

Volume 1

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**TEACHERS** of  
Inclusive Education  
British Columbia



*Photos by Laurie  
MacHale*



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## TIE-BC President's Report

by Debra Swain

In these unprecedented times, it is difficult to know what to focus on. I hope that all the TIE-BC members are taking care of themselves and their families. I hope everyone is well.

In my own case, the time to reflect has been valuable. It has been a busy year, with many changes, and I have appreciated time to review and think about everything.

There are changes that TIE-BC has made because of COVID-19 and other circumstances. TIE-BC executive will be holding our meetings remotely through Goto-meetings. This is a change from our face to face meetings where new executive could work with outgoing executive to learn their roles. At this time, we are unsure about the arrangements for our February 2021 Crosscurrents conference. We will have to wait until we know more about public gatherings. Once we know more, we will be sharing this information with our members.

As teachers, TIE-BC executive members have been collaborating and planning with their teacher colleagues. We have been providing learning experiences for their students remotely. There has been much to learn about working with students and colleagues this way. I am personally grateful of the work we have done as an executive to learn about and expand our growth mindset. Being open to new experiences, and realizing learning new skills takes time and effort is part of a growth mindset. So is being patient and understanding towards ourselves.

I have also been reflecting on Zach Anner's message to us at Crosscurrents 2020. Zach told stories about trying new things, and finding ways to succeed in a world that presented many challenges. His video about looking for a bagel in New York City resonated with me this past week as I was thinking about how I would work with my students. Lots of challenges, some I did not anticipate and some I did. Zach's courage and sense of humour are a good model to have as we move forward.

Zach's message also made me reflect on ableism. In January, I had the opportunity, with Leah Kelley, Raegan Sawka and Joanna Larson, to plan a BCTF workshop on ableism. Ableism has been referred to as

“a network of beliefs, processes and practices that produces a particular kind of self and body (the corporeal standard) that is projected as the perfect, species-typical and therefore essential and fully human. Disability then is cast as a diminished state of being human.” (Fiona Kumari Campbell, 2001)

Meeting with my colleagues to explore the issues of ableism helped me to understand some of the issues. I think the first step is to become aware, and that is the purpose of the workshop. Once it is finalized, teachers will be able to book the workshop for their staff or for presentation at a Local Specialist Association meeting. Since this is a BCTF workshop, the expenses for the facilitator are covered by the BCTF. I will let people know when it is available.

For those who are interested in learning more about ableism Leah's article in the November/December Teacher Magazine, ***Talking language: Ableism and opportunity*** is both informative and helpful. You can access the article through the following link:

[https://issuu.com/teachernewsmag/docs/teacher\\_magazine\\_nov\\_dec\\_2019/22](https://issuu.com/teachernewsmag/docs/teacher_magazine_nov_dec_2019/22).

As a final note, I want to celebrate that teachers voted to ratify the Agreement in Committee in the last week of April. The bargaining was concluded successfully without job action. This is a tribute to the BCTF executive and Bargaining team as well as all the other BCTF members who worked so hard for this outcome. I am grateful that we can now focus on the task at hand, working to support our students through these challenging times.

I hope everyone will take care of themselves and stay healthy.



## The 45<sup>th</sup> Cross Currents Conference

Feb 20 - 21, 2020

### Richmond, BC

<http://www.tiebcbrochure.com>



Laurie Robinson and Zach Anner

This year the Crosscurrents conference continued to provide some amazing inspirational speakers. We had a variety of speakers to address the ever- changing world of education and the realities we experience in our classrooms and schools all across B.C. We had speakers cover topics from anxiety, mental health, Indigenous education and reconciliation, self- regulation, kindness, inclusion, team building, literacy, and behaviour.

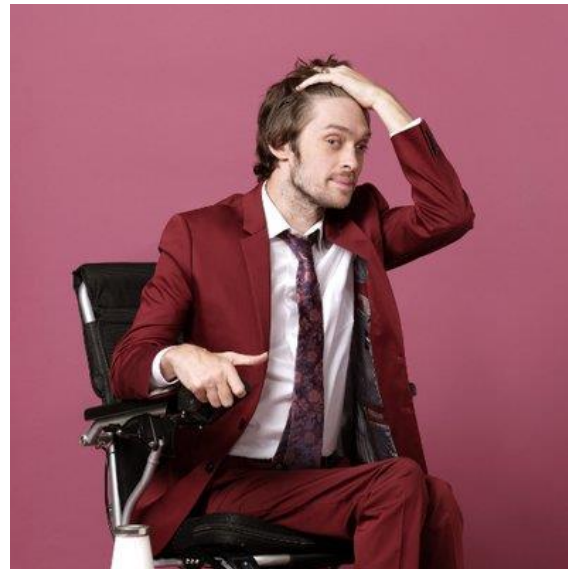
Our keynote speaker this year at the 45<sup>th</sup> Crosscurrents conference was Zach Anner.



