



NISKA NEWS

Volume 4, Number 11

December 2001

Season's Greetings



Photo: Koni Macdonald; Set: McElheran's Fine Furniture

**Wishing you a safe and
happy holiday season**

Vicki Mather, Barb Maheu and Sue Sheffield

SACS Highlights

The following are some of the key highlights of the ATA's *Safe and Caring Schools Project* since June, 2001:

- Uploaded Principals' Best strategies for SACS on the ATA website
- Made plans for the secondary website to be up and running before the year is out
- Completed *Toward a Safe and Caring Curriculum Kindergarten*
- Provided training for additional elementary, secondary and community facilitators
- Posted "Responding to the September 11, 2001, Terrorist Attacks and the Aftermath," tips for teachers and parents on the ATA website
- Held first joint meeting between ATA SACS Steering Committee and Provincial SACS Advisory Committee

Niska, the Safe and Caring Goose

Known for its teamwork, a sense of community and caring behavior, the Canada goose makes a great choice as the ATA's SACS Project's mascot. The name Niska was chosen because it is the Cree word for goose. The following story was written by a Grade 3 student Cleah Takahashi, from Lochearn Elementary School, Rocky Mountain House.

"Niska Helps Out"

"Tommy Smid was extremely bad everywhere he went. Once he even embarrassed his mom at the Kwik-E-Mart. She was getting a box of pop, and Tommy grabbed it from her hands and ripped the box open. Then he took a knife off the shelf and put a hole in each pop can and sprayed it all over.

Tommy was even worse at school. He didn't care for anything or anybody. He threw his apple cores on the ground, his chip bags, noodle bags, fruit roll-up packs and even pudding dishes. Do you know what else he did? He spat at people and he even punched people.

Then one day Niska appeared. He asked a girl named Lola where Tommy was. "Over that way," she said. "Thank you," said Niska. He went over to Tommy. "I am going to teach you a lesson on how to be kind," said Niska. "Okay," said Tommy. So Tommy and Niska worked on a kind lesson every day. After that Tommy raced past the woods by the pond and zoomed into his house and gave his mother a great big hug.

Safe and Caring Schools in Alberta—An Overview Presentation

The ATA's SACS Project has developed a presentation package consisting of a 16-minute video, overheads, script and brochures to tell Albertans about safe and caring schools in Alberta. The package describes the many projects under the Minister of Learning's initiative and illustrates the ATA's Project, its resources and research-based philosophy. This information package is a good start for any group wanting the scoop on safe and caring schools.

Safe and Caring Schools in Alberta—An Overview Presentation can be ordered from the Learning Resources Centre (LRC) at 427-5775 in Edmonton. Elsewhere in Alberta call 310-0000 and ask for the LRC; fax (780) 422-9750; website www.lrc.learning.gov.ab.ca



Congratulations!

In May 2001, Sue Leniczek and Bill Dickie received their certificate of completion for attending the ATA's "Toward a Safe and Caring Community" workshop series. The series was facilitated by Cecile Fausak (centre) at Murdoch School in Crossfield.



Facilitator Training

Facilitator training was recently held at Barnett House on November 15–17 and at SARO on November 23–24. The trainers were Vicki Mather (Edmonton), Karen Hobbs (Edmonton and Calgary), Susan Guilbault (Edmonton and Calgary), Barb Maheu (Edmonton and Calgary) and Angie Dixon (Edmonton). Wendy Holman, a curriculum resource writer, also attended the Edmonton session.

We would like to extend a special thank you to Colleen McClure, Education Manager, Special Programs Branch of Alberta Learning. Colleen gave a warm welcome and spoke on the Effective Behavior Support program at the Edmonton and Calgary sessions.

A total of 21 elementary, 33 secondary and 29 community facilitators completed the training to present Safe and Caring Schools workshops.

Here are some participants' comments.

"The program isn't meant to be an add-on. I like the variety of presentation methods."

"A thematic resource finally!"

"Gave a lot of ideas for applications to integrate safe and caring schools in the classroom."

"An excellent workshop! Involved participants actively. Modelled strategies. Respected knowledge and experience of participants."

"Excellent information! My belief is that all parents (and adults) need this information. Well presented. Your commitment shows!"

"I felt it was very pertinent to my community. Prevention is key to safer communities."

Writing Workshops for the SACS Website

Attention Junior / Senior High Teachers

Help Create the ATA's Safe and Caring Schools (SACS) Website for Secondary Teachers

The proposed SACS website will provide lesson plans, facilitate online workshops and provide links and resources that support violence prevention at the secondary level. We are looking for teachers to write web-ready units or lesson plans in their specialty to be posted on this website. To help teachers do this, we are holding web writing workshops (in Edmonton and Calgary).

