelly sandwich at home.

There is power in the words that we teach and the actions that we take. We must presume that everyone we interact with has the competence and abilities to understand, and we must all be willing to work to support each child's ability to function in our complex society in his or her own unique ways.

In a TEDx talk, Shelley Moore depicts one of her first experiences as a new special education teacher in a high school. She describes in detail her experience with a very complex-needs young man and how she managed to get into his world and understand him. In her words, "We have to believe that all people are competent. We have to trust that all people can learn because what I realize is that if you don't presume competence that it's us who are the people who are disabled."<sup>1</sup>

*Kelly Huck*

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<sup>1</sup> "Under the Table—The Importance of Presuming Competence." Shelley Moore. [www.youtube.com/watch?v=AGptAXTV7m0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AGptAXTV7m0) (accessed June 30, 2016).

# The State of Inclusion in Alberta



Alberta teachers have been consistently and insistently describing the conditions of inclusion as being one of their biggest areas of concern. Responding to this concern, the ATA's 2013 Annual Representative Assembly passed a resolution to strike a Blue Ribbon Panel on Inclusive Education in Alberta Schools, which would facilitate an arm's-length investigation and report on this topic of critical importance. The panel was charged with reviewing the data on the current state of education in Alberta and making recommendations that would ensure that inclusion occurs in ways that support all learners. This article provides adapted excerpts from the research

report, entitled *The State of Inclusion in Alberta Schools* (Alberta Teachers' Association 2015).<sup>1</sup>

In collaboration with researchers from the University of Alberta, the Blue Ribbon Panel on Inclusive Education in Alberta Schools conducted a study focused on better understanding the current state of inclusion in Alberta schools by gathering information from teachers and administrators. Researchers used the data collected to assist the panel in recommending ways to improve teaching and learning in the classroom.

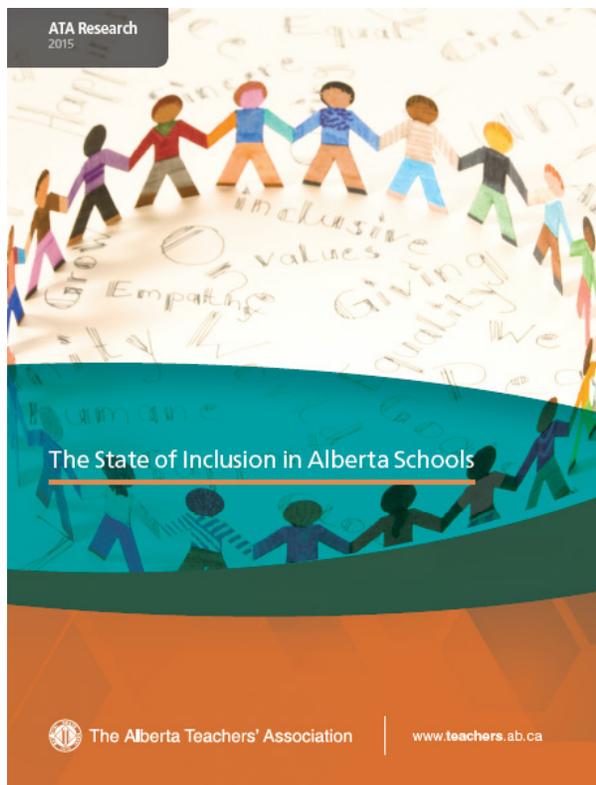
Researchers from Evaluation and Research Services at the Faculty of Extension, University of Alberta, were contracted to conduct a study to capture the experiences of Alberta teachers and administrators. The study, which used a mixed-methods research approach, included the following:

1. Two identical online submission tools—one for which participants were randomly selected from the active ATA membership, and one open to all ATA members who self-selected their participation.
2. Two focus groups that took place in person—each focus group included participants with a range of teaching assignments and represented urban, suburban and rural environments.
3. Four telephone interviews with superintendents—the interviewees were from four different areas in the province and, again, represented urban, suburban and rural environments.

The self-selected survey link was advertised through the ATA and garnered 1,125 responses. The randomly selected sample consisted of 295 participants, for a total of 1,420 surveys completed by Alberta teachers and administrators.

The report outlines four key findings based on the research conducted:

- 1 The full report can be accessed on the Alberta Teachers' Association website at [www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca). For further information on this report, please contact Joni Turville, executive staff officer, Professional Development, at [joni.turville@ata.ab.ca](mailto:joni.turville@ata.ab.ca).



## Key Finding 1: Classrooms Are Large, Complex Communities

Participants frequently described the increasing size and complexity of Alberta classrooms. The number of children with whom teachers worked varied, but the classroom size and the level and diversity of student needs clearly affect the extent to which teachers can attend to each student's needs.

The size and complexity of classrooms affect teacher workload—teachers need to prepare and implement in-class supports, and complete a large amount of paperwork associated with IPPs and other modifications. Despite highlighting such challenges, participants' responses also indicate that teachers want to attend to students' diverse needs. Overall, though, the results from the survey and focus groups emphasize that classroom size and composition constitute a major factor in the capacity of schools to implement inclusion in a way that supports all learners.

## Key Finding 2: Supports and Resources for Inclusion Are in Decline

The ATA has investigated inclusive education in the past. As the government engaged in a consultation process through *Setting the Direction* (Alberta Education 2009), the ATA produced a research publication, *Success for All: The Teaching Profession's Views on the Future of Special Education in Alberta*, in 2009. The research consisted of focus groups and a survey (conducted in 2007) of 217 participants that investigated contemporary topics related to inclusion. Given the little research available on inclusion in Alberta, the panel determined that it would be useful to replicate some of the questions asked in the 2007 survey and to compare the data to determine shifts or consistencies in the results. In particular, this allowed for a comparison of perceived levels of support over time. To support analysis, Figure 8 consolidates the results of questions that were included in both studies.

For each area of support, the responses in 2014 show increased dissatisfaction in comparison with the 2007 study's responses, indicating that overall satisfaction with supports and resources is significantly declining. Reinforcing this shift toward dissatisfaction, the open-ended question responses and focus groups

for the 2014 study noted decreasing satisfaction in relation to supports and resources for inclusion as a major trend.

## Key Finding 3: Multiple, Multifaceted Supports Are Required

Participants suggested that the level of supports and services must increase greatly to ensure that all students receive what they need in order to learn. As might be expected with apparent declining supports and resources for inclusion, teachers' level of satisfaction with specific supports is low. Multiple, multifaceted supports are required for inclusion, from accessible facilities to assistive technologies to time for professional collaboration.