TIEBC President Debra Swain & Conference Chair Jo Cornwaithe



TIEBC Delegates

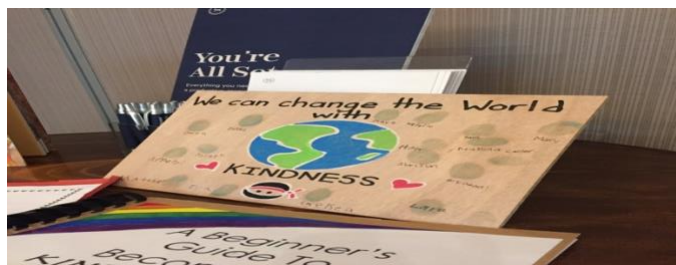




Zach was an inspiring speaker to start this year's conference. He created a positive energy that continued over the two days of our conference. Zach shared his stories of growing up with a disability. He gave us a perspective that helped us see just how important our roles as educators can be. Zach was hopeful and insightful. Zach spoke of being in school and how he developed relationships based on interest rather than on needs; driving home the importance of inclusion. He shared how technology, voice recognition, he was introduced to help him to follow his interests. Other accommodations, he was given were the ability to use a cassette tape as a means to express himself and to demonstrate his knowledge to his teachers. His teachers were able to look beyond just pen to paper as a means of expression. Zach described how one teacher helped him to write a play in Grade five; this was one of those key moments in his life. Zach also did sketches too and this is what he called the unlocking of his superpower- comedy. And boy did Zach get the room of educators to laugh during his presentation. I think that these stories touched me and I believe the rest of us at the conference. Zach helped us to see our super power- encouragement and teaching. I wrote down as Zach spoke so many amazing words for example "You never know the difference you make." and "We need to get to know the person before the disability"

Thank you Zach Anner for making this conference one of the best conferences we have held!

The inspiration of our keynote carried through to our other speakers that engaged us during the conference. Collen De Veyrac engaged us in tough conversations making us reflect on our biases. Leyton Schnellert helped us with ways to guide our students with self-regulation. Renee Gonclaves and Mehri Khalajzadeh helped us with Microsoft technology. Nicole Eredics gave us practical strategies on how to modify the curriculum for all the learners in our classroom. Peter Lijedahl wowed us with math and problem-based learning. Karen Lai helped give us perspectives on inclusion and our own thinking about disability. Ann Pimentel had us participate in an "All Inclusive Escape Room", which was very creative and interactive. Sarah Joseph introduced Positive Discipline and got us to think more deeply about behaviours we see in the classroom. Devon Wolf used applied attachment thinking to help us support our student's mental health. Natasha Bacchus taught us about anxiety and the EASE program. Ron Fremont gave us strategies on building an EA/ Resource team. Morgane Michael helped us jump start kindness and resiliency in our practice. Cris Rowan spoke to the concerns we all have about screen /media technology and its impact on kids. Melanie Nelson taught us about issues that impact Indigenous parent perspectives on inclusive education and assessment processes (Truth), and some initial steps towards taking up Reconciliation. Nancy Young helped us with reading strategies for our students with learning disabilities.



My Guide inside helped us with mental health and resiliency teachings. Itchy alphabet gave some great ideas about reducing letter reversals. Lastly, the Rick Hansen School program shared resources to support accessibility and inclusion in the classroom. This conference delivered a wide range of topics that once again helped us all to be better educators.

