

a fine **FACTA**



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MADD About Town

Editorial

Bonnie Cohoe



By the time you read this, it will be close to summer holidays. We seem to be very much in an in-between time. Conferences and exhibitions are finished for 2012/13, and preparations are being made for our 50th-anniversary conference. The provincial budget will

have been passed, and the fallout will be yet to come. One of the articles in this issue of *a Fine FACTA* is a review of a survey completed in 2003 that looked at where we were 10 years ago; several people are now working hard on helping formulate curriculum and policy that will be appropriate for the next 10 or more years. The provincewide art exhibition held in February

was a great success, due in large part to the work done by Tammy Watt. The fall issue of *a Fine FACTA* will provide a review of the exhibition.

It is almost deceptively quiet, this in-between time, and yet it is a very crucial time, a bit like the time between the scattering of the petals from the blossoms on fruit trees and the appearance of ripe fruit. I hope you will read the articles in this edition with a view to considering your goals for fine arts education, your own teaching and education in general, and what you can do to reach those goals. The conference this fall will help you imagine the possibilities; it will inspire you and help you inspire your students to create works of art in media and performances, and it will provide many opportunities to celebrate what has been and what may be.

I look forward to meeting you at the conference, and hope your summer will be refreshing, rewarding and renewing.



A Message from Your Fine Arts Council Conference Planning Committee!

This year we will be celebrating our 50th anniversary as a council! Our annual conference will be held at the Sheraton Cavalier, in Calgary, from October 24 to 26. This year's theme is "Imagine, Create, Inspire ... Celebrate!" You can look forward to stimulating workshops, networking with colleagues, a remarkable banquet with inspiring keynote speaker Matthew Varey, live musical entertainment and much more. We look forward to celebrating this anniversary with you in October. Please visit <http://fac.teachers.ab.ca> for more information and registration.



Arts-ful Features

Alberta Foundation for the Arts Grants Information

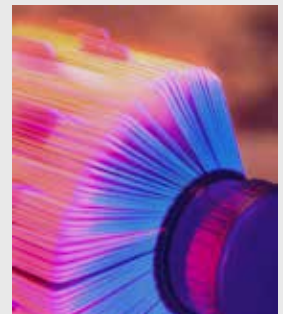
The Alberta Foundation for the Arts (AFA) grants up to \$15,000 to schools to hire Alberta professional artists to provide interactive arts workshops in any arts discipline. Application forms, guidelines and a tip sheet can be downloaded from www.affta.ab.ca/Resources/Grant-Help-And-Resources?type=Organizational-Projects-Grant&stream=Artists-And-Education&information=Guidelines or <http://tinyurl.com/brd2x8q>.

The next deadline for artist residency projects is April 1, 2014, for projects to take place in the 2014/15 school year.

Inquiries may be directed to Paul Reich, arts development consultant with the Arts Branch of Alberta Culture, by telephone at 780-415-0287 (in Edmonton and area) or 310-0000 (toll free in Alberta) or by e-mail to paul.reich@gov.ab.ca.

Directory of Artists

The Arts Touring Alliance of Alberta (ATAA) maintains a directory that schools can use to get information about artists who provide school residency programs. Schools do not have to use an artist from this or any other list—it is a resource, not an endorsed or preapproved list of artists. Schools may choose to work with any professional Alberta artist in any arts discipline. For more information, go to www.artstouring.com/yad.php.



Relationship Building Is Important

John Poulsen, with Steve Allen, Meaghan Cahill, Keiffer Davies, Kellie Doyle, Courtney Gillingham, Katie Howse, Megan Lawrence, Sara Sinclair and Rachelle Thompson

Relationships are important. The relationships teachers develop with their students are arguably the basis of a positive learning environment and therefore are vital to teaching and learning. This article is an examination of the importance of relationships and how a teacher might consciously develop interpersonal relationships.

The authors of this article are a professor, John Poulsen, and interns (Steve Allen, Meaghan Cahill, Keiffer Davies, Kellie Doyle, Courtney Gillingham, Katie Howse, Megan Lawrence, Sara Sinclair and Rachelle Thompson) from the Faculty of Education, University of Lethbridge. The U of L education program ends with an extended practicum that is called an internship to indicate the higher expectations placed on the students. During this four-month internship, students perform much like a .5 FTE first-year teacher. The interns teach, under the supervision of a certified teacher, half a normal teaching load. Interns usually start in late August and continue until Christmas. They start classes with students after summer holidays, and it becomes their responsibility to create a positive learning environment where they and their students can flourish.

Importance

Positive interpersonal relationships are the basis for community, safety and learning. The teacher's ultimate

goal is to create a community for which the students feel responsible and in which they feel safe and, therefore, able to take risks and create. Some students need support in every class, and this is possible only through positive relationships. As Courtney stated, "When students feel like they are worth you putting in the time to get to know them, this helps them see their own self-worth. Relationships are the centre of their universe!"

Planning

How does a new teacher develop these vital interpersonal relationships? It begins before the first day of school. It begins with being eager and excited to meet the students. It continues with having high hopes and expectations for the first day. Steve suggests that first-day nerves and anticipation are common for new teachers, "The staff members that I met were all as anxious as I was. Because the school is so far north, there are constant changes in staff. This means that there are 19 new teachers here."

Planning to interact with your students is a must. Greeting students at the door on the first day can be a good way to begin the connections. Making sure that there is time before, during and after your lessons to interact is important. Katie states, "I want to develop relationships that create a safe learning environment,

where students can take risks. I worked harder for teachers that I knew, not just by name but because they had shared a part of their life with me.”

Drama

Fine arts teachers in general, and drama teachers in particular, want to create a positive learning environment so that teaching and learning can take place. Connecting with your students may be more important in a drama class than in other courses. Kellie states that “Interpersonal relationships are important to any teacher, but I think more so for drama teachers. The reason I say this is because in a drama class I expect students to be able to be themselves wholly, as well as being able to step outside their comfort zones and try new things. If I don’t have good relationships with my students (again, based on professionalism, respect and trust), how am I supposed to expect them to be comfortable and give it their all in class? Interpersonal relationships are important ... extremely important to a drama teacher. End of story. Once you have good relations within your class, managing them becomes rather easy, I should think, and learning can happen and fun can be had.”

