

*Diversity
may be the
hardest thing
for a society
to live with,
and perhaps
the most
dangerous
thing for a
society to be
without.*

—William Sloane
Coffin Jr

DEHR Devils

When I was first appointed as the administrative secretary to the ATA's Diversity, Equity and Human Rights (DEHR) Committee some 13 years ago, I was a little daunted. It was my first committee assignment. And what a committee! I used to jokingly refer to it as the Save the World Committee because its mandate was broader than the proverbial barn door (and then some). To wit, the DEHR Committee was to find ways to address and reduce racism, sexism, prejudice and homophobia. It was also to examine the role of gender and its effect on schools and teachers, promote the value of multiculturalism and diversity, and advise Provincial Executive Council on matters related to diversity, equity and human rights.

Now, as I look back over the past decade, I am amazed and impressed at how much has been accomplished. In addition to carrying out this broad mandate, the DEHR Committee also administers a yearly grant to locals, and publishes resources for teachers and works with like-minded groups to advance causes related to diversity, equity and human rights in Alberta schools.

So, in the spirit of these self-congratulatory times, I think it's time for a little horn blowing, and this edition of *Just in Time*, which is being published to coincide with the committee's first conference, but not its last, aims to do just that. In these pages you will read about how the DEHR Committee came into being, get a list of and links to its main publications, and read a month-by-month list of DEHR-related national events, as well as the usual list of useful resources and notices. But most important, you will also be able to read short articles by the current committee, who, in "teacher speak," talk about how to "unpack" diversity, equity and human rights and describe what those things mean to them.

—Karen Virag



A Brief History of the Diversity, Equity and Human Rights Committee

In the 1999/2000 school year, the former Gender Equity Committee was renamed and given a broader mandate when it became evident that notions of equity extended far beyond issues of gender. Thus, in April of 2000, the Diversity, Equity and Human Rights (DEHR) Committee came into being. It was tasked with advising Provincial Executive Council (PEC) on matters related to diversity, equity and human rights in education and recommending actions in this regard.

The committee began its work with a review of what other provincial teachers' associations had done in this area. Committee members also did extensive reading on such issues as globalization and social justice, and reviewed a number of organizational models to get an idea of what it could accomplish in the Alberta context. In the end, the DEHR Committee agreed that the Association should fulfill its role as an advocate for students and public education, and build relationships between students, teachers, families and communities. Because good teaching involves making good relationships, a measure of success would be fewer marginalized students and the development of a common commitment to a democratic civil society. The committee also made a number of broad recommendations to help the Association achieve the goal of promoting diversity, equity and human rights. In subsequent years, the committee developed three-year plans to guide its activities.

Wide differences of opinion in matters of religious, political, and social belief must exist if conscience and intellect alike are not to be stunted, if there is to be room for healthy growth.

—Theodore Roosevelt

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Actions speak louder than words

Ever since its beginnings, the DEHR Committee has been one of the Association's most active and successful committees, and it has racked up an impressive list of accomplishments. Listed below are just a few of its activities:

- Coordinating symposia, workshops and events with education partners, such as universities, and nonprofit groups, such as the John Humphrey Centre for Peace and Human Rights and the Canadian Teachers' Federation
- Sponsoring the Inclusive Learning Communities grant program, later renamed as the Diversity, Equity and Human Rights grant program, to help locals and individual teachers promote diversity, equity and human rights values
- Publishing major documents such as *Education Is Our Buffalo* (on First Nations education) and *Here Comes Everyone* (about intercultural awareness)
- Establishing focused subcommittees on gender equity; sexual orientation and gender identity; intercultural education; and First Nations, Métis and Inuit education
- Spearheading Association involvement with the UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network
- Encouraging and supporting the formation of DEHR committees in local associations
- Providing input into Association policy on diversity, equity and human rights
- Compiling an extensive list of resources for teachers on diversity, equity and human rights
- Presenting sessions on diversity, equity and human rights at such events as Summer Conference
- Having a visible presence at such events as Pride parades
- Holding an inaugural Diversity, Equity and Human Rights conference, Inspiration into Action, in April of 2013

The power of the press

In March of 2002, the committee published its first issue of *Just in Time*, an electronic newsletter that is distributed twice a year, free of charge, to hundreds of subscribers. *Just in Time* has won three Golden Leaf Awards from the Canadian Educational Press Association. You can read it on the DEHR Committee website, at www.teachers.ab.ca under For Members, click on Professional Development and then Diversity, Equity & Human Rights.

What—and Who—Is DEHR?

The DEHR Committee consists of teachers from across Alberta who express an interest in work related to diversity, equity and human rights. Two members of Provincial Executive Council (PEC) sit on the committee, as well as representatives from two universities (the universities of Alberta and Lethbridge). In the following section members of the 2012/13 DEHR Committee describe their work in diversity, equity and human rights. Note that Cathy Campbell, a professor in the Faculty of Education at the University of Lethbridge at the University of Lethbridge, was out of the country at the time of this writing.



