

# FORUM FORTYONE

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## JOIN AN ATA LOCAL 41 COMMITTEE !

Have you considered joining a committee of ATA Local 41? There are still vacancies on some committees. Please ask your school's local council representative to find out what is available. This is an excellent way for you to learn about the Local and to see how the organization is operated.

Come to the Celebration...

## The President's Reception

We will be honouring those members of Lethbridge Public School Local who have been members of the Local for 10, 15, 20, 25 and 30+ years and those who have served this year on a Provincial Committee. Come out and join us! Let us take this opportunity to support our colleagues by acknowledging their long standing commitment to the education of our youth.

Thursday April 26th, 4:30 pm to 6:00 pm at the Polish Hall, 745 13 Street North

Snacks provided and there will be door prizes!

### Our honourees:

|                |                  |                     |
|----------------|------------------|---------------------|
| Alain Dumont   | Duncan McGeorge  | Barry Byam          |
| Cayley King    | Darlene Garlicia | Clark Bosch         |
| David Fletcher | Lorraine Wolsey  | Ashelyn Redman      |
| Craig Findlay  | Annie Baumbach   | Dixie Charlebois    |
| Carol Steen    | Garry Malmo      | Darryl Christiansen |
| Bev Witzke     | Connie Frouws    | Derek Hoare         |
| Karen Gregus   | Sandy Brunelle   | Neil Langevin       |
| Dee Peterson   | Karen Philpott   | Margaret Erickson   |
| Brenda Berry   | Doug James       | Rhoda Trehearne     |
| Lon Redpath    | Evelyn Baker     | Robin Charlebois    |
| John Loree     | Mike Bryant      | Denise Janssens     |
| Lynda Foster   | Deborah Ayers    | Geoff Weatherall    |
| Roger Harty    | Greg Young       | Cory Kitagawa       |
|                | Teresa Lowen     | Tara Orser          |



## Member to Member



Join us in congratulating members of our local



This bundle of joy is Terrance Hagel's daughter. Her name is Hayden Marie and she is doing very well. Congratulations to the Hagel family from ATA Local 41.



## Member Connections

**Local 41 Member Sharing of Professional Development**

**Article submitted by Paula Degner, CAMP teacher and Karla Wright, LOHS teacher**



One of the most beneficial aspects of being an educator in Lethbridge Outreach is that we work together as a Professional Learning Community. We have the support from both Administration and staff to attend numerous workshops on a variety of issues that pertain to our students. We are especially grateful for the opportunity to attend the SACPA (Southern Alberta Council of Public Affairs), on March 15, 2007.

The speaker was Dr. Bryan Kolb, who is a lead researcher at the Canadian Centre for Behavioural Neuroscience here at the University of Lethbridge. He discussed "How Experience Changes Brain Development and

Behaviour." As a teachers at Outreach High School and in C.A.M.P. we found the information very exciting and invigorating, as well as insightful. To take this information and form experiences for the students which would help structure their brains to eventually improve the student's overall functioning academically, socially and emotionally is pretty cool! The research from this workshop indicates that we need to assess student's functional level to meet their academic requirements. If their brains are not ready to develop such concepts, we must differentiate instruction and help them grow from their level. We need to provide a variety of methods of experiences to the students to utilize the brain and help the students form strong and solid networks of neurons to develop life-long learning skills.

What hit home was the old adage, if we don't use it, we will lose it. Dr. Kolb stated that by age two we have a block of neurons whereby we chip away at them to keep what we use and lose what we do not use. Dr. Kolb stated that we use 10% of our brain at any one given time (though we use ALL our brain) but if we lost 10% we would be lacking brain functioning significantly. Makes one think about the emphasis on early development programs!

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Dr Kolb's talk really focused on the brain development processes and the ways in which it is influenced both before birth and through experiences throughout life. Many of the issues that teachers deal with in the classroom, learning disabilities, hyperactivity, developmental delays, autism, epilepsy, are manifestations of early life events. He spoke of how the brain, in particular the cerebral cortex changes based on experience. Educators see children almost everyday and are providing some of these experiences. One of the most amazing things that I learned was the fact that while a person is born with their own genome, the ways in which the genes are manifest in a person's life may change based on a variety of experiences. Things like hormones, drugs, injury will change their epigenetic effect (how they are expressed). In fact, Dr. Kolb pointed out that while identical twins have exactly the same genetics, by the time they are in midlife, they are only as similar to their twin as regular siblings due to the effect of life experiences.

Crucial early life events, he calls them ACES, will also determine the development of the brain. Sometimes, as teachers, we have expectations of our students that are not realistic. Sometimes we mistake an inability to do something as defiance, we think that the student just WON'T do something, but in reality they actually CAN'T. We must be aware of this new information to better serve our students and to find ways for that student so that the CAN. Behaviour seems to be intricately woven into brain structure and the student's ability to access their parts of the brain they need to manage tasks, including educational tasks. Acknowledging where our students are in their learning and find ways to teach the concepts to help them achieve their goals, this workshop gave me a clearer understanding of how we develop. We are our brains!

This workshop reminded us just how complex human development is and how each one of our students comes with their own set of unique life experiences that have shaped the way their brain formed and how it processes information. Dr. Kolb's information was very supportive for differentiated instructional strategies and ensuring that teachers investigate what students know to help shape how the concepts are taught. With education talks whispering about high school drop out rates, maybe Dr. Kolb's research results can shed light on this situation and solutions can be found. It is worth the time to go to the website, [www.sacpa.ca](http://www.sacpa.ca), and listen to the talk.