Overall, participants' responses indicate that teachers require more supports in multiple forms—educational assistants; time for collaboration, planning and paperwork; and specialized resources and training—in order to address the learning needs of their students. Stable, adequate funding may help to address impediments to inclusion, but, as participants suggested, supports need to be multifaceted in order to address diverse needs.

## Key Finding 4: Teachers Value the Ideals of Inclusion

Despite the challenges noted in the first three findings, participants expressed support for the ideals of inclusion. In particular, in response to two survey questions asking specifically about successes experienced with inclusion, teachers stressed how inclusive education promotes belonging and celebrates diversity. For instance, many participants cited students' increased acceptance of peers with diverse abilities as a key success of inclusion.

In addition to identifying successes, participants provided open-ended feedback describing what they felt were the reasons for the successes they had experienced with inclusive education. Availability of adequate supports and resources was the most frequently mentioned reason, followed by other students accepting students with special needs and then by schools and teachers creating an environment and culture of acceptance.

## Conclusion

Positive possibilities for inclusion exist, but shared vision, leadership, research and evidence, resources, teacher professional growth, time, and community engagement are necessary to facilitating effective implementation.

Hundreds of teachers participated in the study of the Blue Ribbon Panel on Inclusive Education in Alberta Schools, contributing narrative responses that spoke to the importance of meeting student needs. Their voices were strong and the study results are clear—the ideals of inclusion are not in question, but the conditions required to support all students in the system are inconsistent and inadequate.

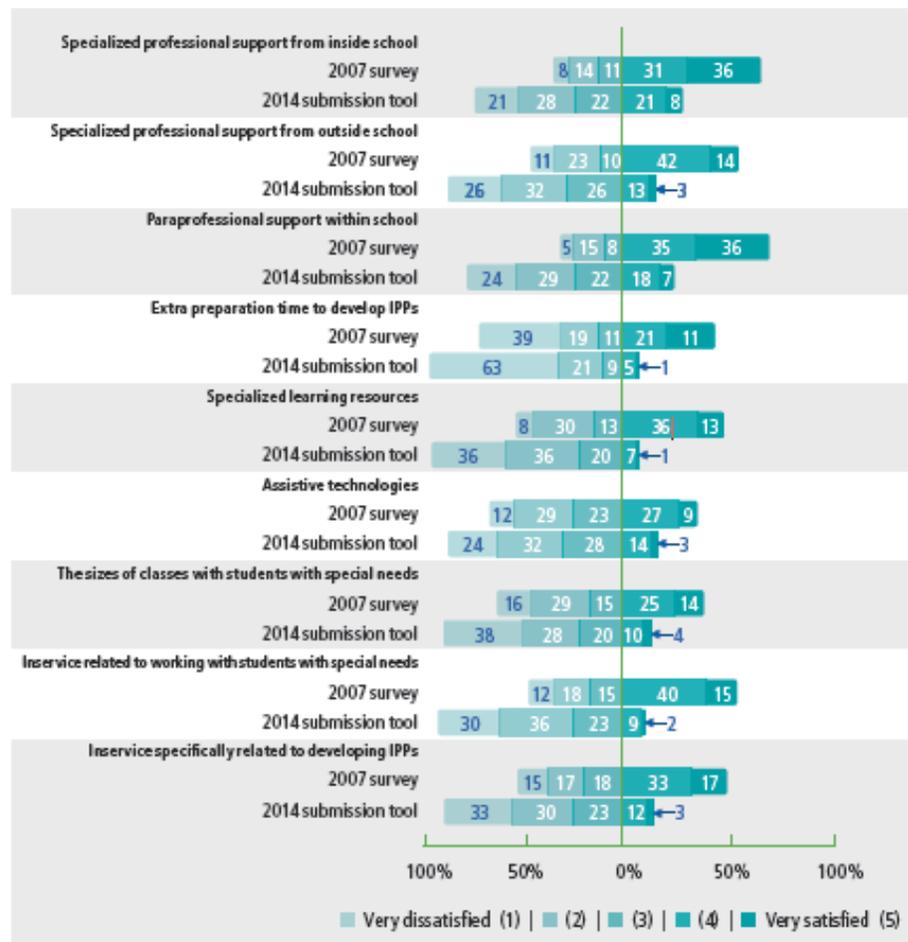
Creating an equitable, inclusive society in Alberta begins with the successful implementation of an inclusive education system. To facilitate this,

comprehensive short-, medium- and long-term plans to improve inclusive education must be put into place. As well, stakeholders must consider a systematic way of collecting data to evaluate the inclusive education model. We can only discern whether inclusion has been successful if stakeholders recognize a common aim and work together to reach it.

The issues surrounding inclusion are complex, but the opportunities are great and the implications are far-reaching. To stand behind the students that represent the future of our province, we must prioritize thoughtful planning and meaningful action to support inclusion.

Alberta teachers have spoken and will continue to speak until they are heard by all stakeholders who share responsibility in making inclusive education successful.

*Joni Turville  
ATA Staff Advisor*



**Figure 8.**  
Comparison of satisfaction with supports and resources in 2007 and 2014

# PEC on CIE



There are a few areas that are of interest to all Association membership, and below are items I would particularly like to highlight for members of the Council for Inclusive Education.

## Ensure That You Have an Online ATA Account

The Members Only area of the Association website is restricted and not accessible to the public. Given that the Members Only area houses vital tools, services and information, there are many reasons for ATA members to get an online ATA account and keep it updated. Here are six great ones:

### 1. Get bargaining updates

When the bargaining of collective agreements is imminent or under way, regular updates and other information critical to keeping you informed of developments will be posted in the Members Only section of the Association website. All collective agreements between ATA bargaining units and their respective school jurisdictions expire August 31, 2016. There is also a bargaining blog that you can read to follow the latest information on bargaining.

### 2. Vote on provincial collective agreements

Ratification votes by teachers on the provincial collective agreements negotiated between the Alberta Teachers' Association and the Teachers' Employer Bargaining Association will be conducted exclusively online. Get your online ATA account to be sure you are able to vote. A ratification vote is expected to take place in 2016.

### 3. Vote in ATA elections

Provincial Executive Council conducts the business of the Association and is made up of 20 members, 18 of whom are elected by you. Council listens to and represents teachers from across the province and brings their voices to the table when determining Association strategies and actions.

General elections for all Council positions are held every two years and are conducted exclusively online, as are by-elections, which take place as necessary. Having an online ATA account is required to vote. The Association's next general election takes place in spring 2017.

### 4. Use ATA library online resources and databases

The ATA library has an extensive collection of books, periodicals, videos and other materials focusing on educational research and professional development for teachers. Library services and materials are available in both French and English. Get your online ATA account and log into the ATA library catalogue to reserve books or videos. The ATA library has a fantastic collection of resources for inclusive schools and classrooms.