Andrea Berg—
“There finally seems to be a growing recognition of the imperative to address the diverse needs and backgrounds of both Alberta students and teachers.”

In my role as an executive staff officer in the Association's Professional Development program area, I am fortunate to have had the position of secretary to the provincial Diversity, Equity and Human Rights Committee since 2009. The DEHR Committee has the important work of studying, advising and making recommendations on Association policies that reflect respect for diversity; providing information and resources to teachers; and supporting the work of diversity committees in local associations. The work has expanded in reach over the past few years, and it is motivating and gratifying to see the topic of diversity garnering increased attention at all levels of education across the province. There finally seems to be a growing recognition of the imperative to address the diverse needs and backgrounds of both Alberta students and teachers. The provincial DEHR Committee defines *diversity* as differences in ethnicity, religion, language, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, socioeconomic status, ability/disability, nationality and so on. Given the changing demographics of Alberta, it is clear that every school in the province must learn how to best support the diversity in their student, teacher and community populations. Support for diversity means adhering to beliefs and practices that demonstrate tolerance, acceptance of and respect for differences in people and their

unique circumstances; recognizing differences as positive attributes around which to build educational experiences; and recognizing the complex and changing nature of individual identities.

The DEHR Committee members include elected Provincial Executive Council members, practising teachers, university liaisons and Association staff. The commitment and passion demonstrated by each committee member is inspiring and instrumental in advocating successfully for policies and practices that reflect the values of the committee. I am personally grateful for the lessons, insights and dedication that all committee members share generously with me and for the enthusiasm demonstrated by teachers across the province, who foster understanding, empathy and compassion in their classrooms every day. I am excited to follow the important work and growth of this committee into the coming years.

Andrea Berg is an executive staff officer in the Professional Development program area at the Alberta Teachers' Association and secretary to the DEHR Committee.

Julia Ellis—“Classrooms and schools as places are socially constructed.”

I think that the issues in diversity, equity and human rights are multiple and perhaps more subtle or complex than we often realize. My early life experiences and career moves have sensitized me to some of the many issues related to diversity, equity and human rights. I began my life as the child of immigrant parents in a small town. Comparing my experiences in this small town and in larger urban centres I learned the meaning of the word *cosmopolitan*, and what multiculturalism is and is not. During my doctoral studies in the area of gifted and enrichment education, I learned about the challenges for supporting the growth and well-being of gifted students in schools. As I travelled the wave of the rise of feminist theory, I began to address gender issues in education in my research and teaching, and I learned about classism and critical pedagogy in my readings on social theory and critical theory. When concerns about “disruptive students” entered the discourse of safe and caring schools, I researched the challenges and promising processes for supporting the growth and well-being of students who needed to be encouraged and to be shown that they belong in school. The literature on space and place and, in particular, on children and place, showed me that classrooms and schools as *places* are socially constructed and that educators have agency in terms of introducing routines, rules, resources and relationships that can provide opportunities for all

students to experience belonging and positive status and identity in schools.

I joined this committee in hope of doing whatever might be helpful to support the committee's projects to make schools even better places for all students. It has been very rewarding to witness the commitment and deep understandings of others on the committee, as well as the committee's activities and projects that support educators in this important work.

Julia Ellis is a professor in the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta.



Mitchell Elser—
“The principles of diversity, equity and human rights are the cornerstone to our transforming approach to education.”

I have been teaching since 1981, working primarily with marginalized youth in alternative or flexible settings. Through the years I have desired to know more about the profession, particularly the workings of the ATA, and how I might contribute to the business end of what we do. So, about 10 years ago I got serious and began to volunteer my time, became actively involved with Calgary Teachers Local 38 and eventually applied to sit on the provincial DEHR Committee.

I didn't know what to expect from that first DEHR meeting. I am happy to say that I discovered that my personal values, attitudes and beliefs are very much in line with the vision, policies and goals of the DEHR Committee—to promote acceptance and understanding; respect differences and treat people with fairness; and create school cultures that are safe, caring and inclusive and that offer educational experiences that reflect a diverse community.

The work we do in the DEHR Committee is collaborative—we learn and gain insight from knowledgeable members who are passionate about specific issues, and that work is directed to supporting the broader educational and professional community. Despite challenges, I am encouraged by the direction in which the DEHR Committee is moving and our efforts to promote the establishment of local committees. We must continue to support the policies and principles of diversity, equity and human rights as a cornerstone in our transforming approach to education.

Mitchell Elser is a teacher at Alternative High School, Calgary Board of Education.