First Day

It is important on the first day that the teacher be ready and eagerly awaiting the new students. Treating everyone with respect and remaining calm are important to create a positive learning environment. Calm does not mean dull; it means that the teacher is ready to teach and is interested in the students. Being open to the students and having them see the teacher as a person is the next important step. Keiffer says, “I started by introducing myself and giving my students a bit of insight into who I am. The idea being that if I open up to them, they would in turn open up to me.”

Opening up to your students has to be accomplished at the same time as being seen as the authority figure. This can be tricky, and the balance between them requires constant assessment of their behaviour and reflection. Megan adds, “In order for students to take risks and be silly they need to trust that their teacher will value both their ideas and them as a person.

This requires that a beginning teacher strike a careful balance between being an authority figure and being a partner and guide. When my expectations are met and when I am respected as an authority figure, I like to have fun in my classroom.”

Orientation

A planned and deliberate orientation that focuses on developing relationships with students and between students is vital. Planning activities that encourage interaction and communication is fundamental. Sara states, “I really want them to get to know each other, step out of their comfort zone, meet other students and realize that they can work with other people who may not have already been their friend. I wanted students to realize they have things in common with other students.”

The interns mentioned that orientation activities encouraging students to interact in a low-stress atmosphere are key. Low stress means that students are not required to perform, and groups change quickly and constantly. Changing groups frequently often creates better interpersonal connections between students who might not like one another. Fast-paced activities were mentioned that prevent the students from slipping into their cliques. Games that require the changing of partners frequently, such as Atom, Hand-to-Hand or Fruit Basket, can be powerful helpers in interpersonal development.

Activities to begin the orientation unit usually include name games. The teacher must know the names of the students in the class, but, in order for there to be a positive learning environment, students also must know and use one another’s names. Meaghan states, “We played many name games to at least establish that we are beginning to know each other. Their first project was to create an ‘all about me’ title page for their drama Duo-Tang. These will be presented to the class at the end of our orientation unit. As part of their orientation unit I have made a questionnaire. The students will complete it in sections and share their answers.”

Teachers also have to stay involved after the first day, of course. This includes being part of any production being put on. Sitting outside auditions can give beginning teachers time to chat to the students about anything. These informal chats can lay a good

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foundation for relationships. Speaking to students in the hall can also yield benefits. A comment such as “How was your weekend?” or “Nice shoes!” or even a simple “Hi” can help beginning teachers connect with their students.

Conclusion

On the first day of teaching, the first impression, the first word spoken, and even the first glance at a student are important. Being ready for your first day is central. Having all the lesson plans done is important, but just as important is having thought through how you will be when the students arrive, what you might say and what your underlying attitude will be.

The overall objective for the first days is to create a positive learning environment. A basis of this is interpersonal connection, which requires building trust between the teachers and students and also between the students themselves. The creation of the positive learning environment requires a great deal of planning that includes but does not end with lesson planning. It requires teachers to come to school with a positive attitude and a constant willingness to engage with the students.

What happens when it all goes according to plan? You get a classroom where teaching and learning takes place and where everyone feels safe and respected. Mutual respect between students and teachers helps to eliminate behavioural issues. Rachele states of building relationships with students and fellow teachers, “All of these relationships obviously apply to me because I am planning on becoming the best teacher I can be, and to achieve that I must have positive relationships with all those around me.” Positive relationships encourage student achievement and transform the learning environment into a positive and respectful one.

John Poulsen, PhD, is an associate professor in the Faculty of Education at the University of Lethbridge. His research foci stretch through education, teacher preparation and performance. He has recently written a book titled Shakespeare for Readers’ Theatre; it is available through fiveriverspublishing.com.

Steve Allen is a drama education student at the University of Lethbridge.

Meg Cahill (BFA, BEd) is a recent graduate from the University of Lethbridge. Her educational strengths include leading and guiding collective creations and technical theatre (especially stage managing). She is currently a substitute teacher in Lethbridge School District 51.

Keiffer Davies is a drama education student at the University of Lethbridge.

Kellie Doyle is a drama education student at the University of Lethbridge.

Courtney Gillingham completed her combined degrees in fine arts/drama and education at the University of Lethbridge in December 2012. She taught drama at the junior high level in two practicums during the completion of her degree and is currently teaching drama at the Grade 8 level at Crescent Heights High School, in Medicine Hat, Alberta.

Katie House recently graduated from the University of Lethbridge with a BFA (drama) and a BEd. She has recently finished an independent study focusing on using movement in storytelling. She hopes to bring her work into a high school setting.

Megan Lawrence is a drama education student at the University of Lethbridge.

Sara Sinclair recently graduated from the University of Lethbridge with a combined BFA and BEd, with a minor in CTS. Her plans are to teach middle school in southern Alberta before continuing her education as an art and music therapist.

Rachele Thompson is a recent graduate from the University of Lethbridge with a BFA (drama) and a BEd. Her educational focus is with middle school and junior high at-risk students. She hopes to complete a master’s in administration and counselling in the future. This is her second publication.

Sharing Chinese Music and Culture in Alberta's Music Classrooms: One Cultural Immersion Experience

Kathy Robinson

The sounds of music coming from several Alberta elementary music classrooms this winter have been more diverse as a dozen music teachers strove to put into practice their skills and understandings of Chinese music and culture gained during a two-week music institute at Liaocheng University, in July 2012. Their study was part of Teaching Music Globally: China, a University of Alberta course that led these educators to play traditional Chinese musical instruments such as the *erhu*, *dizi*, *guzheng*, *yangqin*, and *pipa*, and to sing, read, listen and move to traditional and contemporary Chinese music led by master Chinese musicians and educators. The teachers also attended lectures on Chinese music history and instrumental, choral and Peking opera demonstrations; toured Shandong province to Qufu, the birthplace of Confucius, and Mount Taishan; and joined with Liaocheng

music educators in a teachers' symposium, where the groups exchanged information on music education in their respective communities.

The growing diversity of students in Alberta schools has prompted music educators to adopt a more diverse collection of music for their classes. This interest in global sounds, however, is often accompanied by uncertainty about where to begin or what students should know or be able to do with these new sounds. The professional education of a significant number of music teachers focused on a Eurocentric canon, before global musics and broader perspectives on music and music making were encountered or valued. Some scholars also believe that without a personal experience of *otherness*, musically or in general, attempts to develop a curriculum that is global in content and perspectives will be unsuccessful. It is for

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these reasons that Teaching Music Globally: China was developed.