### 5. Get no-cost ATA specialist council memberships

As a benefit of ATA membership, active members are entitled to join one specialist council of their choice each year at no cost. Specialist councils promote the development of specialized professional expertise. Each of the 21 councils is operated by a team of volunteer teacher members who contribute their time, talent and enthusiasm to developing materials and organizing events that assist in gathering ideas, sharing information and building capacities among ATA members. Encourage your colleagues to join a council if they have not done so.

### 6. Print your own ATA member card

The Association launched online self-serve membership card distribution in 2016. With an online ATA account, you have the convenience of printing your own ATA member card from the Association website when you need it. ATA member cards are useful when your identification as a teacher or member of an association is needed to attend events, receive discounts or be eligible for other offers from retailers and service providers.

## Speak Truth to Power

Speak Truth to Power (STTP), a global program of the organization known as Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights, is a multifaceted human rights education resource for schools that uses the experiences of courageous human rights defenders to educate and inspire students to take positive action. Issues covered range from crimes against humanity and children's rights activism to Indigenous self-determination and citizen participation.

In summer 2015, a Canadian adaptation, appropriately titled *Speak Truth to Power Canada, Defenders for Human Rights* will be accessible to students around the world on the Internet in English and French, with some lessons available in Indigenous languages (Cree, Mohawk and Inuktitut).

This is a collaborative partnership project with Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights, led by the Canadian

Teachers' Federation with the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, the Assembly of First Nations and the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, and focuses on Canadians that are making a difference at home and abroad.

The goal is to facilitate the teacher's task of informing and enabling students to self-identify locally as human rights defenders on issues of importance in their very own communities. We encourage all Canadian teachers to share Malala's advice with their students: "It is possible for every one of us to change the world."

Descriptions of 12 people who have defended human rights in Canada and lesson plans for teachers are available at <http://sttpcanada.ctf-fce.ca>. Current resources are available for Grades 5–12; the project is continually evolving, so check back for new materials, which will be added regularly.

*Diane Sellars-Myshchyshyn*



[Français](#)

# SPEAK TRUTH TO POWER CANADA

DEFENDERS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

# PARLER VRAI AU POUVOIR CANADA

À LA DÉFENSE DES DROITS DE LA PERSONNE



# Regional Updates

## Calgary

Another year has come to an end. It is amazing how quickly time flies by. This year has been full of amazing professional development. Our first workshop was a morning spent with Wayne Hammond; participants learned about the Resiliency Model and how building a strength-based perspective and practice produces positive changes in the way students think and feel about themselves, in addition to increasing our own understanding of our students and how we work with them. In the new year, we took time to understand the Zones of Regulation, presented by Christina Nykyforuk. Participants had an opportunity to learn how to bridge the gap between emotional regulation and sensory regulation, and to go through the Zones framework and resources useful in supporting students, parents and school staff. We followed this up with a workshop in the spring on mental health and autism spectrum disorder: Managing Anxiety and Other Mood Disorders in Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), with Katelyn Lowe. Dr Lowe discussed effective interventions for managing mental health and mood disorders in individuals with ASD. During this workshop, we were also able to successfully Skype a participant in from Lethbridge. This was the first time we had used Skype to connect someone to a workshop presentation.

As we plan for the 2016/17 school year, we are seeking more feedback from members and participants. We would like to hear about your experiences, strategies and needs working with students. We are hoping to have members share their knowledge during the school year to support our community growth and development. Please send comments and feedback to [calgarypresident@cieducation.ca](mailto:calgarypresident@cieducation.ca).

As this year comes to an end, I must say “So long for now” as I move into the past president position and turn the reigns over to our president-elect, Naomi Bell. I have enjoyed the past two years working on behalf of our membership and I look forward to new and innovative ways we can work together in the future.

*Michelle M Dow  
President, CIE Calgary Regional*

The 2015/16 school year has been one of great opportunities and momentum for the CIE Calgary Regional. Under Michelle’s leadership, we were able to offer many meaningful PD opportunities for our membership and have engaged our members in rich discussion about what PD supports they are looking for in order to expand their practice. I am so excited to be able to build on this momentum as I enter my term as president and am looking forward to the work we will do together over the next two years.

*Naomi Bell  
President-Elect, CIE Calgary Regional*

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## South

The South Regional Council for Inclusive Education hosted a session at teachers’ convention and two workshops this spring.

The first workshop was Good Sense: Going Past the Basics, presented by local occupational therapists Danielle Pluth, of Advance OT, and Allison Carrol, of Prairie Rose School Division. The presentation reviewed the basics of Good Sense, an inclusive program that trains teachers to look at the classroom environment, routines and expectations to help students achieve and maintain the “just right” state for learning and step-by-step implementation of sensory strategies and tools in their classroom at a universal level that benefits all children and students. We have students in our classrooms who also need targeted and specialized support from an occupational therapist. The presenters discussed the science behind how the sensory system affects self-regulation and motor skills. They went into more detail about the how the vestibular system (one of the seven senses) affects not only balance, but also the eye movements required for reading and writing. Think about how you automatically close your eyes when you are dizzy. Think about how some people can ride a roller coaster but can’t handle spinning rides. Some people demonstrate a hyporesponsive vestibular system; they are in constant motion; they are risk takers,

jumping on beds and spinning in chairs; they enjoy being upside down; and they often bump into objects. Others are hyperresponsive; they avoid movement like playing on a playground, have unrealistic fears of falling, dislike their feet leaving the ground, dislike swings, are easily startled by others and appear clumsy. It is important to follow the direction of an occupational therapist when working on changing brain patterns; however, there are some universal strategies that classroom teachers can use that will benefit students' vestibular systems at a universal level.

The second workshop we hosted was *Rage Age: How to Understand, Reach and Connect with Angry Adolescent Girls*, presented by Ana Schlosser, MS, RPsych (Prov), NBCC, LPC. We learned about the aggression cycle, which includes physical aggression, verbal aggression, social aggression and property damage. Girls most often engage in verbal aggression and social aggression. Verbal aggression includes verbal threats of physical aggression, hostile teasing and name calling. Social aggression can be verbal or nonverbal and includes relationship manipulation, spreading rumours and social exclusion. Ana spoke about the importance of learning how to be a champion of and creating a dream team for these aggressive girls in our classrooms. Strategies might include

- providing opportunities for belonging—look for the “lonely” girls and get them engaged;
- teaching specific peers to defend victims;
- teaching girls to interrupt malicious gossip;
- addressing girl-fighting when you see it;
- supporting the “mean girls” with empathic responses;
- finding the “floater” who has worth in many groups and teaching her to defend victims;
- supporting the moms of mean girls—forty-year-old women and adolescent girls are not that different; and
- because our education system sets up for winners/losers, good/bad or popular/outcasts, creating ways to mix the two.