Check out the following websites:

<http://www.schoollibraryjournal.com/article/CA499361.html>

<http://www.cbc.ca/arts/story/2005/04/06/PoetryBrain-050406.html>

<http://childparenting.about.com/od/learningenrichment/>

<http://home.iprimus.com.au/rboon/StagesofBrainDevelopment.htm>

<http://faculty.washington.edu/chudler/dev.html>

<http://www.brainy-child.com/>

<http://www.umext.maine.edu/onlinepubs/htmpubs/4356.htm>

If you know of some interesting websites on brain development and how children learn please share them with [office@ataleth.org](mailto:office@ataleth.org) thanks!

# Weaving Words



Marty Chan (Author, playwright) – Keynote speaker from Edmonton. If you are looking for some “sure hit” books for boys, try “Mystery of the Frozen Brains” and “Mystery of the Graffiti Ghoul”.....excellent for Division II!



Andrea Andreachuk and Bryan Pritchard (General Stewart School) – Enjoying their “Rocky Mountain Award” books (gifted to all Weaving Words participants at the opening supper)



Shanda McKnight (Lakeview School) and Mike Wevers (Park Meadows School) – proudly displaying their black light puppets.

*Whenever you go to a session please send photos and a brief write up on the workshop to [office@ataleth.org](mailto:office@ataleth.org) so that we can all share in the learning!*



Budget news...be sure to keep up with the latest information on the Alberta Provincial Budget and its affects on educating the students of our province and on your profession!

Check out [www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca) for the latest information from the Association.

## PD Ponderings

*A new feature of Forum 41 brought to you by the ASTA Local 41 Professional Development Committee*

### Important Dates to Remember

#### Upcoming PD Deadlines:

**May 01:** deadline for activities during June 2007; 4:00 p.m. "at" the ATA Office !

What sessions are you going to in the month of May? Please remember that Forum 41 is always looking for members to write articles about their professional development. Contact any of the members of the communications committee if you would like to submit an article.

- ✓ [len.robinson@lethsd.ab.ca](mailto:len.robinson@lethsd.ab.ca)
- ✓ [wallis.allen@lethsd.ab.ca](mailto:wallis.allen@lethsd.ab.ca)
- ✓ [martha.johnson@lethsd.ab.ca](mailto:martha.johnson@lethsd.ab.ca)
- ✓ [amanda.klager@lethsd.ab.ca](mailto:amanda.klager@lethsd.ab.ca)

### PD Funding Guideline Questions

#### Question

I applied to attend a conference at the September (all year) deadline and received 100%. My colleague is attending the same conference but applied to a different deadline. He received 85%. Why didn't we get the same percentage?

#### Answer

The percentage that is sometimes applied to the Fund is used so that we can assist as many teachers as possible, rather than a few. Percentages are 'not' applied to individual conferences, but they 'are' applied to deadlines. If the same conference may be applied for at two separate deadlines it is indeed possible that the deadline in September received a different percentage than the second deadline used. Once a percentage is applied to a deadline, it is not revised.

#### Question

Can I get money for a conference before I leave?

#### Answer

P D Fund Guideline 6.2.7 states "No advances for expenses shall be made." In order to use our professional development funds in the best possible manner, it is important to have accurate expense and substitute teacher costs available when money is released. Certainly this procedure removes an accounting nightmare that would otherwise border on the impossible. We wish to reimburse our teachers as soon as possible and with that in mind, disburse P D Funds on the 15 and 30 of each month. Cheques are also issued prior to holidays such as Christmas, Easter and Summer, regardless of the 15 or 30 calendar dates. Since each of our cheques requires two signatures, it is important to get your *Expense Claim Form* (and required receipts) to the ATA office well ahead of a holiday break.

All questions and calls are welcome (320-5531 or [office@ataleth.org](mailto:office@ataleth.org)).

LETHBRIDGE PUBLIC SCHOOL LOCAL 41  
OF  
THE ALBERTA TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION  
FORUM FORTY ONE  
IS A PUBLICATION OF THE COMMUNICATIONS  
COMMITTEE OF LETHBRIDGE PUBLIC SCHOOL LOCAL 41.  
BRENDA KROKOSH, LOCAL COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER  
PLEASE DIRECT ANY COMMENTS TO  
[office@ataleth.org](mailto:office@ataleth.org)

The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of  
the contributors and not necessarily those of  
Lethbridge Public School Local 41.

Barnett House

1-800-232-7208

Southern Alberta Regional  
Office

1-800-332-1280

# Representing....



Carlie Fisher represents the teachers of Fleetwood-Bawden at our monthly Local council meetings.

**Did you know...that your school representatives are an information source for you!**

Thank you to all the school representatives for their valued contribution to communication in our Local.

Are there any topics you would like to see covered in Forum 41? Let us know. Please email [office@ataleth.org](mailto:office@ataleth.org) if you have any suggestions.

## *Education Week April 29 to May 5*

### *Innovative. Inspired. Our Future...our students!*

Education Week was established more than 75 years ago to call attention to the importance of education and to show the public some of the good things happening in Alberta schools. Education Week is an excellent opportunity to (a) advocate for public education and the important role that schools play in communities, (b) assure taxpayers that public funds are being put to good use, (c) invite the public into classrooms for first-hand experiences, (d) highlight the partnership between teachers, parents and students, (e) demonstrate the important leadership role that the teaching profession plays in student learning and (f) celebrate the contribution that all staff and volunteers make in the school.

What is your school doing for Education week? Please take photos and document the events and send to [office@ataleth.org](mailto:office@ataleth.org).

Do you have any old photos of any of the teachers retiring this year? The Communications committee would appreciate any photos you could send us. We will scan the photos and return them to you as soon as possible. We very much appreciate your help in this endeavour. Please send photos through interschool mail to the ATA office or contact the office and we may be able to arrange a pick up.