To cheapen the lives of any group of men, cheapens the lives of all men, even our own. This is a law of human psychology, or human nature. And it will not be repealed by our wishes, nor will it be merciful to our blindness.

—William Pickens

I know there is strength in the differences between us.

I know there is comfort, where we overlap.

—Ani DiFranco



Denis Espetveidt—
“The Diversity, Equity and Human Rights Committee works hard to foster a culture of acceptance and celebration of diversity in Alberta schools.”

In education we often think of diverse learners in terms of differences in how they learn. Schools, however, are also places where children develop a sense of personal identity and learn to socialize with others in preparation for meaningful participation as citizens in a civil and democratic society.

Schools must be safe spaces for all children, regardless of background or personal characteristics. The Diversity, Equity and Human Rights Committee works hard to foster a culture of acceptance and celebration of diversity in Alberta schools. I feel deeply privileged to have the opportunity to participate in this vitally important work.

Denis Espetveidt is a teacher at Sir Winston Churchill High School, Calgary School District No 19, and a district representative for Calgary City on Provincial Executive Council. Denis chairs the DEHR Committee.



Mary Frances Fitzgerald—
“Respect is a human right.”

One day, after 20 years of teaching drama and career and life management, and then counselling, I was feeling philosophical, so I asked myself why I had become a teacher. I pondered the question for days only to discover that the answer was simple—I wanted students to have a voice about what matters to them. I then considered why voice is so important to me, and I realized it’s because when I was a student, I didn’t have one.

For years now I have had the opportunity of being a voice for many vulnerable populations, and I have had the privilege of witnessing positive change. In 2006, as a secondee at Alberta

Education I quickly learned about inequity, and I saw efforts made to address important issues in education by many caring people.

I was appointed by the deputy education minister to represent Alberta Education on the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity subcommittee of the Association’s Diversity, Equity and Human Rights Committee; that was the first time I had ever heard of DEHR. I soon came to see how strong, dedicated and focused the DEHR Committee was in promulgating the notion that every person, no matter what their sexual orientation or gender identity, deserves respect, and that respect is a human right. I learned how much work it took to get where we are today with regard to sexual orientation and gender identity. I learned to champion the rights of newcomers to Canada. I learned to champion those who are sexually exploited and harmed. I learned that sometimes as an ally you can be incorrectly labelled, but that is other people’s problem, not yours.

I am now championing good mental health for youth and trying to dispel the silent yet strong stigma against mental illness. Imagine being in Grade 7 with the tunnel of depression so dark every morning so that you cannot get out of bed, or being in Grade 9 with anxiety so terrible you cannot go to school. Imagine being so isolated that you feel you are not worth being on this earth. Well, I have seen it, heard it and walked it with students, and I know that mental illness is increasing, not lessening. The onset of most mood disorders begins in the school years, so school staff—the caring adults who are around to witness the onset of mental illness in students—need to make a collective effort to make change happen and increase students’ good mental health.

Mary Frances Fitzgerald is a guidance counsellor at Victoria School of the Arts, in Edmonton.



Linda Grabas—
“We need to understand who students are before we can be there for them.”

For me, diversity, equity and human rights mean acceptance, fairness, equality, equity, compassion and understanding. As an elementary teacher, I hope that I promote and encourage tolerance and

acceptance among my students. We need to teach both teachers and kids to be tolerant of differences. We are who we are—this is a deceptively simple statement. In essence, it says, “This is who I am and I hope you accept me.”

I believe that we must educate teachers to be aware that there are many students with diverse needs. A simple first step is familiarizing teachers with the terms used to identify different groups so that they know them and are comfortable using them—that’s the first step. We need to understand who students are before we can be there for them.

I am from rural Alberta, and I think we don’t always realize that we have the same problems as urban areas have, but on a smaller scale. I wanted to be on the Diversity, Equity and Human Rights Committee to learn where we are with respect to such issues and to gain insight into how to promote them. And I have to say that I have furthered my knowledge of what is happening in the province with respect to diversity, equity and human rights and have been able to share it with my colleagues and my local.

Linda Grabas teaches Grade 4 at Elk Point Elementary School.



Yvonne Jones—
“Our future is our children. We must serve them well.”