Ana reminded us that what we do matters! The belief that we can be helpful has the most impact on success.

The South East Regional Council for Inclusive Education is always looking for new members and welcomes your input into the professional development opportunities we provide for our membership.

*Joanne Stockman*  
*President*

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## North

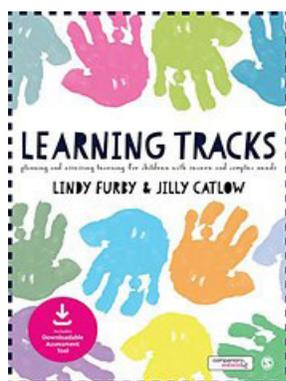
The North Council for Inclusive Education Regional partnered with local occupational therapists Michelle Dechaine and Kiersten Walls to provided educators with two separate full-day sessions on the Zones of Regulation program. Both sessions were well attended—more than 140 teachers, support staff and administrators from the North Regional participated.

Next year we hope to continue to provide and support our educators with knowledge to improve inclusive education practices in our classrooms. We would love to hear suggestions from our members on professional development ideas for next year. Please e-mail [northpresident@cieducation.ca](mailto:northpresident@cieducation.ca).

*Rhonda Kelly*  
*President*

# New from the ATA Library

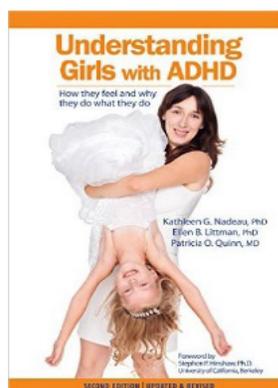
So many topics, so little time to read! But now that summer is here, you might just find a little time ... but where are those books? Don't despair at the thought of long summer months away from your favourite educational authors. Your ATA library is open all summer long! You can request materials or ask for articles on any topic and we will send them to your home in a flash. It's time to visit our library page (<http://library.teachers.ab.ca>) and see what other gems we have waiting for you.



***Learning Tracks:  
Planning and Assessing  
Learning for Children  
with Severe and Complex  
Needs***

Furby, Linda and Jilly  
Catlow. 2016. London,  
UK: Sage (371.2 F983)

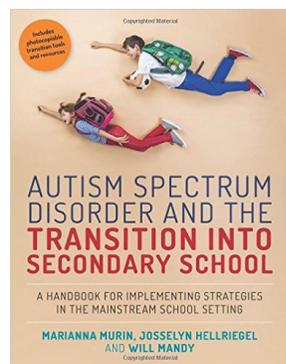
Created for the classroom by two special education teachers, this book works as a planning and tracking resource to support students with complex needs in the classroom.



***Understanding Girls  
with ADHD: How They  
Feel and Why They Do  
What They Do***

Nadeau, Kathleen et al.  
2015. Silver Springs, Md:  
Advantage Books  
(618.92 N134)

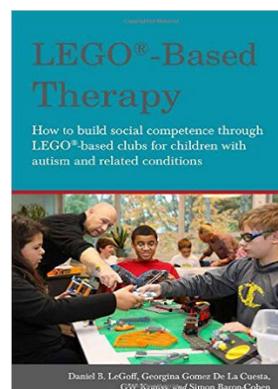
A well-written book that discusses the complexity of ADHD in both girls and women and how it differs from what is generally seen in males.



***Autism Spectrum  
Disorder and the  
Transition into  
Secondary School: A  
Handbook for  
Implementing Strategies  
in the Mainstream  
School Setting***

Murin, Marianna et al.  
2016. London, UK:  
Kingsley (371.94 M977)

The authors provide a guide to creating individualized transition plans for each student and many practical resources for supporting students on the spectrum.



***LEGO-Based Therapy:  
How to Build Social  
Competence Through  
LEGO-Based Clubs for  
Children with Autism  
and Related Conditions***

LeGoff, Daniel B et al.  
2014. London, UK:  
Kingsley (618.9289 L516)

Following the principle that “the best kind of therapy is when it’s so much fun that the child doesn’t know it’s happening,” the authors present a guide to building social competence learning into a fun and interesting club for kids.

# ATA Specialist Council Conference Grants (\$500)

Each year, the Alberta Teachers' Association Educational Trust awards a number of grants to help defray the costs associated with attending an ATA specialist council conference. Eligible expenses include registration, accommodation, fuel and food. Only expenses not covered by other grants will be considered for compensation. To apply for this grant, please complete the online application form.

To qualify for a grant, applicants must

- register or plan to register for an ATA specialist council conference,
- take full advantage of other sources of funding available,
- not be a conference organizer,
- not have received a Trust bursary or grant in the past three years and
- have completed and submitted to the ATA Educational Trust by September 30 a grant application form (only one form will be accepted from any applicant).



From left: Didi Heer, Heather Kovach, Dave Cracknell, Rose Marie Sackela, Kim Dewar, Dania Hill, Donna Armstrong, Roxanne Holmes, and Dr. Gaylene Schreiber

The online application form is available at [www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca)—go to Alberta Teachers' Association > For Members > Programs and Services > Grants, Awards and Scholarships > ATA Educational Trust. A screenshot of the online application is below. The application is only one page and is a clickable PDF document that can be submitted online.

In October, the names of all eligible applicants are entered into a draw and a set number of names are selected at random. School jurisdictions, ATA locals and specialist councils are notified of the results. The September 30 deadline is strictly applied. Faxed or e-mailed applications will not be accepted.

Successful candidates will receive a claim form in October. Once they have attended the conference, they will need to submit the form **along with original receipts** for the expenses they incurred.

## ATA EDUCATIONAL TRUST

### Application for \$500 grant

**Submission deadline: September 30, 2016**

The ATA Educational Trust is a charitable organization dedicated to the professional growth of Alberta teachers. The Association's 21 specialist councils were created to foster the professional development of teachers interested in common curriculum or specialty areas. Through its grant program the Trust awards a number of grants to help defray the costs associated with attending **Association specialist council conferences in 2016/17**.

**\*Applications for other events or conferences are not eligible.**

For a chance to receive this grant, complete this application form and mail it to the Trust at the address below. Applications must be received at the close of business hours on or before September 30. Faxes and e-mails will not be accepted.

**CONDITIONS**  
**—Neither conference organizers nor anyone who has received a Trust bursary or grant in the past three years (excluding the year it was granted) is eligible to apply.**  
 —In October 2016, the names of 30 (or more) recipients will be drawn from the list of qualified applicants. The names of the successful applicants will be posted on the Trust webpage. ATA local associations and specialist councils will be notified.  
 —The successful applicants will receive a claim form to submit to the Trust Administrator after attendance at the conference. Original receipts for expenses that were not reimbursed by other groups must be attached to the claim form.

