

# A Message from the MIDDLE



Volume 9, Number 4, March 2019

## President's Message



A third of the school year is almost completed, and as the weather begins to change, teaching in the middle is some days tough. I have compiled a

list of things every middle school teacher should know and do:

1. Know your kids and let them know you. Build relationships!
2. Plan activities that create a positive classroom climate.
3. Make learning relevant and fun.
4. Work together with people on staff.
5. For goodness sake, laugh and have fun.
6. Discipline, don't punish.

7. Establish routines in your class. Students need these.
8. Mix things up, such as seating plans, groups and questioning techniques.
9. Let students know you care. Volunteer your time outside of the class.
10. Use technology. It is here to stay.

Remember, teaching middle school is hard work but very rewarding. Hang in there and enjoy the ride. I have for 25 years and love it.

The Middle Years Council is continuously looking for new ways to support middle years teachers. We are committed to ensuring that you receive as much as possible from your membership. If you have any ideas that would make your years in the middle better, please contact me at [jeremy.spink@rdpsd.ab.ca](mailto:jeremy.spink@rdpsd.ab.ca). We would appreciate your feedback. I hope that you love being part of the Middle Years Council and that you have a great year in the middle. I look forward to seeing you at the annual conference in Banff in April.

*Jeremy Spink*

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## ENGAGING MIDDLE LEVEL LEARNERS: FIVE THINGS TO CONSIDER

- Is the task relevant to the students?
- Are you giving students the opportunity to be creative and to differentiate the task in order to best meet their own learning style?
- Does the task encourage and require critical thinking?
- Are you providing motivating feedback throughout the learning process?
- Are students aware of the outcomes being assessed?

## IDEAS FOR BUILDING AND STRENGTHENING RELATIONSHIPS

- Personally connect with each student.
  - Find at least one thing you have in common.
- End on a positive note.
  - End each class or day purposefully with an activity or task that encourages smiles or laughter.
- Ensure that students know they are heard.
  - Address their concerns and validate them.

*Abby Stillwell*

# Several Reasons to Become a Teacher

Presenting a session to new teachers at the 2018 Beginning Teachers' Conference in Calgary took me back to that exciting time of remembering why one goes into teaching.

As the new teachers gathered around during lunch in a buzz of chatter ("Wow! I'm going to use that." "That inspired me." "I hope I can deliver a message like that to kids."), I stood back listening and reflecting back to my conversations and feelings as a new teacher. I wanted to be perfect for my students. I wanted to inspire them. I wanted to fix their problems and teach them how to avoid new ones.

When the challenges begin, such as students' bad behaviour that escalates with yelling or throwing things, I hope that the new teachers know that these students need our persistence, love and direction. I wanted to do everything in my power to have students believe that they were good enough to do anything. With societal challenges, pressures and terrors that children deal with everyday, we must teach social emotional functioning. We must make an impact on children and teach them to make good decisions and lead themselves back to a better place. It is not only about sparking excitement or having new activities each day but also about

teaching them mindfulness and how to take care of themselves. All we teachers really want is to empower students to do what they love.

New teachers are looking for quick ideas, new apps, websites and online tutors to make their day with students run smoother. They are looking to be inspired so they can inspire others and not feel like they can't keep up.

Quick ideas, grabbers and relevant information are in high need, but as I gave my presentation on 10 Things You Should Remember When Teaching, thoughts flooded into my head. I wanted my audience of new teachers to know that they will find their way in a classroom if they slow down, take breaks with students and give students time to grow with them and their ideas.

Many times teachers do it all. They help with homework, coach, put on musicals, tune instruments, put out fires and call home to report good and bad news. And this is just at the beginning of the year. What I wish I knew when I started my career is that we can't do it all. Slowing down gets way more done and helps students build tools for life. Pausing and being mindful can take us to higher and healthier places.

Take time in your conversations to see where your students are. Laugh, have fun and connect. Look after yourself. This will be the only way to give strength to the many students you will meet throughout your day and your career.

*Shawna Cunha  
Calgary Regional Representative*

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## Citadel Theatre School Programs



For the past three years, I have been taking my students to the Citadel Theatre school matinees for *A Christmas Carol*. For most students, this is their first live theatre

experience. Students have told me that they loved it and want to go again. They were amazed at how quickly the set changed for each scene and how the costumes suited each character. They were impressed with the phenomenal acting and the props that made the ghosts come alive.