Specifically, I wanted this course to allow students to develop a deeper understanding of the role of culture in learning and music making in China specifically, and unfamiliar cultures in general; expanded frames of reference musically, socially and pedagogically; skill in learning, playing and singing traditional Chinese folk music; awareness of the lens through which we see the world; value for another way of being and doing—musically and/or culturally; and the ability to communicate this learning experience to students and colleagues in a manner that honours and respects the tradition, the music makers and the transmission process. Knowing our desire to increase our skills and understanding and to bring more Chinese music and culture to Alberta’s school children, the Confucius Institute of Edmonton, led by Dr Wei Li and Mr Stuart Wachowicz, graciously provided more than \$10,000 in financial assistance through their Hanban scholarship program for the course participants.

Teaching Music Globally: China began with a weekend meeting in June, at which we examined the lens through which we look at the world as people and as musicians and how this view relates to the many daily decisions we make, such as what repertoire is shared in the classroom, who is musically intelligent and what is a beautiful sound. We discussed the individual challenges we encounter when hearing unfamiliar music and then examined strategies for sharing what we learn about Chinese music with our students. Universals in the world’s musical traditions were also discussed, and we began to uncover some unique aspects and characteristics of Chinese music.

In China, participants opened themselves up to a barrage of new sounds, images and experiences. As they ate unfamiliar foods, learned to read music with numbers and underlining rather than notes on a staff, plunged into singing unknown songs in Mandarin, watched a rehearsal of a children’s choir whose repertoire and tone quality were unusual by Western standards, and carried on tentative conversations with Chinese teachers and students, every day they were in the role of outsider or “other”—musically, personally and socially.

Our two-week course ended with a concert at which we played together as a Chinese traditional instrument orchestra, sang our new vocal repertoire and performed



Katie Wiegman and Kim Wiens, both teachers, playing the erhu in the Chinese traditional orchestra rehearsal



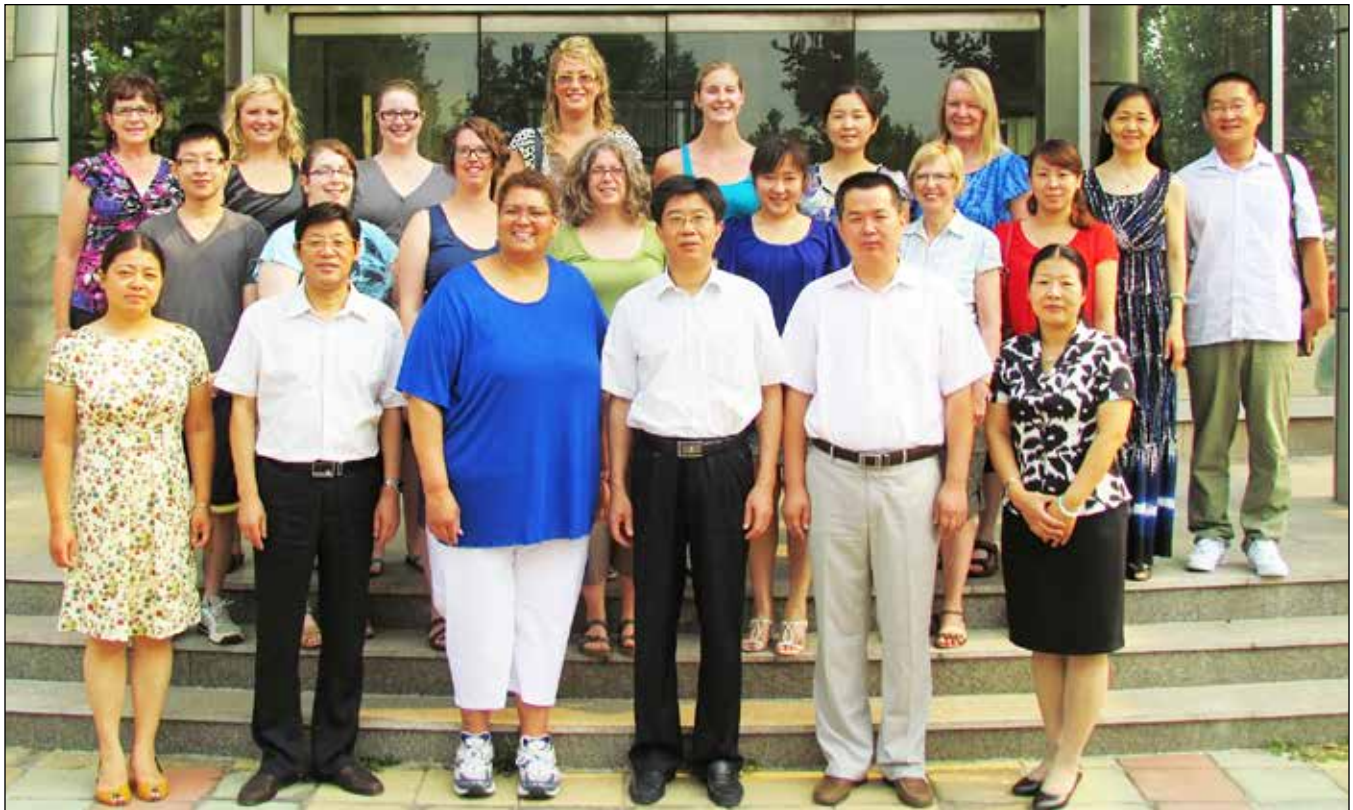
Kathy Robinson, instructor of Teaching Music Globally: China, with her Chinese flute—the dizi

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“Land of the Silver Birch” accompanied by our Chinese teachers and tutors, followed by a farewell Peking duck dinner. The next morning we bid farewell to our new friends in Liaocheng and boarded a fast train for Beijing, where we went our separate ways to explore more of China. Teachers climbed the Great Wall, gazed at hundreds of terracotta warriors, cruised the Yangtze, attended a Peking opera performance and strolled the Bund in Shanghai before returning to Edmonton to craft curriculum projects for their students.