Name of applicant: \_\_\_\_\_ Certificate #: \_\_\_\_\_  
 School or workplace: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Home address: \_\_\_\_\_ City/town: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Postal code: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone numbers: \_\_\_\_\_ (home) \_\_\_\_\_ (school)  
 ATA specialist council: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Conference date: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

**List expenses that will not be covered by the school, school board, ATA local or government.**

DATE \_\_\_\_\_ SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

Entry by application in the above draw is voluntary. The collection, use and disclosure of the personal information requested above is for the purposes of 1) determining applicants' eligibility to enter the draw; 2) advising all applicants of draw results, and 3) publishing the winners' names, as provided for by the Personal Information Protection Act.

PLEASE TYPE, PRINT AND SEND YOUR COMPLETED FORM BY MAIL TO THE ADDRESS BELOW:

Kim Dewar  
ATA Educational Trust  
11010 142 Street NW, Edmonton, Alberta T5N 2R1

# Alberta Council for Exceptional Children



## Providing Resources and Services to Professionals

Greetings from the Alberta unit of the Council for Exceptional Children (ACEC). My name is Shawn Crawford and I am the president of the Alberta CEC. I want to take this opportunity to introduce CEC to you and provide you with some information about who we are and what we do.

The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) is the largest international professional organization dedicated to improving the educational success of individuals with exceptional needs. CEC provides professional development, advocates for individuals with exceptionalities, and helps professionals obtain the conditions and resources necessary for effective professional practice.

CEC is a leading voice for diversity and inclusive education. Through the vision and dedication of its nearly 35,000 members, CEC ensures that the needs of children and youth with exceptionalities are met in education legislation, establishes professional standards for the field and develops initiatives to improve inclusive education practice. The CEC is also known as an outstanding source for information, resources and professional development for inclusive educators.

At Alberta CEC, we are committed to providing our members in Alberta with quality services that extend the benefits of belonging to the international organization. At ACEC, we partner with other regional and provincial organizations and agencies to offer quality professional development and networking opportunities. Members receive significant cost benefits for all workshops and training provided by ACEC. Newsletters provide valued and valuable information on current events within Alberta and insights on working with students with exceptional learning profiles.

Please take some time to peruse the CEC website, [www.cec.sped.org](http://www.cec.sped.org), for information on our parent organization, including professional development opportunities and resources for educators. For local resources and upcoming events, check our Alberta website, <https://albertacouncilexceptionalchild.wordpress.com>.

We are responsive to the thoughts, ideas and suggestions of the Alberta members and colleagues in education, so please feel free to contact me or our executive at any time. Our contact information is on our website. Thanks for reading, and take care.

*Shawn Crawford, PhD, RPsych  
President, Alberta Council for Exceptional Children  
(ACEC)*

# Universal Strategies and Supports to Improve Engagement in Learning for ALL Students

## Troubleshooting Tip Sheet

### Individual Considerations

If a student has difficulty ...	Try using ...	Tried it!
<b>Organizational Skills</b>		
Managing homework	<i>A homework binder or folder</i> with clearly divided sections. Have homework on one side and finished work on the other. For older students have a section for work in progress.	<input type="radio"/>
Organizing supplies	<i>Desk map</i> so the student can visually see where everything goes in their desk.	<input type="radio"/>
	<i>Stay put stations</i> consist of a box or bin where the student can keep everything he or she needs for that class. This is especially good for students who transition between classes frequently (junior high or high school).	<input type="radio"/>
	<i>Colour-coded supplies</i> —Assign colours to subjects (can include folders, binders, textbook covers, notebooks, index cards etc).	<input type="radio"/>
	<i>Guides</i> —Label different areas for different students for where to put or get their materials, where to stand/sit, walk etc.	<input type="radio"/>
Remembering important items	<i>Classroom labels</i> —Determine what words would be most helpful to your students and label items in the classroom.	<input type="radio"/>
	<i>Tax questions</i> outline the important points for a student to remember for a certain activity.	<input type="radio"/>
	<i>Desktop cheat sheet</i> —so students can reference information and facts that they need (eg, number line, multiplication table, alphabet, other language for ESL, commonly misspelled words etc).	<input type="radio"/>
	<i>Keychain tutor</i> —Older students can be encouraged to record their assignments or other important information on their cell phones.	<input type="radio"/>
Organizing their school day	<i>Beach ball review</i> —Write different facts or questions on a beach ball with a permanent marker. When the student catches the ball, the student must answer the question facing him or her.	<input type="radio"/>
	<i>Adapted agenda</i> with their own <i>daily schedule</i> and <i>to-do list</i> .	<input type="radio"/>
Managing home/school communication	<i>Picture and object daily schedules</i> —Students who have communication problems may need a picture or object daily schedule to clearly show them their day.	<input type="radio"/>
	<i>Home folder</i> with sections labelled <i>Read and Respond</i> and <i>Read Only</i> .	<input type="radio"/>
Managing a big assignment	<i>Assignment checklist</i> that breaks the big assignment down into manageable steps, with a checkbox beside each step to keep track of progress.	<input type="radio"/>
Transitioning from one place to another	<i>School map</i> so they have an illustrated floor plan of the school. Lines or arrows can be used to help them find their way to different areas.	<input type="radio"/>
	<i>Luggage Tags</i> as reminders attached to pertinent items. For example, put a luggage tag on the backpack to remind the student of what needs to go into it before he or she goes home.	<input type="radio"/>

If a student has difficulty ...	Try using ...	Tried it!
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## Behaviour and Motivation

Following classroom rules	Post <i>visual rules</i> with written rules plus a drawing or photograph.	<input type="radio"/>
Transitioning to a new setting	<i>Personal portfolio</i> —Compile a portfolio, in either video or book form, that tells others about the student. Have the student present this portfolio to new teachers and/or peers as appropriate.	<input type="radio"/>
With specific behaviours	<i>Video modelling</i> or <i>video self-modelling</i> shows a video of a person engaged in the desired activity and is used as a teaching aid to help other students or the same student transitioning from one setting to another.	<input type="radio"/>
Following school rules	<i>Schoolwide expectations</i> —Establish schoolwide expectations for students for different places and in a way they can see themselves grow within a category.	<input type="radio"/>
Knowing how to act in certain situations	<i>Cue cards</i> are simply small, palm-sized visual aids that reinforce what a teacher or student is trying to communicate. Again, use pictures to provide more visual information.	<input type="radio"/>
Completing work	<i>"First/Then board"</i> —Label a board with <i>First</i> and <i>Then</i> , with a line between. Put what the student has to do (and usually doesn't want to do) in the <i>"First"</i> section. The <i>Then</i> section is something that the student wants to do. By completing the <i>First</i> , the student gets the <i>Then</i> .	<input type="radio"/>