So, what exactly are diversity, equity, and human rights? Many things to many people, for sure. And people’s understanding of diversity, equity and human rights differs within nations and between nations as well; there is, for example, a vast difference in attitudes between a country like Canada and countries like present-day Syria and Congo. That being said, though, no matter where they live, people want the same thing—to be able to celebrate their diversity, to be treated equally as human beings and to have their rights respected by those with whom they live and work and by those who govern. As an older female who has lived in two countries and who travels frequently in Europe and North America, I am always amazed at how generous people are toward each other when they are in close

proximity. But once distance is involved, stereotypes can come into play—that is, we fear what we don’t understand. This is why I joined the Diversity, Equity, and Human Rights Committee. I wanted to learn from others about the challenges we face eliminating stereotypes, work with others to eliminate these stereotypes and expand my understanding of issues so that I can better facilitate understanding in my classroom. Our future is our children. We must serve them well. The difficulties are many; time and money are the obvious ones. It takes time to change ingrained attitudes and behaviours; it takes money to develop resources and to construct safe places in which we can discuss issues. But there are other difficulties too—learning to use technology appropriately to avoid further misunderstandings, and questioning governments and business practices that appear to work against people’s rights. The list goes on. The DEHR Committee strives to deal with these challenges daily and is slowly and steadily making headway. It does take time, and people will need stamina, fortitude and patience to continue this valuable work. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to help further it.

Yvonne Jones teaches social studies at Bellerose Composite High School, in St Albert.



Robert Mazzotta—
“Social justice means doing the right thing, not the popular thing.”

I am proud to sit on the Association’s Diversity, Equity and Human Rights Committee, which has accomplished so much in such a short time. One of my principal areas of interest is social justice. So my position on the DEHR Committee fits well with my position as the provincial coordinator for Alberta on the UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network. The UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network in Canada has 62 candidate and member schools in seven provinces. Canadian schools that join the network commit to supporting the ideals of UNESCO, through four pillars of learning and four themes of study in order to contribute to a local, national and global culture of peace.

It is time for parents to teach young people early on that in diversity there is beauty and there is strength.

—Maya Angelou

Dominator culture has tried to keep us all afraid, to make us choose safety instead of risk, sameness instead of diversity. Moving through that fear, finding out what connects us, revelling in our differences; this is the process that brings us closer, that gives us a world of shared values, of meaningful community.

—bell hooks

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The UNESCO Associated Schools are examples of social justice in action. Students in the network strive to better understand how their actions can impact the people around them. This makes them think about what they do, and why and how they do it. For these students, social justice means doing the right thing, not the popular thing.

Likewise, the notions of social justice and doing the right thing underlie the activities of the DEHR Committee. The committee strives to engage schools in a deeper discussion about the actions schools take and why they take them. Do schools understand the difference between charity and social justice? When schools raise money for a cause, do they explain to students why they are doing so? Do they explain the root causes of why there is such a discrepancy between our country and a country in need? This is what we strive to achieve—a clear understanding of what needs to be done to effect real change. This is what social justice is all about.

Robert Mazzotta is an executive staff officer in the Member Services program area at the Alberta Teachers' Association.



Diane Sellars-Myshchyshyn—
“As a civilized and democratic society we must not allow inequity and intolerance to exist, and when we find it, we must work to eradicate it.”

One of my favourite assignments as a district representative is sitting on the Association's Diversity, Equity and Human Rights Committee. As a youth, I always had a keen interest in social justice, and when I became a teacher I knew that I wanted to work with children who faced difficulties either because of a disability or because they were disadvantaged. As a civilized and democratic society we must not allow inequity and intolerance to exist, and when we find it, we must work to eradicate it. The DEHR Committee is doing very important work in Alberta by bringing topics of diversity, equity and human rights to the foreground in multiple ways. The DEHR Committee's newsletter, *Just in Time*, is a great resource that deals with a wide range of topics and can be used in different contexts. The ATA also has other publications

and workshops that can help locals and schools work on DEHR issues that affect their communities.

Diane Sellars-Myshchyshyn is a teacher at Manachaban Middle School, Rockyview School Division No 41, and a district representative for Calgary District on Provincial Executive Council.



Rino Villeneuve—
“Every child has the right to be taught in an inclusive environment that is safe and caring, respects diversity and the rights of all persons, and provides equitable opportunities for success.”

Bonjour! I am very happy to be one of the newly appointed members of the DEHR Committee. After serving the ATA for nearly 30 years, I am very proud that my professional association places such importance on the creation of this essential committee. “To be or not to be” is not the theme of this issue of the committee's newsletter, *Just in Time*, but existence is certainly a nice topic.

How I see the world nowadays could be somewhat similar to the beginning lines of Dickens's classic *A Tale of Two Cities*: “It was the best of times, it was the worst of times . . .” As an example, the University of Lethbridge recently held its third annual Diversity Awareness Week on the theme “Diversity Includes All,” with guest speakers, displays and more. On the other hand, after having just finished a wonderful week of antibullying at our school, organized by the Boys & Girls Club of Lethbridge & District, with emphasis on bullying prevention, I was shocked and dismayed when I read in the *Lethbridge Herald*, March 16 edition, that religious leaders are joining a group opposing Manitoba's Bill 18, which is aimed at preventing bullying in schools and promoting equality based on gender, race, sexual orientation and other factors. This proposed antibullying law scares these leaders because they believe that schools should not be forced to promote equality for gays and lesbians. I do strongly believe that every child has the right to be taught in an inclusive environment that is safe and caring, respects diversity and the rights of all persons, and provides equitable opportunities for success. If I can prevent a single student in my class, in our district or somewhere else from being bullied, my goal will have been achieved.