Teachers created units in which children sing and perform Chinese songs on Orff instruments, recorders, *erhus* and handbells, often learned through traditional notation and accompanied or introduced by traditional instruments. Photos and videos from the experience, combined with additional materials in Prezi and

PowerPoint formats, accompany these units and provide a rich context for learning. Some of the many activities developed will have children creating music based on dragon dances or meant to accompany folktales, or using compositional techniques put forth by well-known composer Tan Dun (*Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*) to present in Chinese teahouse performances. In addition, some teachers planned to lead an afterschool *erhu* club or ensemble, explore music of the Silk Road or create band arrangements of Chinese traditional orchestra repertoire. All of it will have at its centre the personal experience gathered during Teaching Music Globally: China. “Wonderful experience,” “great opportunity,” “fabulous” and “life changing” are words that participants used to describe their experience. While these words are strong, it is the teachers’ desires to continue



Participants of the Teaching Music Globally: China course, with officials and music instructors from Liaocheng University, Shandong, China

Back row, left to right: Laura Schular, Katie Wiegman, Shaylyn Buchanan, Jill Davidson, Marcie Frewin, Professor Haihua Wang, Ruby Thielmann, unknown professor of voice from Liaocheng University, Professor Zhu

Second row, left to right: Nathan Chan, Felicity Smith, Kim Wiens, Greer Rinehart, Tutor Bai, Betty Radford, Professor Yin Lei

First row, left to right: Associate Music Dean Mu, International Education Dean Sheng Liu, Dr Kathy Robinson, Liaocheng University Vice President Qiang Wang, unknown official from Liaocheng University, Professor Yuping Han

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to learn through study of Chinese instruments and the many connections with Alberta's Chinese community that are the most powerful in bringing Chinese music and culture, and thus another way of being and doing, into the lives of our increasingly multicultural students.

Kathy M Robinson is associate professor of music education at the University of Alberta, where she has directed several professional development programs for inservice teachers, including Umculo! Kimberley, featuring immersion in Kimberley and Galeshewe, South Africa, and Teaching Music Globally: China, featuring study in Shandong province, China. She has presented and published research focused on world musics in education and culturally relevant pedagogy and is an active clinician, having given more than 90 presentations on five continents.



Nathan Chan, University of Alberta student teacher, practising the guzheng. Notice the notation he is reading!



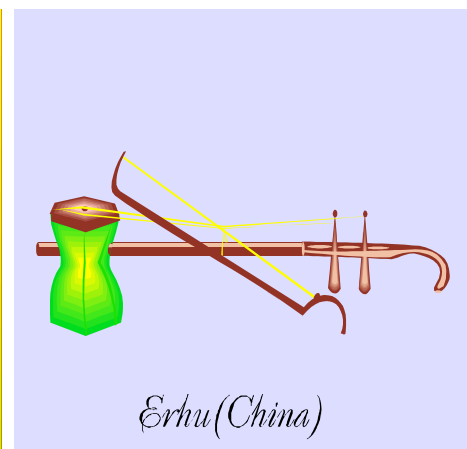
Guan (China)



Di (China)



Suona (China)



Erhu (China)

Art and Magic

Robert Dmytruk

This article was originally published in Issues, Events and Ideas (IEI) no 127 (2011). IEI is the newsletter of the Early Childhood Education Council of the Alberta Teachers' Association.

Art is about magic. It can give life and meaning to thoughts, ideas and emotions. It fosters inquisitiveness and encourages deeper understanding of the world.

As teachers, we have witnessed young students taking hold of a paintbrush and using it as a wand to create magical expressions that are exciting and adventurous. Art opens doors to a discovered world that enriches the life of students in the classroom by giving them an added means of communicating—a visual language.

As early childhood teachers we lay the foundation of skills required to appreciate art in an environment that encourages imagination and adventurousness. The art period, in early childhood education, is an opportunity to prepare for the creative and industrious years that lie ahead for each student. Students will have few other chances to develop their creative potential, a potential that unlocks new ways of communicating and creative problem solving. Therefore, the time we have for art with early childhood students cannot be squandered or left for “next year when they get Mrs Y, who knows more about art.” The magic adventure begins now.

Every teacher has the capacity to understand and teach art. Art is not an elusive, mystical thing that only a few can comprehend and enjoy. Although changing conditions in our elementary schools have meant that

the number of art specialists is reduced, classroom teachers in early childhood education have risen to the challenge and demonstrated their ability to teach art. Many teachers have been doing this for years. And many teachers are able to do this despite their claim of not being able to draw a stickman and despite the limitations of an art curriculum that has not been updated for more than 20 years. Not one of these teachers has more time to teach art than anyone else. It is not easy work, but regardless of all the hurdles, they are not afraid to try new things; they find joy in the creativeness of children and see their work as an art form that has its own validity. Their classrooms foster imaginative and independent thinking, creative problem solving, confidence in children’s own ideas and means of expression, individuality, personal style, and persistence. This is truly magical.

I think it is imperative for teachers to understand that feelings and ideas are far more important than technical cleverness in early childhood art education. Having students produce art through a vague kind of self-expression, or having them struggle to draw objects or people to satisfy a desire for being realistic, does not nourish the magic of art making. That approach to art can be daunting for children of any age.

Teachers or parents often ask “What is it supposed to be?” and react with tolerant amusement to the reply. The student quickly senses that the drawing is inadequate, not realistic enough. He or she has failed to rise up to our adult expectations and the retreat from creativity begins. “I am no good at art”—the feeling builds up and grows throughout the life of the student.

Conversely, when we point out or proclaim that some realistic looking images produced in the classroom

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are “great” or “outstanding,” we dampen the spirit of creativity for many students. Good art is shaped by our adult/teacher vision of art appreciation, but we must remember that realistic or photographic representations are only technical skills.

Not all children have this special ability to see and record. Those who work this way should be encouraged but should not be singled out as the “talented” or serve as models for all others to follow. (Mattil and Marzan 1981, 6)

Every new thing that has ever been created resulted from the imaginative ability of one individual whose vision went beyond the realities of the known world. (Mattil and Marzan 1981, 13)

Our young artists see things differently. They reject irrelevant details when drawing and favour, instead, qualities that are important or of interest to them. They simplify. Details are rejected. Children apply their own selection process and develop their own fresh childhood vision. They engage their own visual language using symbols. The images may be simplistic and childish, but they represent important achievements in attempting to visualize and communicate ideas and feelings. It is important for us to understand what they endeavour to do as they learn to express themselves in a way that many of us as adults seem to have misplaced. One of the exciting things about teaching art is that it can be an extraordinary means of helping children develop a creative new language of visual communication. This language encapsulates a new way of seeing and a new way of growing and being productive and successful in the 21st century.