Some highlights in photos:



TIEBC Executive





## Exhibitors

Amazing Exhibitors that inspired us with cool resources:

- CBI Consultants
- Discovery Toys
- Davies and Johnson's assoc.
- Eagle crest Books
- Eaton Arrowsmith
- Foothills
- Jump Math
- Odin Books
- Spectrum ed supplies
- Wintergreen Learning Materials
- Spectrum learning Supplies
- Fashion on the Move
- Sticks and Stones Childhood learning
- Itchy Alphabet/ ABB Creations
- Rick Hansen School Program
- Kinder books
- C&G Nature Trails – Education and Therapy toys
- Learning A-Z
- Ministry of Children and Family Development
- Renaty Layton Counselling
- My Guide Inside curriculum
- VIU
- OES wellness Group



## TIEBC Chapters Reports:

### Sunshine Coast/School District #46 -TIE BC Chapter Report

Topics of discussed @ TIE BC Chapter/ Support Service Teacher meetings so far for 2019-20



1. What is the TIE LSA in our District:
  - a. Descriptors of what our LSA has traditionally done
    1. EG: accessing resources, seeking collegial supports, Pro D
    2. \$\$\$ can be available to all members
      1. \$300 to start
  - b. PSA / TIE BC – was encouraged for all members to participate
    1. Zach Anner = Keynote at this year’s Crosscurrents in February
    2. Each LSA is asked to provide a Delegate
  - c. Presidents Day – was described and promoted
2. 2019-20 LSA election
  - a. President = Holds meetings, complete forms from (Paula S Martinez )
  - b. VP = assists President (Tara Davies)
  - c. Treasurer = Checks on money (Michelle Crosby)
  - d. Secretary = takes minutes and submits (David Heskin)
  - e. Member at Large = (Laurie McHale + Fiona James)
3. Local Funding Structure to access funds
  - a. Roll over from last year
  - b. Proposed funding structure to be voted on at the next SCTA meeting
  - c. How to access the money will be determined at that time
    1. “May” be able to access more funds as a group
  - d. Currently we should have roughly \$1700 of rolled over money
  - e. Discussed how we “may” spend the money
    1. Topics included: Speakers, possible POPFASD webcast Pro D session
    2. Also discussed topics such as Trauma Informed Practise/SKIDS, Social Competencies via Michelle Garcia Winner webcasts that could be shared during our LSA sessions
4. Shelley Moore – Inclusion Team PD workshops
  - a. 3 sessions of Inclusion collaboration (Jan 22, Feb 19, March TBA)
  - b. Intent to develop teams within school to build capacity.
5. SD#46 TIE LSA meetings included:
  - September 26, 2019
  - October 17, 2019 as well as
  - January 22, February 19 2020

## **Greater Victoria Teachers of Inclusive Education LSA**

GVTA TIE LSA Executive met with the District to plan the Learning Support Teachers District Inservice days

Three days were planned for learning support teachers from elementary, middle and secondary. The first session was to discuss assessment tools, one of the psychologist shared assessment instruments, and a literacy support teacher spoke about literacy assessment.

The second District session was about working with other professionals to support students.

LSA met three times

In September we met to discuss our priorities and welcome members.

Second session was in October with a District Psychologist who took us on a guided tour of the New District Website. She showed where resources are and how to access them.

Third session was in February with Bernardus Larryant, M. A., BCBA Education and Behaviour Consultant from POPARD who facilitated a session on ABLLS, the Assessment of Basic Language and Learning Skills. It is an assessment that has curriculum and a tracking program for students with language delays. It is typically used for students with autism or intellectual/cognitive disabilities (ie: low incidence).

This resource is useful because it gives valuable knowledge of what skills your student is missing and where to go next. It also assists in writing IEP goals and has a visual tracking chart to show progress.

TIE LSA executive also met with the District to discuss the implications of the Jackson arbitration. They shared their process they used to decide if the student met the criteria or not.

Members of the TIE LSA executive were on the Tapestry Conference committee that planned a conference for all teachers from Sooke, Saanich and Victoria.



### **CCTIE Interior of BC and the Cariboo Chilcotin District.**

Our Williams Lake group has been enjoying monthly meetings discussing literacy and developing programs that will assist our students to achieve greater levels of success in literacy based learning . Our group has a variety of Learning/Resource Support Teachers, teachers (Primary, Intermediate and High School), Counsellors, Autism Specialists, Speech Language and Psychologists working together to discuss topics and enjoy one another's wealth of knowledge. We have been looking at books that support the full encompassing of reading, comprehension, phonological awareness, phonemes and so much more (Kilpatrick, Harvey, Greer, Greene, etc). Two of our colleagues, Walton and Okrainetz, have been trying sound walls and phoneme awareness in their classes and are seeing improvements daily. Many of our colleagues are also developing all encompassing programs using rhyming, nursery rhymes, letter recognition, letter sound and blending in their primary classes to enhance their guided reading, Daily 5 and literacy programs. We are looking towards the future and focusing on creating ProDs and programs that could be used in the schools by any of our many teachers. we have developed a strong, motivated and great team of ladies who are becoming driven to support all. We look forward to continue next year in SD27. For anymore information please ask Lacey-Dawn Testawich, Anita Davidson or Melanie Baerg who are present at Crosscurrents this year.



