



British Columbia
Teachers' Federation

ABCDE FOCUS *September 2017*



President's Report

Every September I say “Happy New Year” more than I say “Welcome Back” and so with that in mind I extend that greeting to all the readers of the ABCDE newsletter. This year will prove to be an interesting one for us as teachers, given that we have a reinstated collective agreement, new draft Drama curriculum and because we are turning 50 years old as an organization.

As someone who started their career in 2001, when the government eviscerated the collective agreement, it truly has been an experience of not knowing what I had lost. The hiring of significant numbers of new teachers is welcome news and all of a sudden our profession has become one with brighter opportunities than in previous years.

The return to our previous collective agreements should result in smaller classes and more Drama in BC. The specifics of your local's agreement will be something you will need to research. I would recommend reaching out to your local president if you are not sure what the return of language means to your situation.

Our year also continues with DRAFT curriculum at the grade 10-11-12 levels. New curriculum at the K-9 level is now fully implemented but at the aforementioned level it is still a trial year. For 2018/19 the new curriculum will become mandated so I would recommend you check out the new curriculum and see how you can begin to integrate it. If anyone says you **MUST** use the new curriculum in grades 10/11/12 please know they are wrong. If necessary, seek support from your union.

50 years old! Or young! We are turning 50 and I really hope you will come to the annual ABCDE October Pro-D conference. This year we'll be at the Vancouver Film School on October 20th and 21st and we have a 50th anniversary gala planned for the 19th. Please check out abcde.ourconference.ca for registration details.

And finally, this will be my last newsletter as President of ABCDE having served another 2-year term. I put my name forward in 2015 because I believed there was a need to have a strong voice as an organization as it related to the new curriculum that was coming forward. I have since been able to work on the new curriculum and helped argue on behalf of the ABCDE that we needed a variety of courses (which we have now) and not just a Drama 10, 11 or 12 template for locally developed courses. I would like to thank the executive for their support, and the membership for allowing me to serve in this role. I appreciate what everyone does to teach Drama in BC classrooms.

Colin Plant

ABCDE
Executive
2016/17

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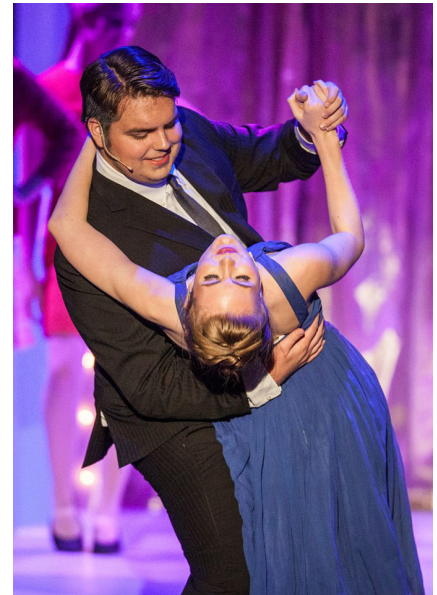
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CYMC's summer production of "Catch Me If You Can"

50th
Anniversary



2017 Drama Conference
October 20-21

Vancouver Film School
151 W Cordova St, Vancouver, BC V6B 1B2

VFS



for more information please contact Gordon Hamilton or Katie Everson
email: gghamilton@sd35.bc.ca or keverson@sd35.bc.ca



CONFERENCE HOTELS

Sandman Hotel Vancouver City Center

On-site restaurants: Moxie's Classic Grill, Mbar Lounge and Shark Club Bar & Grill. In-door swimming pool, fitness centre, gated underground parking. Steps away from open-space parking lot for large buses and coaches.

ABCDE Fall Conference 2017 Rates

Standard Queen at \$129.00 per room night

Two Doubles at \$139.00 per room night (comp upgrade)

All rates are before 17.5% tax, non-commissionable and based on Single/Double occupancy

Complimentary Wi-Fi throughout the Hotel and Coffee/Tea

Guests may call the Hotels directly or our Central Reservations- Guests must quote Group Number 983566

Sandman Hotel Vancouver City Center at Tel. 604-681-2211

Central Reservations at 1-800-SANDMAN (726-3626)

Sandman Hotel
Vancouver City Center
180 West Georgia St
Vancouver, BC
V6B 4P4
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The St. Regis Hotel

ABCDE Fall Conference 2017 - Rate \$189.00

YOU MUST BOOK BY September 18th, 2017 TO RECEIVE THIS RATE.

The St. Regis Hotel is TripAdvisor's Travellers' Choice Award recipients for 2017.

Amenities and services at the St. Regis Hotel include 32" - 50" LCD TVs with multi-media hubs, cordless phones with data port, L'Occitane En Provence amenities, terry bath robes, oversized in-room safes and coffee makers.