## General Teaching and Learning

Picking out important information	<i>Highlight</i> the important information using a highlighter or, when printing materials, using the highlight option in Microsoft Word, or by giving the student notes that he or she can highlight during the lesson.	<input type="radio"/>
	<i>Curriculum commercials</i> —Determine what concept you want the students to know. Consider a fun and unforgettable way to communicate this with a jingle, chant, compelling graphics, skit, commercial or PowerPoint book.	<input type="radio"/>
	<i>Teacher radio</i> —Create an audio file on Microsoft Word for the students to download a recording of important information.	<input type="radio"/>
	<i>Spinner questions</i> —Make a spinner that has all the important questions to do with a lesson on it. Students can quiz each other, or the teacher can quiz the class.	<input type="radio"/>
	<i>Graphic organizers</i> are visual displays of knowledge that structure information by arranging important aspects of an idea or topic into a pattern and show the relationship between related concepts.	<input type="radio"/>
Asking questions in class	<i>Question jar</i> —Have available a container with slips of paper where students can write questions to the teacher that they might not want to ask in class. The teacher has a set time to answer any questions in the jar.	<input type="radio"/>
Level of the curriculum	<i>Choose-and-learn boxes</i> contain a wide range of materials related to the subject area or unit and have designed activities for a particular student to learn new skills. Have each activity separate with instructions. That way, any person working with the student is able to pick up the item and know how to use it.	<input type="radio"/>
	<i>Individual work stations</i> contain various activities, like the box above, designed to help the students learn at their particular level. The student knows to take items from one section, complete them and move them to a completed section.	<input type="radio"/>
	<i>Adapted books or curriculum materials</i> , such as those available from the Davies and Johnson website, adjust the level of the material presented.	<input type="radio"/>
Following a lesson	<i>Guided notes</i> are teacher-prepared sheets that outline lectures or class discussion but leave blank spaces, lines and boxes so students can fill in key words, concepts, facts and so on. They help the student follow a lecture, identify key points and provide opportunities to get involved.	<input type="radio"/>
Completing worksheets	Adapted worksheets are worksheets that are modified for a particular student. They are modified by changing questions to statements or sentence completions, open-ended questions to matching and so on.	<input type="radio"/>
Remembering important events	<i>Remnant books</i> are a visual and tactile way of helping students record events in their lives and communicate with others about these events. Collect things that are meaningful to the student about a certain event and put in a photo album for the student to review.	<input type="radio"/>
Learning or practising an important task	<i>Peer tutor scripts</i> pair students to learn or practise an academic task. Write a script and be sure that the "tutor" understands all of the steps. Observe the peer tutor and give feedback.	<input type="radio"/>

If a student has difficulty ...	Try using ...	Tried it!
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## Comprehension

Taking notes	<i>PowerPoint notes</i> —For older students, create a PowerPoint presentation so the students can record important information alongside the visual from the PowerPoint.	<input type="radio"/>
	<i>Doodle notes</i> —Students are encouraged to doodle graphic representations of the content on the page while they are taking notes.	<input type="radio"/>
Understanding what they have read	<i>Comprehension sticky notes</i> are comments that a student attaches to a passage, chapter or book. They are created as the student reads and are reviewed when the reading is completed. Give students sticky notes and ask them to record their thoughts, questions, key points and impressions.	<input type="radio"/>
Understanding more than just the facts of a story	<i>Puppets</i> —Using puppets with names that guide the student response has been effectively used. When the students have that puppet they need to follow that puppet's rules in talking about a story to improve their comprehension.	<input type="radio"/>

## Reading

Reading aloud	<i>Audio books</i> —Make your own recordings for books, using the appropriate volume and expression as a model for the students.	<input type="radio"/>
Following written directions	<i>Picture directions</i> can be used for students who have difficulty following written directions.	<input type="radio"/>

## Art

Completing art projects with the supplies given	An <i>art options box</i> contains a collection of materials and adapted materials that the student can use to complete art assignments.	<input type="radio"/>
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## Math

Math facts	<i>Human calculator</i> —Create a calculator on the floor where the students can actively move around to show basic number facts.	<input type="radio"/>
	<i>Math helper</i> is a binder filled with math reference materials to help a student during class and assessments and with homework. It may contain such charts as counting, addition/subtraction, multiplication, common formulas, place value, vocabulary, money value, key words/phrases found in word problems and so on.	<input type="radio"/>
	A <i>manipulatives box</i> is filled with number tiles, puzzles, a large number calculator, coins, number lines, base ten blocks, dice, graph paper and so forth—everything a student might need to manipulate numbers.	<input type="radio"/>
	<i>Coded and cued assignments</i> are assignments that direct a student as to what type of math question they are working on—for example, all the addition questions are circled in blue and all the subtraction questions have a green triangle around them. You could also list the number of steps or order of operations in a problem.	<input type="radio"/>

## Writing

Fine motor problems	<i>Rubber stamps</i> can be an effective support for learners with fine motor problems who cannot print or write.	<input type="radio"/>
	<i>Writing without a pencil</i> involves giving students opportunities to create words and put sentences together without actually using a writing implement. Use sticky notes, scrabble tiles, pocket chart compositions and so on.	<input type="radio"/>
	A <i>writing tool box</i> contains alternative writing materials that may include pencils, markers, rubber stamps, crayons, paintbrushes, chalk, vibrating pens, novelty pens, textured pens, label maker, letter or word magnets, dry erase board and markers, paper with raised lines, index cards and so forth.	<input type="radio"/>
Writing stories	A <i>personal word wall or dictionary</i> can be made. As students learn new words they can decide to add them to their personal word wall or dictionary. If they put a picture beside the word, they can easily remember what the word means.	<input type="radio"/>
	<i>Story kits</i> help students plan their writing. The content of the story kit should give the student writer cues about what should be included when writing about a particular story.	<input type="radio"/>

If a student has difficulty ...	Try using ...	Tried it!
	A <i>collaborative writing notebook</i> contains pictures to use as writing prompts. A peer can then write with the student, using the pictures to guide the written work.	<input type="radio"/>

## Communication

Socializing with others	<i>Talking sticks</i> —Record conversation starters on popsicle sticks and place them in a container. Students draw one to start a conversation.	<input type="radio"/>
Problem solving	<i>Power cards</i> are used in situations where a student may be confused about rules, does not understand choices, is struggling with generalization and so forth. Make a story about a strategy a student's "hero" has used to solve a problem. Then recap (on the other side) how the person using the card can use the same strategy to solve a similar problem.	<input type="radio"/>
Talking	<i>Content-specific communication boards</i> are developed for a particular student in a certain situation. They serve as an alternative to spoken language and may include pictures, words and so on.	<input type="radio"/>
	<i>Speech-generating communication devices</i> are devices that talk for a student, using either real or synthesized speech. The device can be controlled by pointing to pictures or words and range from simple to complex. As well, there are many speech applications available on the iTouch and iPad.	<input type="radio"/>

