

MYABC

In the Middle

A Message from the President

Creating a culture that will lead to the success of young adolescents is a responsibility that lies with Middle School Educators. These talented professionals have made a choice to work with this high energy group and guide them to a successful future. As role models, middle level educators are inclusive, collaborative, democratic and team oriented.

This creates an environment filled with exciting opportunities for all students. The conscious choice made by Middle Level Educators to focus on this particular age group requires high energy and a zest for life. They use integration and interdisciplinary studies to meet the needs and interests of their students. They are passionate about making middle level classrooms safe havens where adolescents are free to learn and explore their interests.

Successful schools for young adolescents are characterized by a culture that includes Educators who value working with this age group and are prepared to do so. *This We Believe.*

Pat Vance



Connections Conference 2009 The Power of Relationships

Preparations for the MYABC Connection 2009 Conference are well underway, hosted by Saanich School District in Victoria. “The Power of Relationships” will be the theme, as we all know how vital building healthy, positive relationships with adolescences is to their social, emotional, and cognitive development.

April 17th and 18th are the dates, with the brand new Royal Oak Middle school as the host site and the Delta Victoria Ocean Pointe as the choice hotel. The conference planning committee has met a number of times and is proud to announce an excellent line up of keynote speakers. Beginning Thursday night, April 16, at Royal Oak Middle School, Barry MacDonald, educator and author will be presenting to conference delegates with additional seating available for parents and the community.

Connections Conference 2009 Power of Relationships

Friday morning, April 17th, at Royal Oak Middle School, Stephen Lewis, Professor and Co-director of AIDS Free World will be speaking to all conference delegates. Some seats to this event may also be available to the community. Saturday morning, April 18th, David Bouchard, author and story teller will present at the Delta Ocean Pointe. A change to this year's conference will be with the number of break out sessions. There will no breakout session on the Saturday at Royal Oak Middle School. Instead, the conference switches venues to the Delta Ocean Pointe for David Bouchards presentation.

A call for presenters will be held from September 1st to the 30th. Please email Jean_Bowman@sd63.bc.ca if you are interested in presenting on one of the following themes: What is Middle School All About, Oral Communication, Instructional Strategies & Curriculum, Social & Emotional Needs of Students, Creating Inclusion, Developing Leadership & Social Responsibility, Go Green: Environmental Studies, and Healthy Living through Healthy Schools. Online registration begins October 5th and will run until conference is sold out. Cost for this conference is \$230 per person. Registration includes the Conference fee, breakfasts both Friday and Saturday, lunch on Friday, snacks, a dance and social, and your annual membership fee to MYABC.

Conference co-chairs Peter Westhaver, Principal of Royal Oak Middle School, and Wendy MacDonald, Principal of the Individual Learning Center look forward to next April. We and the planning committee are honoured to host the next MYABC Conference in Saanich and hope to see as many educators of adolescent students in attendance to continue developing "The Power of Relationships."

13th Annual Month of the Young Adolescent October 2008

Contest for Young Writers and Artists

MYABC is pleased to announce the Month of the Young Adolescent Artwork and Writing Contest. MYABC would like to invite Middle Years students province-wide to submit their artwork and their writing. This contest aims to provide students with the opportunity to express their thoughts and ideas about the middle years and middle level education. Contest categories and awards are as follows:

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	1st prize	2 nd prize	3 rd prize
Grade 6/7 writing	\$100.00	\$75.00	\$50.00
Grade 8/9 writing	\$100.00	\$75.00	\$50.00
Grade 6/7 artwork	\$100.00	\$75.00	\$50.00
Grade 8/9 artwork	\$100.00	\$75.00	\$50.00

THEMES:

The theme for this year's contest is relationships. Submissions will be judged on how well the art or writing relates the topic chosen by the student. Students can choose from one of the following topics:

- Explain why healthy relationships are important for your success in Middle School.
- What does a healthy relationship look like?
- Describe the different relationships that exist in a classroom or a school.
- How will the relationships you have in Middle School help shape your life outside of school?

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR WRITING AND ARTWORK:

WRITING: Must be a minimum of 250 words and a maximum of 500 words. Writing can be printed, hand-written or typed.

2-DIMENSIONAL ARTWORK: Must be accompanied by a paragraph explaining how the piece relates to the theme. Students can choose to use any medium they wish. Submission size can range from 8 1/2 X 11 inches to 11 X 17 inches.

All writing and artwork submissions must be accompanied by an entry form. They must be mailed to the address on the entry form and must be postmarked no later than Monday, February 2nd, 2009

Questions can be directed to: nboucher@sd79.bc.ca

Regional Initiatives Up Date

The Middle Years Association of British Columbia is looking to help middle years educators with Grants to promote the middle level philosophy!

REGIONAL INITIATIVES GRANT APPLICATION

The Middle Years Association of British Columbia (MYABC) is pleased to offer financial assistance to groups of middle level educators who are interested in holding workshops, study groups or other initiatives that:

- ∅ Promote an understanding of middle level philosophy and understanding
- ∅ Develop curriculum that is relevant, challenging and exploratory
- ∅ Incorporate multiple learning and teaching strategies that respond to the needs and diversities of young adolescents

Rationale:

Research indicates that high quality professional learning:

- Focuses on deepening teachers' content knowledge and pedagogical skills
- Includes opportunities for practice, research and reflection
- Is embedded in educators' work and is connected to daily activities
- Is sustained over time

Is founded on a sense of collegiality and collaboration among teachers and between teachers and principals in solving important problems relating to teaching and learning

Dennis Sparks, National Staff Development Council, 2002

Grant:

Teams can apply to MYABC for funds of up to \$100 per group member. Teams decide collaboratively how funds will be used to answer questions and achieve goals specified in their application.

We are on the web at: <http://www.myabc.bc.ca>