Included in our rates are the following Business Class value added benefits:

FULL cooked to order breakfast

Wired/wireless internet

WORLDWIDE Long Distance and Local Calling

FIJI bottled water

24 hour access to our Business Centre/printing and faxes

Steve Nash VIP Gym Passes

Membership to St. Regis Hotel Voila Rewards Program

The rate of \$189.00 is available for reservations between Thursday, October 19th and Sunday October 22nd, 2017.

Please call the hotel directly to book your room. 604-681-1135 or 1-800-770-7929. You can also email info@stregishotel.com. Refer to the Group name "ABCDE Fall Conference" when making reservations.

The St. Regis Hotel
602 Dunsmuir Street
Vancouver, BC
V6B 1Y6
Canada

Curriculum Update

By Colin Plant

As mentioned in the President's Report, the K-9 Drama curriculum is now mandated and the 10/11/12 is now in trial mode. Here are some quick bits for you to consider:

-Nobody can force you to teach the new curriculum in the 2017/18 year. You can however use it if you wish.

-ALL students in Grade 9 need a Fine Arts credit starting in 2017/18. If your school is not doing that, or is coming up with creative ways around it (ie. a Foods/Drama course being considered both Fine Arts and ADST) please talk to your local president.

-When it says all Grade 9 students will be offered a program in Fine Arts at the grade 9 level it does NOT only mean they can choose to take a course. IT IS MANDATED.

-The new Arts Education curriculum can be found at:

<https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/curriculum/10-12#ae>

-Feedback on the new curriculum can be given to curriculum@gov.bc.ca

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to me at colinplant@shaw.ca

BREAKING NEWS

Provincial Festival Update

Sears Canada has officially pulled its funding from the B.C., Ontario, and Atlantic provinces Drama Festivals because of the company's restructuring plan.

We are working closely with Wayne Fairhead, Former Executive Director of the Sears Canada Drama Festivals to consider other sponsorship options.

We will continue to have our zone festivals and see where we go from here.

Sharon Conrad & Gordon Hamilton

Zone Liaisons & Provincial Drama Festival coordinators

The Value of Collaboration

by Christine Knight

I have just finished my 24th year as a high school English and Drama teacher. In that time I have learned a thing or two about making my job easier, because, as we all know, being a Drama teacher is not for the faint hearted...especially if you do Musicals, and the chance of reaching burn out is high if we don't take care. That is not to say that all the other endeavours we undertake are not crazy busy, but doing a musical, in my opinion, tops them all. What other aspect of our job requires directing, choreography, costume design, set design, chorus rehearsals, vocal training, set painting, lighting, sound, a pit band, someone to direct that pit band, and all the other things that go into a show? Only Musicals! And we do them while teaching other classes, and juggling family life and other commitments. I have always tried to surround myself with helpers, but I have to admit, I have done a musical without any help...that is to say, without much adult help. It was my first musical at the school I currently teach at, Carihi Secondary in Campbell River, and, unfortunately was during a job action year. When I say I did the show alone, that means I directed it, choreographed it (which sucked, because I don't dance,) sewed costumes, designed the set, arranged to build it and paint it, designed the lighting, organized helpers for Front-of-house and in the green room, publicized the show, designed tickets and posters, and taught the songs. (We didn't have a pit band for the first show, so I didn't have to do that job.) I had other teachers pop in for a task here and there, but I was the number one overseer of all of it. It nearly killed me. I didn't want to do it all by myself, but it was my first show at the school, and I hadn't found my support team yet...though I knew I wanted one.

I had seen several shows by my colleague, Lori Mazey, who teaches in Courtenay, at GP Vanier Secondary. What I always noticed about her musicals, was that she had a huge team, many who came back year after year. She had a choreographer, and a producer, and a lighting technician, and someone who did publicity and all kinds of parents and teachers helping her out, among others. I would sit in her audience, leaf through her program, and make plans to build my own team. Since that time I have done 6 musicals at Carihi, and the "dream team" that creates our shows has grown into something special. I now have a co-director and choreographer, who teaches alongside me and takes much of the responsibilities associated with a big production. I have a musical director, who makes the pit sound fabulous, and contributes to the set up of sound equipment. I have a vocal coach who works with soloists and duets, and supports the choral director who teaches the chorus. I have a sound technician who manages the problems of doing a show in a "drama-nasium," a lighting technician who manages to make an archaic and miniscule set of lights look great. I have a colleague who sets up and runs the concession for every show. I have a set designer that takes all the left over pieces of sets that I have, and puts them together into something unique and creative, then teaches the students how to paint the set and build props. On top of that, I still have teachers and support staff helping with FOH, with make-up and hair, and with clean-up. Having a team like this has allowed us to do amazing shows because we can all focus on our strengths. Despite having all this help, I am still very busy directing, producing and doing costume design, among many other things, but it doesn't feel like the crazy stress of past shows where I struggled to keep all the balls in the air by myself. It means our shows can be bigger and better, and they have become just that.