## Personal

Self-esteem	<i>Personal portfolio</i> —Students may want to introduce themselves to a teacher or others through the use of a portfolio. Portfolios may include photographs, artwork, writing, school work samples, lists of favourite things and so forth. The portfolio should always highlight what the student can do.	<input type="radio"/>
	<i>See-me-strong books</i> are made to encourage students and let them know they can succeed. These books are a visual record of a student successfully performing a set of actions, engaging in a task or even simply sitting quietly.	<input type="radio"/>
Feeling overwhelmed	A <i>safe space</i> is a place where the student can go to "get away." The space should be quiet and relaxing.	<input type="radio"/>

*Lindsay Bothner*

# Modifying the Curriculum for Students with Moderate to Severe Disabilities



The ATA's Blue Ribbon Panel on Inclusive Education (2014) found that "many teachers indicated that their hesitance regarding inclusion most often stemmed from feeling that they lacked the requisite professional knowledge, experience and support, rather than from a lack of support for inclusion itself" (p 66).

There is a difference between social inclusion and academic inclusion. Many goals on our IPPs reflect social inclusion goals such as emotional regulation, social skills development, and expressive and receptive language acquisition. Depending on the ability of the student, academic goals are sometimes omitted from the planning process. Some teachers and parents feel that academics are too far out of reach for the student's understanding. Students are, therefore, included in the classroom solely for social reasons (Downing 2010).

Downing states "while students with moderate to severe disabilities may be gaining physical placement in age-appropriate general education classrooms, questions remain as to how to teach students in these rooms, especially during large group discussions or lecture times" (Downing 2010, 5).

Many students with moderate to severe disabilities have a variety of challenges with learning. For example,

they may have sensory difficulties that are exacerbated by being in the classroom. These students may also have challenges with off-task behaviour and information retention, often requiring repeated exposure to the same concepts. These challenges are important to recognize as teachers develop appropriate curriculum material for students in the classroom.

The ATA's Blue Ribbon Panel on Inclusive Education states "... the government must require that resources developed are multileveled and multifaceted to meet the wide range of learners in the classroom. There are models available, including Universal Design for Learning (UDL), that could be used as a lens for resource development (Rose and Meyer 2002)" (ATA 2014, p 43).

Interpreting the curriculum and identifying the "big ideas" for students with moderate to severe disabilities requires preplanning and attention prior to instruction. To plan for such a student, teachers must have knowledge of the student's unique abilities, understand the intent of the lesson for that student and know the performance standard expected of same-age students. It is important to reduce the complexity and determine what main idea or ideas have to be taught

to a given student. The goal for the student may be to master the big ideas and relational vocabulary without the breadth and depth expected of students without severe disabilities. Lesson planning can include all students in the class actively through UDL (CAST 2011). Teachers must plan to present information in different modalities, plan for students to access information through different means (reading listening, and so forth) and plan for them to demonstrate what they have learned in different ways (writing, orally, visually and so forth). Students may require additional accommodations such as assistive technology support, prewritten notes, pictorial supports, and verbal and visual prompts, and their level of participation in the class may vary.

As a school team at the beginning of the year, we discussed ways to bring about more curriculum involvement in the classroom for our complex students. We wanted teachers to be able to teach the target skills to students, check for comprehension, review material regularly and help students generalize skills to other environments (Sarathy 2014). With so many different elements to coordinate, we felt that it would be helpful to create a structured way of planning for students with severe disabilities. We decided to create a template that incorporated the principles of both *Understanding by Design* (Wiggins and McTighe 2005) and *Universal Design for Learning* (CAST 2011). The process followed on this template mirrors our division goals and mandates in curriculum planning. It also provides structure for teachers to carefully consider in the preplanning process. The example template shown was used to help modify a Grade 5 science unit for a student with Down syndrome who had the cognitive functioning of a Grade K–1 level.

Our first step in modifying the curriculum was to begin with the end in mind. First, we needed to consider the bigger picture: what was reasonable to expect the student to learn and what outcomes did we need to

focus on? The goal was to develop a meaningful and personalized curriculum in the context of the student's current and future environments. Sarathy (2014) provides a list of questions teachers should consider before planning the unit. These include

1. What is the student's current level of functioning?
2. In what ways can you broaden the learner's world?
3. How can you promote social inclusion through positive interactions with grade-level peers?
4. What types of instructional activities can you provide that will support self-dependence and control over the student's environment?

In stage one of planning, we established the essential question of the unit along with the knowledge and skills we wanted the student to take from the unit. Because it may be unrealistic to expect the student to complete all of the outcomes, we looked at what we knew about the student and chose two of the outcomes to focus on.

Stage two of the learning plan incorporates Universal Design for Learning principles. It considers multiple means of representation, expression and engagement. These three guidelines work together

to remove instructional access barriers, which maximizes the student's ability to participate in the activities (CAST 2011).

Providing *multiple means of representation* includes varying the level or complexity of the instruction for a given topic. Students with moderate to severe disabilities can be taught curriculum-based outcomes, but the actual grade level of those outcomes may differ from those of their same-age peers. In this example, the unit is based on the Grade 5 outcomes, but we used resources from kindergarten to Grade 2, some of which are outlined on the example template. The way the content is presented may also differ from how it is presented to other students in the class. Some of the same content material may be reviewed multiple times using different activities. Some of the activities will



include visual, tactile and auditory changes to the lesson design.

*Multiple means of expression* considers how the student will demonstrate the knowledge that he or she is learning. Students with moderate to severe disabilities often find writing and reading information very difficult. The use of choice boards, for example, can give students many different options to show what they know. The level of difficulty in quizzes or project rubrics will have to reflect the level of difficulty of the lessons presented. In this example, there are a number of ways in which the science outcomes were evaluated. Methods for evaluation will differ depending on the types of activities that were presented to the student.

*Multiple means of engagement* considers how to increase the student's engagement. The goal is to figure out how to actively captivate the student, depending on his or her level of support and functioning. Some students are able to actively engage within the class, while others will demonstrate more engagement in a small group. Students may also vary widely in the amount of time they are capable of remaining interested. Multiple activities may have to be presented during the same teaching block of time. As previously stated, some content material may need to be reviewed multiple times, so the way in which the material is presented may look different each time. Examples of methods to actively engage our Grade 5 student in modified science projects are provided in the example template.