Rino Villeneuve teaches Grade 1 at École Agnes Davidson School, Lethbridge.



Jennifer Wathen—
“I am inspired and eager to ensure that each of my students feels safe and cared for and valued.”

I am really not much of a committee person. I had tried sitting on committees before, but it is hard for me to sit and talk in circles about student welfare and teachers’ rights and never really see any changes. However, when my ATA local president approached me about joining the Association’s Diversity, Equity and Human Rights Committee, I have to admit I was curious. There are so many things that fall under the categories of diversity, equity and human rights that align with my beliefs about how things should be, about fairness, equality, respect, safety, difference and balance. I was impressed by the committee from the beginning.

Although my colleagues on the committee seem to be there for different reasons, everyone respects everyone’s reason for belonging, and their passion is contagious. The thing I love most of all is that things actually get done! This is not a committee where we sit around and talk abstractly every couple of months about what should be happening or what changes we would like to see; instead, with the DEHR Committee, a group of committed and passionate people get together to brainstorm ways to infuse the principles of diversity, equity and human rights into schools, and they actually make it happen. It’s amazing what the committee has achieved. Furthermore, the DEHR Committee is always changing, always open to new ideas and areas to focus on when we see a need. Right now I am concerned about youth mental health, and I can discuss my concerns openly with this group of caring people.

After each DEHR Committee meeting, I come back to my class renewed and revitalized, and I speak to my students and staff with a fresh passion. And I am inspired and eager to ensure that each of them feels safe and cared for and valued.

Jennifer Wathen teaches at Mother Teresa School, in Grande Prairie.

Strength lies in differences, not in similarities.

—Stephen R. Covey

People who have served on the DEHR Committee since its inception

Sharon Armstrong, Miriam Cooley, J-C Couture, Deb Davidson, Dawn Duffy, Margaret Epoch, Leah Fowler, Michelle Glavine, Sean Grainger, Gary Hansen, Janice Holloway, Christine Jellett, Janet Laddish, Denise Legge, Patrick Loyer, Darren Lund, Barb Maheu, Vicki Mather, John Milford, Harold Neth, Dianne Oberg, Gloria Oberg, Marg Pickup, Patrick Rivard, Sherry Robbins, Jacquie Skytt, Lynn Smarsh, Jonathan Teghtmeyer, Lyle Watling and Stephen M Wiewel



*If we cannot
end now our
differences,
at least we
can help
make the
world safe
for diversity.*

—John F. Kennedy

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One of the goals of the DEHR Committee is that locals will establish their own diversity, equity and human rights committee. The following article preprinted from volume 46:19 of the *ATA News* describes the wonderful event that took place in May 2012 when three locals from northern Alberta joined forces to stage a special event.

Belly Dancing for Human Rights

—Jennifer Wathen

On May 3, over 40 teachers and staff members attended a special event at Grande Prairie's Mother Teresa Catholic School. The wonderful evening was in support of diversity, equity and human rights and was cosponsored by a tridistrict Diversity Equity and Human Rights (DEHR) Committee consisting of representatives from Grande Prairie and District Catholic Teachers Local No 42, Northern Spirit Local No 6 and Trumpeter No 26.

The Moondance Shimmy Dance Company kick-started the evening with a fabulous belly dancing display that involved audience members getting a quick lesson on stage. The Bluebird First Nations Dance Troupe performed beautifully and involved the entire audience in a round dance. A Grade 6 student from Mother Teresa, Kassidy Stienwand, sang a moving version of "We Are the World" with a teacher from Mother Teresa, and Ray O'Toole played guitar in the background. The guest speaker, well-known Métis author, educator and raconteur David Bouchard, spoke about his trials and tribulations as a teacher, a principal and a student. Bouchard remembers the difficulties of

being a little boy trying to fit into a white world that were exacerbated by his dyslexia, which was undiagnosed at the time. Bouchard also talked about difference—that is, how boys learn differently from girls, how the upbringing of a First Nations child differs from that of a mainstream Caucasian child, how being a student from a minority culture differs from being a student from a majority. And he praised the power of music in classroom management, even giving the audience a demonstration of his flute-playing ability. At the end of the evening he showed his many flutes as well as his many books about Métis and First Nations children. Bouchard also put in a plug for DEHR committees, saying that it is important for teachers to get involved in such committees, especially given the ever-increasing diversity of students entering Alberta schools.