One simple way to help students develop art appreciation, visual language, feelings and ideas is by visiting an art gallery. Reproductions of art are pleasing to look at in the classroom, but it is far more exciting to stand in front of an original piece of art. Tours can be easily arranged, and tour guides are engaged to reveal the context and meaning of the art and how to appreciate it. Here are some questions you can pose to students:

- What do you see? (Describe the artwork—for example, objects, colours, lines, textures, shape.)
- What part of the artwork do you look at first? How did the artist draw your attention to that part? (Explain what you see.)

- What is the mood of the artwork? The subject? The idea? The meaning? (Think about what it means.)
- Which of the five senses does the artwork appeal to?
- Does this artist use symbols?
- Do you think this artwork is important or valuable? Why or why not?
- If you owned this artwork, where would you display it? Why?

Building your art lessons around a visit to the gallery is powerful. For instance, at the time of writing, the Art Gallery of Alberta, in Edmonton, has an exquisite exhibition by Henri Matisse. He is a master of the expressive language of colour and drawing. Matisse’s drawings are excellent examples of an artist rejecting irrelevant details and simplifying. Imagine the ideas and stories that could emerge after viewing the original work of this master artist!

Connecting art lessons to previous learning and other subject areas is another potent means of building visual language. Recently, a Grade 2 class was studying the regions of Canada. I was asked to present an art lesson that would connect their learning to art. They had been introduced to the various animals that lived in the north, west, east and the prairies of Canada. The class also had some earlier drawing experience.

I briefly introduced the students to Miró and Klee, two artists whose drawings use a process of simplification and imagination. The work of these artists, and many others, is sometimes described in art history as “drawing like a child.” As stated earlier, drawing can be daunting for young students, so for them to view these two influential masters of art using so-called childlike approaches in their artwork creates an excellent atmosphere for drawing in the classroom.

Next, the students began to draw animals from each region of Canada by viewing images that I projected on a whiteboard. After making several warm-up drawings (10 to 12 one-minute contour drawings on 18” × 24” cartridge drawing paper), they were given a fresh piece of paper and drew again; this time they stacked one animal from each region on top of the other. This approach to drawing emerged from *Teaching Children to Draw*, by Marjorie Wilson and Brent Wilson.

The students completed the warm-up drawings (turning the paper and changing the colour of the drawing tool after each drawing) and two stack-up

drawings in 65 minutes! After they completed their stack-up drawings, some students were able to add colour to the animals.

The completed drawings were immediately displayed in the hallway, and the students were thrilled. Learning the regions of Canada had been emphasized and reinforced through the magic of a visual language.

Early childhood art education sets in motion the lifelong spirit of the creative process. The magic can happen in every classroom. It gives each student a foundation to adapt successfully to an indefinable and rapidly changing 21st century.

The future belongs to a very different kind of person with a very different kind of mind—creators and empathizers, pattern recognizers, and meaning makers ... The “right-brain” qualities of inventiveness, empathy, joyfulness, and meaning increasingly will determine who flourishes and who flounders (Pink 2006, 1, 3)

The traditional core subjects provided a ticket to the job market in the past. But this is a new era, one that is more challenging, more global. Competition for jobs will require people to offer skills that are out unique and creative.

Teachers have the keys to open the doors to student’s imagination, inquisitiveness and adventurousness. The doors must open today. Tomorrow will be too late.



Grade 2 student,
Bissett School, Edmonton



Grade 2 student,
Bissett School, Edmonton

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Grade 2 display, Bissett School

Book Review

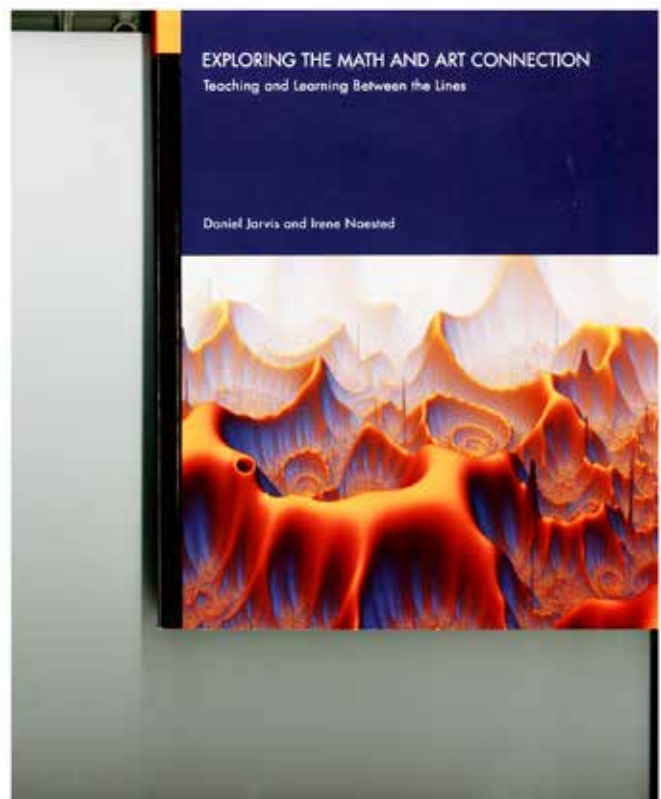
Roberta La Haye

Exploring the Math and Art Connection: Teaching and Learning Between the Lines

Daniel Jarvis and Irene Naested.
Calgary: Brush Education, 2012

Exploring the Math and Art Connection: Teaching and Learning Between the Lines is a new publication by Dr Daniel Jarvis (Nipissing University) and Dr Irene Naested (Mount Royal University), two education professors with expertise in teaching art and mathematics. The book is intended as a teaching resource for educators, especially at the elementary level. It is built on the principles that both mathematics and visual arts provide valuable tools with which to understand the world around us and that connecting the two disciplines can help students appreciate and understand mathematics and art even more.