Thank you and keep up the great work.

# Covid 19 Pandemic is a strange and stressful time however we must try be healthy:

By Laurie MacHale

There are many stresses right now with Covid 19 Pandemic. We are all concerned for our loved ones, our community, country and the world. We are learning everyday new things about this new reality we are living and what it means to our future. That being said we all must try to be healthy by staying home as much as we can, social distancing and washing our hands. If you are struggling with stress and anxiety we have benefits and tools that are there for us to use. One tool available to us is Starling Minds. It is an online mental health and wellness tool that is designed specifically for teachers. As a member of BC Teachers' Federation, it is available to you and your family members to use anywhere and anytime you want, for free. It is a confidential program. I believe it can help many of us to deal with all we have to deal with these days as being in a pandemic is nothing we have ever experienced. We are all living under some strange circumstances so please do access supports and tools to help you be as healthy as possible, you deserve it.

<https://bctf.ca/wellness/> and <https://www.starlingminds.com>

We are all zooming a lot as we work at home and one consequence is zoom fatigue. Take a look at the article below for more information. **Some suggestions to alleviate zoom fatigue I did get from the article are to take breaks in between meetings, turn off the video camera, and limit zoom meetings in a day.** I find that conference calls or calls can be much less fatiguing.

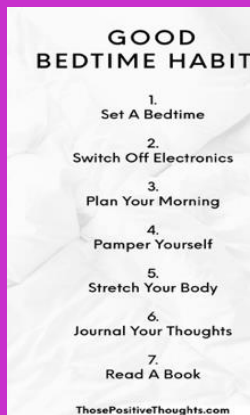
<https://www.ecowatch.com/video-calls-zoom-fatigue-264582204.html?rebellitem=1#rebellitem1>

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/2020/04/coronavirus-zoom-fatigue-is-taxing-the-brain-here-is-why-that-happens/>

<https://www.mindful.org/zoom-exhaustion-is-real-here-are-six-ways-to-find-balance-and-stay-connected/>

For up to date information about Covid in our province you can go to these key links:

<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/data>



## Activities you can do with your kids:

Regan Rankin, Registrar



I wanted to share a couple of fun activities that are very good to help the energy in your body. I have included some links below to the videos I am referencing. Give them a try! Both my kids at home and the kids I teach really enjoy doing them. If you are inspired, there are a LOT of fun videos in this series!

Did you know that learning to breath (and controlling your breath) is the most important thing you can do to help easy anxiety (and other big emotions for that matter)! Now you may be thinking, Uhhh - I obviously KNOW how to breath already!!! Yes, that's true, you wouldn't be here reading this if you didn't, however, I am talking about breathing with purpose. It's a little bit different. Breathing is something that a lot of people who are first responders and emergency people learn to do to be able to help to be calm and in control in emergency situations - they call it tactical breathing. You may also have heard it be called lazy 8 breathing or square breathing. This different kind of breath comes from your belly and fills your entire chest. It's a very deep breath that nourishes our entire body. When your body and mind are feeling anxious, silly or out of control, it becomes hard to make good decisions, to focus on getting things done and to maintain control of our bodies.

Try this with me. Put one hand on your belly and take a deep breath. You should feel your belly expanding outward like a balloon filing with air.

Now, as you breath out, bring that belly inward and feel yourself squeezing all the air out.

If you are having trouble doing this, you could try lying on your back with a small stuffy on your belly - you should be able to see it rise and fall. That's a great visual to tell yourself you're doing it correctly.

I really love the visual of rainbow breathing. Firstly, I LOVE rainbows - there is something magical about having something so beautiful right after or sometimes during nasty weather or a storm. When you are doing your rainbow breathing, imagine all that stormy energy you may be holding onto relaxing in your breath.

On and Off, the other video link talks about shifting the energy in your body. I love to do this one at the beginning of the day, although, it can be done anytime! Enjoy!

Go Noodle Rainbow Breathing

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O29e4rRMrV4&t=17s>

Go Noodle On/Off

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ZP-TMr984s>



"I truly believe we can either see the connections, celebrate them, and express gratitude for our blessings, or we can see life as a string of coincidences that have no meaning or connection. For me, I'm going to believe in miracles, celebrate life, rejoice in the views of eternity, and hope my choices will create a positive ripple effect in the lives of others. This is my choice." *Mike Ericksen*



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