The evening ended with food and music by Ray O'Toole and Janina Carlstad and her partner (Janina is a member of the tridistrict DEHR Committee). As well, members from the three school districts talked about how they formed the tridistrict committee and what its purpose is. Essentially, the tridistrict DEHR Committee respects diversity and recognizes, understands and accepts differences in people. It involves understanding that equity is ensuring that people have equitable chances to reach their potential and that human rights ensure that people live in a society free from injustice due to race, religion, sexual orientation, age, socioeconomic status, gender identity and so on.

Jennifer Wathen is a member of the 2012/13 DEHR Committee. She teaches at Mother Teresa Catholic School, in Grande Prairie.





A List of DEHR Committee Publications

Compassionate Classrooms: Understanding Student Mental Health

Produced by the ATA, the Canadian Mental Health Association and Global Television to help build awareness of the Healthy Minds, Bright Futures program, this reference booklet provides teachers with information on common mental health issues, tools to identify students in need and resources to help teachers make referrals to mental health professionals.



Salles de classe refuges

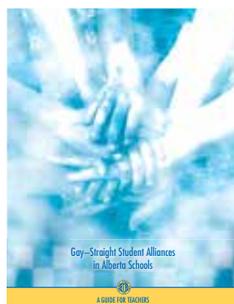
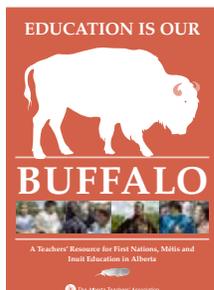
Produit par l'ATA, l'Association canadienne pour la santé mentale et Global Television, ce guide de référence a pour but de promouvoir la campagne

Bonne santé mentale : avenir prometteur et d'informer les enseignants de façon à ce

qu'ils puissent reconnaître les symptômes de maladies mentales chez leurs élèves ou collègues et leur indiquer comment obtenir l'aide de professionnels qui pourront les aider.

Education Is Our Buffalo

Written by a team of Aboriginal writers, this guide is intended to make teachers more aware of the history, culture, world views and present-day concerns of Alberta's First Nations, Métis and Inuit people.



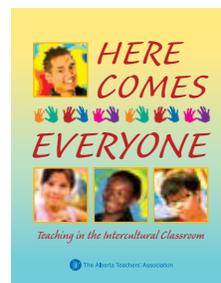
Gay-Straight Student Alliances in Alberta Schools: A Guide for Teachers

Drawing upon current legislation, educational policy and research, this guide describes how best to create and sustain gay-straight student

alliances in Alberta schools.

Here Comes Everyone

This monograph is designed to help school staff establish educational practices that honour and reflect intercultural perspectives. It provides practical advice for teachers, tips for administrators and a list of community resources.



Ici, tout le monde est le bienvenu

Ce guide a pour but d'aider le personnel scolaire à créer et à maintenir des pratiques qui valorisent et reflètent les perspectives interculturelles. Il fournit des conseils pratiques aux enseignants et aux cadres scolaires et une liste de ressources communautaires.

Just in Time

Published twice a year, this electronic newsletter covers issues related to diversity, equity and human rights. Available free by subscription.

Opening Doors in Public Education: A Forum on Diversity, Equity and Human Rights

Contains the proceedings of an invitational symposium on diversity issues that the ATA hosted in 2001.

If man is to survive, he will have learned to take a delight in the essential differences between men and between cultures.

He will learn that differences in ideas and attitudes are a delight, part of life's exciting variety, not something to fear.

—Gene Roddenberry

He who is different from me does not impoverish me, he enriches me. Our unity is constituted in something higher than ourselves.

—Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

Canada's Best Diversity Employers

Canada's Best Diversity Employers recognizes employers across Canada that have exceptional workplace diversity and inclusiveness programs. This competition examines a range of diversity initiatives, including programs for five major employee groups: (a) women, (b) members of visible minorities, (c) persons with disabilities, (d) Aboriginal peoples and (e) lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered/transsexual (LGBT) peoples.

www.canadastop100.com/diversity/

Canadian Centre for Diversity

The mission of the Canadian Centre for Diversity (CCD) is to inform and educate Canadian society about the value of diversity, difference and inclusion. The CCD believes in a Canadian society without prejudice and discrimination, that celebrates diversity, difference and inclusion. Its goals are to eliminate prejudice and discrimination through the advancement of education and public awareness and to provide information and public education concerning attitudes that lead to prejudice and discrimination.

<http://centrefordiversity.ca/whats-new>

List of Diversity, Equity and Human Rights Events Throughout the Year

February—Black History Month. Celebrate the contributions of the black community to our country, province and community.