I had the pleasure of teaching a new course for future elementary educators with Dr Naested on the integration of mathematics and visual arts for pedagogical reasons. This book was both a valuable resource for the course and an eye-opener for me. As a professor of mathematics with an interest in visual art and some experience with math/art outreach activities, I thought I had a decent understanding of the math/art connection. I was wrong! Many learning experiences I had thought of as math/art are actually math activities with crafts added on to make mathematics more appealing.



These “math crafts” give no consideration to artistic principles or the true value of integrated learning to both math and art.

The first chapter of the book outlines some of the history of the mathematics/art connection and discusses a breadth of educational theories and strategies that support connecting the two disciplines. The hope is to convince readers of the value to students of exploiting the connections in the classroom.

Arts-ful Features

The second chapter highlights some of the major elements of both the mathematics curriculum and the art curriculum and ends with a discussion of how to plan integrated activities. A single chapter can't make a math teacher an art expert or an art teacher a math expert. Instead, the chapter serves to emphasize that both disciplines have a substantial and meaningful curriculum and there are links between them.

Chapters 3 through 7 get down to the nuts and bolts of exploiting connections between the two subjects through possible teaching and learning experiences. The authors deliberately chose not to organize the chapters using the math or art curricula. Instead, they have organized the topics according to the world around us. There are chapters related to flora, fauna, the human figure, architecture and designed objects. The authors' discussion of the topics also brings in some connections to other disciplines, from science to sociology.

A few examples of the learning experiences outlined include linking grid drawings and distorted grid drawings to measurement and area; measuring angles and using symmetry to construct kaleidoscope patterns; making data collection a part of the artistic process of realistically capturing the human figure; problem solving with ratios to get a life-size depiction of a sasquatch. Imagine discussing math and art topics not because you hit that section in the textbook but because you and your students were looking at the world around and saw them there!

Finally, in Chapter 8, the authors further discuss the why of curriculum integration and get into a few specifics on how integration can be achieved. The chapter warns that to do a good job of integrating mathematics and art curricula in learning experiences, the teacher must have a good understanding of both and must have taken the time to carefully plan the

lessons. The references and resources in the back of the book are also an asset.

Overall, I do think that the book consistently puts a little more emphasis on art. This is probably because the two authors have more combined experience in that discipline than in mathematics. From the mathematics viewpoint, it is interesting to see experts in another discipline also lamenting how little respect their discipline gets and how its goals are being watered down.

There are some really nice ideas in these chapters but, for the sake of breadth and to appeal to a wider audience, the book simply outlines the learning experiences. The onus is on the reader to flesh them out and customize them to their individual goals in the curriculum. This is not necessarily an easy task but has the potential to be a very rewarding one. I'd recommend this book to any educator who is open to the idea of truly integrated math and art activities and willing to put in the time and effort to expand their expertise and apply the book's ideas to their own curriculum goals. It will not be your only resource but it will be a great start.



Roberta La Haye is an associate professor of mathematics at Mount Royal University, in Calgary, Alberta, where she teaches courses in calculus, algebra and statistics and has helped develop and run a course in general education as well as a course connecting mathematics and art for future educators. She has a PhD in group theory and, in the past few years, has developed an interest in the ties between mathematics and art.

Curriculum Survey 2003: An Examination

John Poulsen

This is an examination of the survey results from a 2003 survey sent out to fine arts teachers in Alberta. The survey was commissioned and conducted by the Fine Arts Council of the Alberta Teachers' Association. The questions were created by the Fine Arts Council and should not be seen as indication that something may or may not take place—that is, the results of the survey and the following opinions do not reflect government policy or decisions.

This examination of a ten-year-old survey is relevant today because the process for developing a new curriculum is under way. Reflection on the past can give us insights into the future. Seeing what was said ten years ago can give us thoughts about what could be relevant or irrelevant today.

A new curriculum is important to all of us. We all want the important work we do in the arts to continue without being hindered by curriculum. Furthermore, we want a curriculum that can help us become more effective in our chosen field. It is hoped that examining the survey results from ten years ago will inform our discussions about a future curriculum.

One hundred and thirteen teachers responded to the 2003 survey—37 teachers of art, 44 of drama, 12 of dance and 45 of music, for a total of 138, which means that some teachers taught more than one of the fine arts subjects. The range in years of experience was from 1 to 45. Eighteen respondents had graduate degrees in their specific discipline and 11 indicated that though they had degrees, they felt they had no formal

education background in their fine arts subject. Eighty-six teachers felt that they had received adequate training to be able to teach their subjects, while 17 did not. Sixty-four teachers felt that they had received adequate continuing professional development, while 29 did not.

The survey asked teachers about their practice with reference to their training, facilities and professional development. It also asked their opinions on their current fine arts curricula and what they would like to see in new curricula.

Teachers completed the survey using a Likert scale—they were presented with statements with which they had to decide whether they strongly agreed, agreed, were undecided, disagreed or strongly disagreed. For example, teachers were given the statement, “Some of the core subject areas are currently being unified under the Western Canadian Protocol. Fine Arts Education should follow this lead and have a unified Western Canadian Protocol.” The response was

Strongly Disagree	40
Disagree	14
Undecided	21
Agree	24
Strongly Agree	10

According to these figures, 54 teachers would not be in favour of a fine arts pan-provincial protocol, but 34 would be in favour. These numbers suggest that teachers would lean toward no protocol.

Arts-ful Features

A stronger indication came from the next statement, “Many provinces have started to offer an integrated arts curriculum where all of the arts are seen as a single subject and taught by a single specialist teacher. Alberta should follow this lead and integrate at the following grade levels ...”

	K-3	4-6	7-9	10-12
Strongly Disagree	44	73	71	76
Disagree	22	10	11	7
Undecided	18	12	12	12
Agree	15	5	5	4
Strongly Agree	13	11	11	13

At the K-3 level, 66 teachers disagreed, compared to 28 who agreed. This suggests that if offered integrated curriculum at the K-3 level, teachers would oppose it, but not as much as they would at the 10-12 level, where 83 teachers were opposed and only 17 supported such a plan.

Teachers were asked to rate how important the current curriculum guide was in planning their lessons. The following numbers suggest that though the majority of teachers believed that the curriculum was important there seems to be some variation.