Research has shown that students who attend live theatre have enhanced tolerance and empathy toward others. They are also able to have emotional experiences that they may not or will not experience because it extends beyond their normal lives. Live performance is more than just watching a show, it is an experience.

To read more about the benefits of watching live theatre, check it out at Science Daily ([www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2014/10/141016165953.htm](http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2014/10/141016165953.htm)).

*Emma Holota*

# Conference 2019 Update



*Photo credit: Emma Holota*

We will be heading back to beautiful Banff for our annual conference April 25–27, 2019! Our conference keynote will be Rick Wormeli ([www.rickwormeli.com](http://www.rickwormeli.com)).

Please note that the conference will run optional school tours on Thursday, April 25. More details about this event will be announced soon.

For more information, go to [www.ata-myc.com](http://www.ata-myc.com) or feel free to contact the conference chair, Chris McCullough at [chris.mccullough.teacher@gmail.com](mailto:chris.mccullough.teacher@gmail.com).

We are pleased to announce that 9 Second Ride will be playing at the social on Friday, April 26. The band proved to be very popular with last year's delegates, so you know it's going to be a great night of live music and fun!

Congratulations to Marie Lyttle for winning free registration to Conference 2019 in Banff. Marie teaches Grade 7 at Ecole Dr Bernard Brosseau School in Bonnyville. We look forward to seeing her again in Banff.



*Marie Lyttle*

# MIDDLE YEARS CONFERENCE

## 2019



**IF YOU BUILD IT  
THEY WILL COME**

**SCHOOL TOURS** Optional school tours  
Thursday, in Calgary

**DATE** April 25-27, 2019

**LOCATION** Banff, Alberta

**FRIDAY NIGHT SOCIAL** 9 Second Ride

**MYC CONFERENCE**  
*Featuring*

*Rick  
Wormeli*

*Jolee  
Social Media*

**EARLY BIRD RATE: \$350, After February 28, 2018 \$375**  
**PLEASE REGISTER @ [www.ata-myc.com](http://www.ata-myc.com)**

# AMLE Update

## AMLE Affiliation

Members of the Middle Years Council have found value in having a membership in the Association for Middle Level Education (AMLE), which is the international organization for middle years educators. The AMLE website ([www.amle.org](http://www.amle.org)) has resources and information related to middle years education. The free membership will allow you to access some materials. However, with a professional membership, you will have full access to all resources, as well as receive discounts on books, resources and conference registration.

## AMLE at a Glance

The AMLE is committed to helping middle grades education

- reach every student,
- grow professionally and
- create great schools.

## Mission

The AMLE is dedicated to improving the educational experiences of all students ages 10–15 by providing vision, knowledge, and resources to educators and leaders.

## Vision

The AMLE is the leading international organization advancing the education of all students ages 10–15, helping them succeed as learners and make positive contributions to their communities and to the world.

## Core Values

- *Integrity.* The AMLE practises the ethical, inclusive and courageous behaviours that sustain an open and honest organizational culture.
- *Future thinking.* The AMLE is visionary and prepares for the future.
- *Respect.* The AMLE values human worth, dignity, diverse talents and varied perspectives.
- *Collaboration.* The AMLE seeks active partnerships and shared leadership opportunities at the state, national and international levels.

## AMLE Conference 2019

November 7–9

Nashville, Tennessee

Follow the link for all the information:  
[www.amle.org/annual/Home/tabid/244/Default.aspx](http://www.amle.org/annual/Home/tabid/244/Default.aspx)

Source: AMLE website.

# What does AMLE provide to affiliates?



## Affiliate Leader Summits & Strands

- Affiliate Leaders Strand offered at the AMLE Annual Conference
- Summit for Affiliate Leaders provided each summer (budget conditions apply)



## AMLE Resources

- Print material & giveaways provided for affiliate events (currently 11 affiliates distributing AMLE materials)
- AMLE articles, resources, & programs provided for affiliate publications



## Affiliate Advisory Committee

- Organize and facilitate an Affiliate Task Force



## AMLE Discounts & Rebates

- Rebates for AMLE Events attendance  
4 affiliates received \$12,970.25
- Discounts on AMLE publications sold at affiliate events (8 affiliates sold books)  
\$8,491 in revenue from AMLE books sold by affiliates