March 8—International Women's Day. Celebrate the progress made in the rights of women

<http://humanservices.alberta.ca/family-community/15597.html>

March 2—International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

March 21–28—Week of Solidarity with the Peoples Struggling Against Racism and Racial Discrimination

April 17—Equality Day. Celebrate the anniversary of Section 15 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

May 3—World Press Freedom Day. Celebrate the freedom to voice your opinions.
www.unac.org/en/news_events/un_days/press.asp

May 21—World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development. Implement policies that recognize the benefits of our diversity.
www.un.org/depts/dhl/cultural_diversity/

June 20—World Refugee Day. Advocate for the rights of refugees and immigrants.
<http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646c46d.html>

Celebrate Canada in June and July
Eleven days of celebrations including

❖ **National Aboriginal Day June 21:** www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100013248/1100100013249

❖ **Multiculturalism Day June 27:** www.pch.gc.ca/special/canada/11/multi-eng.cfm

❖ **Canada Day July 1:** www.pch.gc.ca/special/canada/11/canada-eng.cfm

June 21—National Aboriginal Day. Learn more about Aboriginal cultures.
www.pch.gc.ca/special/canada/11/jna-nad-eng.cfm

June 27—Multiculturalism Day. Take pride in your ancestry and create opportunities for everyone to feel welcome.
www.pch.gc.ca/special/canada/11/multi-eng.cfm

First Monday in August—Alberta Heritage Day. Recognize the cultural heritage of Alberta and celebrate your own.

August 9—International Day of the World's Indigenous People. Learn more about Canada's First Nations people.
www.un.org/en/events/indigenousday/



August 12—International Youth Day.

Acknowledge the youth in your life.

www.un.org/en/events/youthday/

September 8—International Literacy Day.

Reflect on the right to an education and the role literacy plays in our lives.

www.un.org/depts/dhl/literacy/

September 21—International Day of Peace.

Work for peaceful resolution of conflicts in your family, your community and our society.

www.un.org/en/events/peaceday/

October—Women’s History Month. Celebrate the contributions of women in Canadian society.

www.swc-cfc.gc.ca/dates/whm-mhf/index-eng.html

October 1—International Day for Older Persons.

Honour the contributions older people make to your community.

www.un.org/depts/dhl/olderpersons/

October 10— World Mental Health Day

www.who.int/mediacentre/events/annual/world_mental_health_day/en/index.html

October 16—World Food Day. Raise awareness and take action on issues of food security and hunger.

www.fao.org/wfd2007/index_wfd2007

October 17— International Day for the Eradication of Poverty.

Support efforts to eliminate poverty.

www.un.org/depts/dhl/poverty/

October 18— Persons Day.

Mark the anniversary of women being declared “persons” in law.

<http://humanservices.alberta.ca/family-community/15597.html>

Third Week in October—Citizenship Week.

Show you are proud to be Canadian.

www.pch.gc.ca/pc-ch/minstr/arc_disc-spch/kenney/2007/20071017-eng.cfm

October 24—United Nations Day.

Celebrate the work of the United Nations.

www.unac.org/en/news_events/un_days/un_day1.asp

October 24–30—Disarmament Week.

Work for nuclear-free zones, bans on landmines and peace.

November 5–11—Veterans Week.

Reflect on the many Canadian men and women who gave their lives to protect our democratic way of life in Canada.

www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/veterans-week

November 6—International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict.

Work for peace.

www.un.org/depts/dhl/environment_war/index.html



November 16—International Day of Tolerance.

Move beyond tolerance to acceptance.

www.un.org/depts/dhl/tolerance/

November 20—Universal Children’s Day

Celebrate those rights that allow children to grow and prosper without harm.

www.unac.org/en/news_events/un_days/children1.asp

November 25—International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women.

Work to end gender violence.

www.un.org/en/events/endviolenceday/

November 25–December 10—16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence.

Prevent violence in all its forms.

December 1—World AIDS Day.

Raise awareness of AIDS/HIV.

www.unac.org/en/news_events/un_days/aids1.asp

www.health.alberta.ca/health-info/HIV.html

December 2—International Day for the Abolition of Slavery.

Discuss circumstances for how slavery can continue and work to eliminate them.

www.un.org/depts/dhl/slavery/index.html

December 3—International Day of Disabled Persons.

Raise awareness of the needs and concerns of disabled people.

www.unac.org/en/news_events/un_days/disabled1.asp

December 6—National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women.

Remember the anniversary of the Montreal Massacre when 14 women were murdered at Ecole Polytechnique, and educate others about violence against women.

www.swc-cfc.gc.ca/dates/vaw-vff/index-eng.html

December 10—International Human Rights Day.

Celebrate and educate about human rights and fundamental freedoms by hosting an event, undertaking an activity or taking action.