Art

Not Important	3
Of Little Importance	4
Undecided	2
Important	13
Very Important	5

Drama

Not Important	1
Of Little Importance	
Undecided	3
Important	17
Very Important	14

Music

Not Important	2
Of Little Importance	1
Undecided	2
Important	16
Very Important	6

Though 22 of the 27 (81 per cent) respondents indicated that the current music curriculum is important when creating lessons, only 18 of 27 (67 per cent) art teachers were of the same opinion. Thirty-one of 35 (89 per cent) drama teachers felt the curriculum was important. This suggests overall satisfaction with their respective curricula, with art teachers being the least satisfied with the present curriculum and drama teachers being the most satisfied. This could suggest that art teachers are most interested in a new curriculum, followed by music then drama teachers.

It should be noted that dance teachers may actually be the most interested in a new curriculum because there is not a provincewide Alberta Education-mandated curriculum. Dance programs in Alberta schools are locally developed.

Continuing with the examination of what was important to teachers when creating lessons, the survey gave approximately 14 suggestions that teachers were to rate according to importance. Art teachers indicated that (1) perceived student interests (28 of 29, or 97 per cent), (2) material available (27 of 28, or 96 per cent) and (3) a personal collection of successful lessons (26 of 30, or 87 per cent) were of most importance when creating lessons.

Drama teachers rated their preferences similarly. When creating lessons they valued their (1) personal collection of successful lessons (33 of 35, or 94 per cent), (2) ideas from arts specialists (33 of 37, or 89 per cent) and (3) perceived student interests (32 of 35, or 91 per cent).

Music teachers rated the important factors in creating lessons slightly differently. The top three considerations were (1) a personal collection of successful lessons (25 of 27, or 96 per cent), (2) seasonal projects (23 of 26, or 88 per cent) and (3) a variety of assessment strategies for students at different ability levels (23 of 26, or 88 per cent).

Dance teachers indicated that (1) ideas from arts specialists (7 of 7, or 100 per cent), (2) the current skill level of the students (novice, intermediate, advanced) (3 of 3, or 100 per cent) and (3) a personal collection of successful lessons (6 of 7, or 86 per cent) were important when creating lessons. That the current skill level of the students ranked highly with dance teachers suggests strong skill building within dance programs. Comments later in the survey suggest that dance is on a continuum—that for dance students, skills are built on from year to year.

Arts-ful Features

It is interesting to note that all four groups valued their personal collection of successful lessons in the top three considerations when creating lessons. It seems that music teachers have seasonal considerations such as concerts for special events (Christmas, graduation and competitions, such as Kiwanis festivals) that are important when creating lessons. Art, dance, and drama teachers seemed more interested and perhaps able to adapt to perceived student interest when forming lessons. Ideas from specialists were important to both dance and drama teachers.

The overall intention of the 2003 survey was to gain a base understanding of fine arts teachers' needs with regard to the impending new curricula. At the end of the survey, comments were solicited regarding what should be retained from the current curriculum and what additions should be in the new curriculum. Comments from art teachers may help shed light on what the new curriculum should aim for. There were a few comments that suggested that the content of the current art curriculum was basically good but the structure was, "difficult to penetrate." Another prevalent theme was that clarity and suggestions were needed for teachers who were not trained to teach art. Some teachers suggested that the new curriculum should include online resources and lesson examples, as do some other curricula. Another suggestion was for an easily accessible list of books, kits and resources for teachers who have never taught art in a school that has no resources. Technology was another common theme. It seems that teachers want a curriculum that has the flexibility to incorporate technology that is available now and other technology that may not have been implemented or invented yet.

Drama teachers' comments echoed some of the same themes. Inexperienced teachers who were given drama classes to teach seemed to despair at the lack of resources and lesson ideas. It seems that lesson and unit suggestions should be part of the new drama curriculum. Another common theme in the comments was the distinction between *theatre* and *drama*. *Theatre* was defined as being focused on developing students for performance, while *drama* was defined as developing students' personal skills and personal understanding. It was mentioned that drama (as more clearly defined by Heathcote and Boulton 1994, Way 1967 and Courtney 1968) should not be lost in the coming curriculum. Some teachers wanted better assessment examples

within the curriculum, including examples of rubrics. Finally, many drama teachers spoke of the strength of the current drama curriculum and indicated that the new curriculum must remain flexible.

Music teachers seem to have a range of opinions on the strength of their current curriculum. One theme was that the curriculum desperately needs to be changed, while another prevalent theme was that the current music concepts and skills are good and need not be changed. Elementary music teachers seem concerned about the time allocated to music being cut to mere minutes a week. Teachers also seem concerned about technology and music, and many teachers request inservice help to stay current with technology. Finally, a few teachers mentioned needing help in assessment, especially as it relates to skill testing. A common theme was the lack of specific resources to teach the curriculum. One teacher expressed the frustration this way: "If the school does not have certain instruments, it cannot teach appropriate curriculum instruments that are suggested."

Dance teachers seemed generally frustrated that dance is not a provincially recognized subject like the other fine arts. One teacher commented that dance instruction must include a philosophical examination of "Why do we dance?" Another idea shared by all dance respondents was that the provincially mandated dance curriculum should have multiple strands that allow dance teachers to select from an array of dance styles.

A common theme was a call to have trained fine arts teachers teaching the fine art. Almost as many comments called for help for teachers who were assigned fine arts classes with little or no training. This challenge seems to be a long-term conundrum within the fine arts. Training during undergraduate study is vital. However, many excellent fine arts teachers did not enter teaching with the background that they now have, so perhaps it is safest to say that trained fine arts teachers are preferred but if someone is assigned a fine arts class there should be curricular and professional development in place to assist him or her. The assistance should be in the form of a curriculum that is easy to understand and examples that are easily accessible.

This survey, though informative, is 10 years old. Another survey would be timely because it seems that curriculum reform *may* be close at hand (again).

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Bringing the curriculum to life[©]

SOCIAL STUDIES PROJECTS FOR KINDERGARTEN TO GRADE 6

Clay for Kids Scholarship Program

In 2010, Clay for Kids created a scholarship program to give back to schools that regularly support our clay programs. Thirty-four Calgary and area schools qualified and received scholarships totaling over \$15,000 in value for the empowerment of students in the arts. The Scholarship is available to schools that have over 60% of their student body participating in CFK classes, the Artist in Residency program, or a wall tile mural project during the school year.