The reflection stage is completed at the end of the unit. Questions are provided on the example template to guide this reflection process. It is important that the school team (classroom teacher, assistant, learning support teacher, other therapists, consultants, psychologist) take time to review positive and negative aspects of the unit design, process and implementation. This allows the team to figure out how much learning took place, the level of student participation and whether the outcomes and content were appropriate for the student. In our project, it was important that the school team had time to plan before, during and after the unit. Some of this time can be incorporated into breaks or before and after school. However, given that teachers have so many tasks and roles competing for their time, breaks and "in between" times were not quite enough. We found it helpful for the learning support teacher to cover for the classroom teacher for one period so the teacher and education assistant could have some uninterrupted planning time during the day. Overall, having a plan helped the student demonstrate

that she can access many concepts in the curriculum. Further, it seemed to increase the confidence of the teacher and assistant to plan for complex students in the future.

As educators, one of our primary goals is to teach students the big ideas and the practical skills that they can use to feel valued and become productive citizens. This may mean different things for different students. For students with moderate to severe disabilities, the goal may be to master the big ideas and practical concepts that are part of academic topics without the breadth and depth expected of students without severe disabilities. Students with severe disabilities can learn curriculum content at various levels. However, determining exactly how the students will access the curriculum and demonstrate their knowledge requires preplanning and attention prior to instruction. Many teachers support the idea of inclusion but feel that they need support in programming for students with moderate to severe disabilities. Providing classroom teachers with a framework and support to thoughtfully plan for students with disabilities will hopefully increase teacher confidence, improve students' knowledge base and improve how we track what skills students have acquired.

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*Kelly Huck and Amelie Doucet*

*Kelly Huck is a learning strategist and Amelie Doucet is an educational psychologist; both are with Rocky View Schools.*

# Modified Unit Template

(Using UBD and UDL Guidelines)

Title of Unit	Weather	Grade Level	Grade 5
Subject	Science	Time Frame	4 weeks
Student			
Developed By			

## Stage 1—Identify Desired Results

**Essential Question**

*What are weather patterns and how do we study them?*

**What knowledge and skills should the student take from this unit?**

*The student will learn different kinds of weather patterns and disasters. The student will learn how to record weather temperatures. The student will learn how to dress in different kinds of weather*

**Learning Outcomes**

("I can" statements and what grade level—refer to the curriculum continuum for subject level)

*I can investigate the relationships between weather phenomena and human activity—Grade 5 outcome.  
I can observe, describe and interpret weather phenomena—Grade 5 outcome.*

## Stage 2—Learning Plan and Assessment

**How will this topic be taught? (Multiple means of representation—WHAT). What are the ways the information will be presented?**

What tools or strategies will be used? How will the content be presented to meet the needs of the student? In what different ways will the information be represented?

Science A–Z (K–2) weather unit:  
[www.science-a-z.com/main/UnitResource/unit/14/earth-space-science/grades-k-2/weather](http://www.science-a-z.com/main/UnitResource/unit/14/earth-space-science/grades-k-2/weather)  
 Explores weather: temperature, wind, clouds, precipitation, storms, weather patterns, causes of weather patterns.  
 Includes three reading levels of information books, games, vocabulary, organizers and comprehension activities.

(K–2 unit) Calendar and Weather: [teacherspayteachers.com](http://teacherspayteachers.com)  
 Calendar charts to track weather patterns, activities to show what to wear in different types of weather

(K–2 unit) Weather Literacy and Science unit: [teacherspayteachers.com](http://teacherspayteachers.com)  
 Weather words, puzzles, math activities related to weather

Use of reciprocal reading strategies, read aloud, text to speech, text with visual supports, tactile experiments  
 Visual aids (photos of real objects or tactile examples of objects), creation of tactile resources  
 Music: incorporate learning the vocabulary words to music  
 Break down the directions into small steps, choice of two activities  
 Creating videos and adding voice

**How will the topic be evaluated? (Multiple means of action and expression—HOW). How will the student demonstrate knowledge and skills?** In what ways does the student demonstrate what he or she has learned? What tools are needed? How is the evaluation going to be documented? What is the criteria for the student to demonstrate knowledge of the topic?

1. Choice boards (visual, oral, artistic, dramatic, written etc demonstration of knowledge)
2. E-book quizzes/book quiz from lowest-level weather science books (Science A–Z)
3. Retelling rubrics (nonfiction stories, activities etc) from science resources unit (Science A–Z)
4. Vocabulary matching (matching pictures to the words or words to words).
5. Modified rubric for student-created science activities (weather tracking, cloud books, weather instruments, weather disasters)

**How will the student actively engage? (Multiple means of engagement—WHY). How will the student actively engage and stay motivated?** How many activities does the student need during each block? How will you change up activities? What can you use? How will the student interact with other students in class?

Multiple attempts at the same task, repetitive (example: use of calendar, weather, seasons and tracking the weather patterns daily using a visual tracking sheet)

Tactile activities: making the activity (cloud books with cotton)

Cloud books: flip books or tactile books

Weather instruments such as wind instruments

Collect data in weather journal daily for two weeks—use of a visual chart

Create a “weather channel” broadcast with a video

Creating weather disaster stories—student may think of a story with a weather disaster, such as *Wizard of Oz*

### Stage 3—Reflection

Was the unit successful? How was it successful? What was the level of participation with other students in the classroom? Did the student use peer supports? Was the student able to do some activities independently? How might you make changes to this unit in the future?

How much or how little class participation in the unit? What experiments or projects was the student able to participate in with groups or individually with support?

How much full or partial support was needed by adults or peers? What activities, if any, was the student to do independently?

Was the student able to explain any of the projects he/she helped create?

What concepts in the unit did the student have to have repeated review for better understanding?

Was the student able to initiate or engage in peer support?

### Resources

<https://sites.google.com/site/udlguidelinesexamples>—Explanation and example of UDL principles

[www.grantwiggins.org/documents/UbDQuikvue1005.pdf](http://www.grantwiggins.org/documents/UbDQuikvue1005.pdf)—Overview of UbD

[www.learnalberta.ca/content/ieptlibrary/lib08.html](http://www.learnalberta.ca/content/ieptlibrary/lib08.html)—Instructional strategies and supports

[www.spannj.org/pti/Curriculum\\_Modifications\\_and\\_Adaptations.pdf](http://www.spannj.org/pti/Curriculum_Modifications_and_Adaptations.pdf)—Explanation and examples of curriculum modifications and adaptations

Adapted from Wiggins, G, and J McTighe, *Understanding by Design*, 2005; and CAST, *Universal Design for Learning Guidelines version 2.0*, 2011.

*Created by Kelly Huck and Amelie Doucet*

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