(Collaboration cont'd)

If you do musicals, or other big shows, I highly recommend keeping an eye out for the people in your community who can become part of your team. You'd be surprised at how many people want to be part of the high school theatre world. I pay honoraria to the community members that help, and while I wish I could pay them more, they all seem to enjoy the experience and have come back each year, happy to be part of the team. The students have gotten to know them, and have come to learn that these adults add to the richness of their theatre experience. They are being led and taught by people who know what they are doing. Best of all, it makes my job easier, but it also makes it richer. There is joy in doing theatre with wonderfully creative people, and amazing rewards in sharing our skills and allowing our students to shine. Thank you to my team: Lisa-Marie Thompson, Phil Cassidy, Amy Lelliott, Beth Kingston, John Bailey, Gord Jacques, Chris Freeland, Rose Anderson, and the many others who lend their support! If you have questions about how to build your team, feel free to email me at Christine.Knight@sd72.bc.ca

Christine Knight



Part of the “Dream Team” at Carihi - Phil Cassidy (Musical Director), Lisa Marie Thompson (Choreographer/Director), Christine Knight (Director/Producer), Amy Lelliott (Vocal Coach), John Bailey (Set Design/Painting)

Missing - Beth Kingston (Choral Director), Chris Freeland (Sound), Gord Jacques (Lighting)

Travel Diary - Seattle, Washington

If you've never thought about Seattle as a destination for theatre, then think again. Not only is it an amazing city to visit for sports and tourist attractions and beauty, but many touring productions of the Broadway shows come to the Paramount and 5th Avenue theatres, right in the heart of the city. I travelled there, this summer, with two Courtenay/Comox colleagues and we saw excellent productions of "Fun Home", and "The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time." A "quick" trip on the Clipper from Victoria and we were in Seattle. We spent the day shopping and evenings in the theatre, and we had a great time. We will surely do it again when we get the chance.

Upcoming shows at the Paramount include The Book of Mormon, Les Mis, Phantom, and Love Never Dies. 5th Avenue has Something Rotten, Ragtime, Mamma Mia and Ride the Cyclone!

Maybe it's time to head to Seattle?



Lisa Williams, Christine Knight and Lori Mazey at the theatre!



Drama warm-up

CAN YOU TOP THIS

(From Anita Jesse's book *The Playing Is The Thing*)

1. Students work in pairs scattered around the room.
2. Post a collection of adjectives on the white board. eg a list like: exciting, delightful, depressing, colossal, small, repulsive, sad, etc
3. Students will choose an adjective (or teacher can call out one to use) and take turns bantering back and forth, each one trying to TOP the other's lines. It's all fiction, folks!
4. Example with the adjective delightful:

Person A: Yesterday, my baby cousin came over and on our back porch she said her first word! It was sooo sweet. She said... (beat) gum. So cute!

Person B: Oh wow, that is so delightful. But you know, a few weeks ago, I was at my grandma's senior's home and she was walking down the hallway and suddenly ran in to her best childhood friend, from the old country. They embraced and have been inseparable every since.

Person A: Really? That is delightful! I remember a time when... etc

Players can keep going until ideas are saturated. Ideas ought to get grander on each turn. Then play with another adjective.

After some practice, this game could also be shared from the four corners of the room (doesn't have to be perfect, not everyone will "show" - just those who volunteer, audience can swivel to where the players are standing). OR, it could be played as a quick rotation of improv on stage - a pair at a time, with the adjective thrown at them, no prep time.

Jenn Ohlhauser



Scenes from MONTE CRISTO, performed by students from Rockridge Secondary, West Vancouver, BC

SPOTLIGHT ON..... **YOUR SCHOOL?**



Do you want to be a spotlight school this year? Please send the following information to Christine.Knight@sd72.bc.ca

- Your **school**, your town/city, and your name
- **Programs** offered at your school
- A brief description of your **facility**
- **Upcoming events** in your theatre
- Some **photos** of recent shows, or of your theatre space

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### **Become a member of the ABCDE... a PSA of the BCTF**

#1 Do you want to join/subscribe to the ABCDE? Need to renew your membership? Online registration can be found at <https://www.bctf.ca/psa/join.aspx>

#2 Do you prefer to print off the application and mail it in? Find a link to the form at [www.bcdramateachers.com](http://www.bcdramateachers.com)

#3 Join our moderated email list-serv and connect with other Drama practitioners! Share ideas, ask for help, post info about your shows. Almost anything Drama-related goes. Anyone can read our list-serv, but only members/subscribers can post (membership has its privileges ...\*sometimes we will post FREE offers for teachers on behalf of non-members)

To join our list-serv:

Use the drop-down list to select “psa-abcde” (fortunately we are the first one in the list!).

To post a message to our list-serv, please email Colin Plant at [colinplant@shaw.ca](mailto:colinplant@shaw.ca)

Our list-serv is moderated to avoid getting spammed.

Not sure of your membership status? Please contact the BCTF at 1-800-663-9163 and ask