Literacy is a bridge from misery to hope. It is a tool for daily life in modern society. It is a bulwark against poverty, and a building block of development, an essential complement to investments in roads, dams, clinics and factories. Literacy is a platform for democratization, and a vehicle for the promotion of cultural and national identity. Especially for girls and women, it is an agent of family health and nutrition. For everyone, everywhere, literacy is, along with education in general, a basic human right.... Literacy is, finally, the road to human progress and the means through which every man, woman and child can realize his or her full potential.”

—Kofi Annan

NOTICES AND EVENTS

April 17–19, 2013. Montreal, Que: Rethinking Race and Sexuality: Feminist Conversations, Contestations, and Coalitions. This three-day international conference, organized by the Simone de Beauvoir Institute, brings together scholars, activists, artists, and students from a broad range of disciplines and fields to discuss the complex ways in which race and sexuality shape one another. Website: http://wsdb.concordia.ca/news-and-events/upcoming-events/documents/35thconf_engfinal.pdf

Contact person: Michelle Lacombe at events.coordinator.sdbi@gmail.com.

April 23–24, 2013. Toronto, Ont: Workforce One-Stop: Developing People for a Cutting-Edge Workforce. This Conference Board of Canada event presents the latest insights into guiding, developing and retraining skilled talent through a combination of strategies, research, tools and programs directed at issues such as the multigenerational workforce and workplace diversity. Cost: Not-for-profits: \$695/ governments and corporations: \$995. To register go to www.conferenceboard.ca/conf/13-0047.

April 24–25. Richmond Hill, Ont: Diversity, Equity and Inclusivity Symposium. This event organized by the Community Inclusivity Reference Group includes topics such as building respectful relationships with First Nations communities, an organization's journey on the road to inclusivity and equity, and cultural diversity in the workplace. Keynote speakers are Stephen Lewis and Jean Augustine. Cost: \$225. For more information, contact Michael Bowe, at michael.bowe@yorkcas.org.

April 29–May 1. Saskatoon, Sask: Inclusion Works '13. This event will transform your organization into an employer of choice for Aboriginal talent and a company of choice for Aboriginal business opportunities. Cost: \$1,045/ NFP or Aboriginal organization: \$895. Register at www.aboriginalhr.ca/en/inclusion13/Registration. For more information, contact Rudy Rehn. Phone: 306-956-5392.

May 1–2. Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont: Influencing Skills for Women Leaders. A two-day intensive session for women who want to develop and practise skills in effectively influencing others to achieve exceptional results and advance their careers. Participants receive videotapes of sessions, feedback and Niagara Coach reviews. To register or for more information, send an e-mail to info@NiagaraInstitute.com or phone 1-800-663-7305.

May 2–3. Calgary, Alta: Western Canada Immigration and Diversity Forum 2013: Translating Diversity into Business Advantage. How can you source the best talent from Canada and

abroad while making the internal changes needed to take full advantage of an increasingly diverse workforce? At this Conference Board of Canada event, national and international experts share insight so you can learn how to capitalize on the energy and talent of each person in your organization, embrace diversity of thought and tap into the growing Aboriginal labour market. [Register online for this event](#) and quote rebate code PRM3 to save \$460 off of the total registration fee. Contact: Joel Elliott. E-mail: elliott@conferenceboard.ca.

May 6–7. Toronto, Ont: Engaging Hearts and Minds: Human Rights and Social Justice Issues Today. Third annual international academic conference, organized by Centennial College, Institute for Global Citizenship and Equity, looks at activities, trends and possibilities in the field of human rights, social justice and global citizenship. Website: www.centennialcollege.ca/engagingheartsandminds2013. Contact person: Amanda Sampson.

June 4–6. Toronto, Ont: Ninth Women and Leadership Conference. Hear presentations by top-ranking female executives as they share career and leadership tips, uncover strategies that guarantee professional advancement and greater work-life balance, and learn how to break through gender barriers that stand between where you are and where you want to be in your organization. For more information, send an e-mail to info@federatedpress.com; telephone: 1-800-363-0722.

August 6–9. Montreal, Que: International Society of Diversity and Inclusion Professionals 2nd Annual Conference. This conference includes the Legends of Diversity Dinner. For more details, go to www.diversityinclusionprofessionals.org

October 17–18. Winnipeg, Man: Strangers in New Homelands Conference 2013. The conference, organized by the Faculty of Social Work at the University of Manitoba, brings together researchers, academics, students, NGOs, government representatives, policy makers and other stakeholders from around the world to promote exchanges and discussions on migrations, settlement and integration of newcomers. Conference website: www.strangersconference.com.

October 30–November 2. Montreal, Que: The 15th Annual ILA Global Conference—Leadership for Local and Global Resilience. Join us for the International Leadership Association's 15th Annual Global Conference, Leadership for Local and Global Resilience: The Challenges of a Shifting Planet. Conference website: www.ila-net.org/Conferences/2013/index.htm.

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