Edmonton: Monday, **January 28, 2002**, at Barnett House, 11010 142 St, Edmonton, 8:30–16:00

Calgary: Wednesday, **January 30, 2002**, at Rocky View School Division Office, 2616 18 St NE, Calgary, 8:30–16:00

Expenses

Hotel, per diem and travel will be covered at ATA rates. Sub costs will be negotiated with the school and districts, if necessary. Please ask for ATA rates when booking hotels.

Honorarium

\$150.00 for completed unit or lesson.

Prior to attending the workshop

- ✓ Review the writing workshop materials package that will be sent to you and obtain a release agreement from your school and district (a letter for this purpose will be included in the materials package).
- ✓ Gather resources (textbooks, handouts and related information) that support development of your unit or lesson plan and bring them to the workshop.

Registration Form for the ATA's SACS Writing Workshop

Name _____ School _____

Address _____

Subject area _____ Level junior or senior Site Edmonton or Calgary

Email _____ Jurisdiction _____

Phone (h) (_____) _____ Phone (b) (_____) _____ Fax (_____) _____

Procedures

- ✓ **Ensure** approval by principal/superintendent
- ✓ **Fax** your approval and completed registration form to (780) 455-6481 in Edmonton or (403) 250-3904 in Calgary.
- ✓ **Confirmations** will be faxed to your school prior to start date.
- ✓ **Questions:** please contact Sue Sheffield **(780) 447-9487 in Edmonton** or the **CRC in Calgary at (403) 291-0967**.

Supporters

The Alberta Teachers' Association
Rocky View School Division

The ATA's Safe and Caring Schools Project
Calgary Regional Consortium

Notices and Events

Turn off the Violence Creative Writing Contest

for youth of all ages, Kindergarten to Grade 12. Submit essays, poems, songs or stories by December 31, 2001, to Action Committee Against Violence, Mail code #19, Box 2100, Station M, Calgary AB T2P 2M5. (For Calgary schools only.)

New contact information for Continuum of Services for Youth Violence Prevention Programs is Doris Toy-Pries, Youth Violence Prevention Coordinator, Action Committee Against Violence (403) 268-6716. doris.toy-pries@gov.calgary.ab.ca

Check out the new website titled *lets talk about bullying*, www.talk-helps.com

www.bullying.co.uk has a new section on staying safe in cyberspace that has information for pupils, parents and teachers. It explains the potential

dangers of chatrooms and gives tips on what to do about abusive emails and hate websites. It includes information on a CD game called "Missing," devised by Drew Ann Wake of Vancouver, a friend of Bullying Online, in conjunction with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. "Missing" is being used on a trial basis in a number of West Yorkshire schools. For more information contact help@bullying.co.uk

Tips for parents and teachers to help children and teens cope with the New York terrorist attacks and the aftermath are on the ATA website at www.teachers.ab.ca/index.cfm?p_ID=3027

Safe Schools Safe Communities conference *Putting the Pieces Together* is being held in Vancouver, B.C., February 20–22, 2002. For more information call 1-866-775-3066 or www.safeschools.gov.bc.ca

RONNO & the Lunchbag Lizard



Music enhances learning. Rhyme works to embed key messages into memory, and rhythm/melody add zest and pleasure to the learning experience. Positively focused songs and materials integrated into the curriculum give teachers strong tools for helping students succeed.

SONG SUPPORT, created by Ronno, is committed to creating song and support materials to help teachers integrate music into the classroom. SONG SUPPORT is ideal for Grades K–4, and some material is suitable for older grades.

RONNO's Song Theme Packages are available from Song Support, Box 722, Station C, Kitchener, Ontario, N2G 4B6 Phone: (519) 744-7529 or Fax: (519) 894-0739.

Coming Soon!

SACS Secondary Curriculum Resource website soon to be launched.

The website will

- ✓ introduce approaches to integrating violence prevention,
- ✓ provide SACS units and lesson plans for all subjects at the secondary level,
- ✓ facilitate online microworkshops, and
- ✓ identify resources and links that support violence prevention at the secondary level.

Niska News is a newsletter produced by the ATA's Safe and Caring Schools (SACS) Project for school and community members. The goal of the SACS Project is to encourage practices that model and reinforce socially responsible and respectful behaviors so that learning and teaching can take place in a safe and caring environment. Achieving this goal requires the involvement of not just parents and teachers but also of all the important adults in a young person's life. This newsletter is designed to provide timely, up-to-date information about the project. For more information, contact the SACS office by phoning 447-9487 (in Edmonton) or 1-800-232-7208 (from elsewhere in Alberta). Copying and distributing Niska News are permitted as long as the source is credited. The newsletter is available online through the SACS Project website at <www.teachers.ab.ca/safe/index.html>. Editor: Sue Sheffield.