## Exhibit Space

- Exhibit space available at AMLE Annual Conference at no charge (additional costs will be responsibility of the exhibiting organization—i.e., electricity, internet, furniture)



## Goal Setting Assistance

- Assist with Goal Setting and Long-Range Planning (if requested)



## Contact Information

- All affiliate contact information provided in an annual directory



## Dual Membership

- Dual Membership opportunity (Dues paid \$22,232 – nearly 8% increase from last year)
- Currently have 21 Dual Memberships



## AMLE Meeting Room Space

- AMLE Board Room available for affiliate organization (based on availability)



## Affiliate Website Links

- 45 listed affiliate websites on AMLE website (41 linked to sites)
- Affiliate conference dates on AMLE website (4 in last fiscal year)



## AMLE Mailing Lists

- Electronic mailing list of all AMLE Members within the geographic or professional area of the affiliate (8 affiliates requested mailing lists)



## AMLE Speaker for Conferences

- AMLE representative for affiliate conferences (travel & lodging provided by affiliate)  
9 speakers provided in 2016–2017



## Advocacy Tools

- Provide advocacy tools and up-to-date/relevant legislation
- Provide website of resources for affiliate leaders

# 2018/19 MYC Executive

## **President**

Jeremy Spink

## **Vice-President and Conference Codirector**

Tom Stone

## **Past President and Conference Codirector**

Chris McCullough

## **Secretary**

Tina Chadwyck

## **Treasurer**

Jodie Park

## **Publications Director**

Emma Holota

## **Webmaster**

Jeremy Clevette

## **ATA Staff Advisor**

Geneviève Blais

## **PEC Liaison**

Michelle Glavine

## **Regional Representatives**

### **Central Alberta**

Patrick Adams

### **Calgary**

Shauna Cunha

### **North Central Alberta**

Mike Edwards

### **Northeast Alberta**

Emma Holota

### **Northwest Alberta**

Abby Stillwell

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### **Facebook**

[www.facebook.com/  
MiddleYearsCouncilAlberta/](http://www.facebook.com/MiddleYearsCouncilAlberta/)

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### **Twitter**

@MYC\_ATA





The Alberta Teachers' Association

# Consent for Collection, Use and Disclosure of Personal Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ (Please print)

I am giving consent for myself.

I am giving consent for my child or ward.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ (Please print)

By signing below, I am consenting to The Alberta Teachers' Association collecting, using and disclosing personal information identifying me or my child or ward (identified above) in print and/or online publications and on websites available to the public, including social media. By way of example, personal information may include, but is not limited to, name, photographs, audio/video recordings, artwork, writings or quotations.

I understand that copies of digital publications may come to be housed on servers outside Canada.

I understand that I may vary or withdraw this consent at any time. I understand that the Association's privacy officer is available to answer any questions I may have regarding the collection, use and disclosure of these audiovisual records. The privacy officer can be reached at 780-447-9429 or 1-800-232-7208.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Print name: \_\_\_\_\_ Today's date: \_\_\_\_\_

For more information on the ATA's privacy policy, visit [www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca).

# Publishing Under the *Personal Information Protection Act*

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

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

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

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

Refer all questions regarding the ATA's collection, use and disclosure of personal information to the ATA privacy officer.

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

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

780-447-9429 (direct)  
780-699-9311 (cell, available any time)

# THE MIDDLE YEARS COUNCIL WANTS YOU!!!



## EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTORS

### Join the Executive

We are always looking for volunteers from all over the province who would like to join the executive and promote middle years education. The executive meets five times a year; two meetings are via video conference and one is held at the annual conference in April. Please contact **Jeremy Spink** at [jeremy.spink@rdpsd.ab.ca](mailto:jeremy.spink@rdpsd.ab.ca) if you are interested in joining the executive.

### Request for Links, Games, Lessons or Cool Activities

Do you have any website links, games, lessons or cool activities that you would like to share with other middle school teachers? Send them to **Emma Holota** at [holota.emma@gmail.com](mailto:holota.emma@gmail.com). We will include them in upcoming issues of our newsletter.

The MYC website is  
[WWW.ATA-MYC.COM](http://WWW.ATA-MYC.COM).  
Add it to your favourites.

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