Clay is one of the most effective art mediums for children to discover and develop their creative and learning skills. Each class is 90 - 120 minutes which includes a pottery wheel presentation and each student creating their own clay project. The work is dried and fired and returned to the school within 21 days. A follow up painting class is available.

The cost for clay building is \$9+gst per student, for classes with 18 or more students. A flat rate of \$170+gst is charged for classes with fewer than 18 students. Follow up painting class is \$6 per student. We request 2 -4 bookings per day.

Each grade incorporates a set of social studies projects, many of which have come as a result of teacher suggestion. Social projects by grade include:

Kind	Popular Projects	All about Me Picture Frame, My Favourite Book
Gr. 1	My World	Family Plaque, Hand Plaque Personal Plaque, City Scape
Gr. 2	Canada's Dynamic Communities	Arctic Animals, Prairies (Grain Elevator), Atlantic (Lighthouse), Northern (Inukshuk), Inuit mask, Totem Pole
Gr. 3	Peru Tunisia India Ukraine	Peruvian Child, Toucan Dougga Dwelling, Decorated Camel Taj Mahal, Elephant Coil Pot Ukrainian Child
Gr. 4	A sense of AB land Alberta - the stories, history and people	Alberta Mural Pioneer Log Schoolhouse Tee Pee, Buffalo, City Scape
Gr. 5	Histories & Ways of Life	Voyageur Pioneer Log Schoolhouse
Gr. 6	Government Early Canada	Four Pillars of Democracy Iroquois Mask



Artist in Residency Program - Our program offers unique and creative clay projects and individual pottery wheel work supporting personalized learning, sensory development, fine motor skills, self-esteem, imagination, problem solving skills, discipline and pride in students.

Three Programs offered for the classroom:

- 1) The "Power of Masks" featuring "Masks around the World" for Grades K-4 and "The Culture of Masks" for Grades 5-9 which includes a dynamic 20 minute Power Point presentation.
- 2) Over 75 substantial clay making projects that connect curriculum in each grade.
- 3) Construction of clay tile murals by all students & staff.

Costs include a two hour clay class, each student making a project on the pottery wheel accompanied by a second CFK Instructor, follow-up painting class (includes all paints, finishes and Instructor lead class). As well, professional development, glazing and showcase.

Mural prices remain between \$15 - \$20 per tile (cost is for the mural tiles only, each student working on the pottery wheel is an option). Six weeks from start to finish.

To view all our projects and get more details about Artist in Residence visit:

**www.clayforkidscalgary.com
www.clayforkidsedmonton.com
www.clayforkidsreddeer.com**

Submitting to *A Fine FACTA*

Add the goal of being published to your teacher professional growth plan and submit something to *A Fine FACTA*! Submissions may include the following:

- Practical classroom tips, lesson plans and rubrics
- Resource reviews
- Movie and book reviews
- Personal reflections on classroom experiences
- Stories and poems by teachers, students and student teachers
- Student artwork

Please include a short (three- to five-sentence) biography and your address so that a copy of the issue in which your work appears can be sent to you.

Submit signed permission forms for student work or photographs of students.

Send submissions to Bonnie Cohoe, 24 Signature Place SW, Calgary, AB T3H 3A1; e-mail thecks@shaw.ca

Permission to Print Photograph/Student Work

Your child has submitted a piece of work or appears in a photograph that we would like to print in the next issue of *A Fine FACTA*. *A Fine FACTA* is a journal that goes to teachers across Alberta who are members of the Fine Arts Council of the Alberta Teachers' Association.

By signing below, I give permission for my child's work or photograph to be considered for publication in an upcoming issue of *A Fine FACTA*. This permission form will be forwarded to the journal editor.

Parent/guardian name _____ Signature _____

Student name _____ Signature _____

Teacher _____ Signature _____

School _____ School location _____

Notes to teachers:

- When submitting student work, please include the Permission to Print form with all signatures completed. Send the student work/photograph and the permission form to the editor of *A Fine FACTA*, Bonnie Cohoe, 24 Signature Place SW, Calgary, AB T3H 3A1; e-mail thecks@shaw.ca.
- Work may be submitted electronically to thecks@shaw.ca. Please ensure that the permission form is mailed to the address above.



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We are there for you!



The Alberta
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www.teachers.ab.ca

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Diversity • Equity • Human Rights Diversity • Equity • Human Rights

Specialist councils' role in promoting diversity, equity and human rights

Alberta's rapidly changing demographics are creating an exciting cultural diversity that is reflected in the province's urban and rural classrooms. The new landscape of the school provides an ideal context in which to teach students that strength lies in diversity. The challenge that teachers face is to capitalize on the energy of today's intercultural classroom mix to lay the groundwork for all students to succeed. To support teachers in their critical roles as leaders in inclusive education, in 2000 the Alberta Teachers' Association established the Diversity, Equity and Human Rights Committee (DEHRC).

DEHRC aims to assist educators in their legal, professional and ethical responsibilities to protect all students and to maintain safe, caring and inclusive learning environments. Topics of focus for DEHRC include intercultural education, inclusive learning communities, gender equity, UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network, sexual orientation and gender variance.

Here are some activities the DEHR committee undertakes:

- Studying, advising and making recommendations on policies that reflect respect for diversity, equity and human rights
- Offering annual Inclusive Learning Communities Grants (up to \$2,000) to support activities that support inclusion
- Producing *Just in Time*, an electronic newsletter that can be found at www.teachers.ab.ca; Teaching in Alberta; Diversity, Equity and Human Rights.
- Providing and creating print and web-based teacher resources
- Creating a list of presenters on DEHR topics
- Supporting the Association instructor workshops on diversity

Specialist councils are uniquely situated to learn about diversity issues directly from teachers in the field who see how diversity issues play out in subject areas. Specialist council members are encouraged to share the challenges they may be facing in terms of diversity in their own classrooms and to incorporate these discussions into specialist council activities, publications and conferences.

Diversity, equity and human rights affect the work of all members. What are you doing to make a difference?

Further information about the work of the DEHR committee can be found on the Association's website at www.teachers.ab.ca under Teaching in Alberta, Diversity, Equity and Human Rights.

Alternatively, contact Andrea Berg, executive staff officer, Professional Development, at andrea.berg@ata.ab.ca for more information.

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