



Early Childhood Education Council

President's Message

Fellow Teachers,

We hope you have had a great start to 2018 and to the second half of the school year! It was a pleasure to meet and socialize with many of you at our provincial ECEC conference that was held in beautiful Banff, Alberta. We appreciated your feedback and suggestions, for your future professional development opportunities from the Thursday Night Social. We were exposed to various approaches to further spark creativity in our classrooms and in the lives of our students. I explored and implemented a variety of tools, strategies and activities presented at conference that focused on creating authentic opportunities for jump starting creativity and enhancing student voice in my classroom. I have noticed an even greater level of engagement and excitement in new discoveries that students make. When given the opportunity to be creative and to develop their creativity, we are allowing them, to in turn, to be inventive, to experiment, to take risks, break rules and norms while making mistakes and having fun!

Creativity is contagious, pass it on! ~Albert Einstein

It is with pleasure that I get to share with you that Carla Nickel is our new ECEC Calgary Regional President! Carla Nickel is an amazing teacher with Calgary Catholic and has been a valued member of our Calgary Regional executive. I have had a wonderful journey learning alongside you, as President, for the last two years. On behalf of Calgary Regional, we wish you all the best in your teaching and learning in 2018! Please keep an eye on the ECEC website (<http://www.ecec-ata.com>). Let us know if you are interested in applying for subsidy funds for you and ECEC colleagues to travel to other regionals to participate in additional ECEC professional development.

Respectfully,

Katarina Rivard

Calgary Regional Past President

2017-2018 E.C.E.C. Executive

Carla Nickel - President

Karin Rivard & Kathy Man - Treasurer

Donna Lawson - Secretary

Executive: Joy De Nance, Karin Rivard, Meghan Clark, Kathy Mah, Donna Lawson, Karen Smith, Carla Nickel, Katarina Rivard, Michelle Webster, Bev Dutton, Grace Leung-Chow, Anna Vilaysane, and Anna Li-Wang

Helpful
Tips

Using Technology to Enhance Literacy & Communication

By: Michelle Webster Grade One Teacher

Ozobots are the craze these days! These small robots are easily accessible for students of all ages to use and program. They can help strengthen communication skills with students, allow students to continue to work on problem solving skills in addition to the obvious of it being a great introduction to coding. Once students have had an opportunity to play, explore and learn what these small robots can do, integrating it into the classroom and other curricular areas could be intimidating.

During a recent PD session, the idea emerged to integrate Ozobots with curriculum and to use the Ozobots as a tool to help children represent their learning and understanding. As children draw or use pictures, they can program the robot to do a variety of things. As the robot moves from one picture to another, children can share their story or understanding by talking or recording with a camera or ipad. Using technology is not just about using the new exciting "things," it's about using a variety of tools to help children connect, find their voice and explore, expanding the limits of education today.



Coding with Kinders

Using the Scratch Jr. App in a Kindergarten Classroom

By Meghan Clark

I had the amazing opportunity to take part in a STEM Learning Lab residency at my school this year. During our pre-residency PD we were introduced to Scratch Jr. Initially, I thought coding with Kindergarten kids, seriously?!? My own daughter and students soon proved me wrong! Simply put - the best way for kids this age to learn to code is to give them time to play and explore the app. My daughter (five years old) did this over the summer and I watched closely, learning from her. Likewise, by the second session of our residency the Kinders were doing things with the sprites (tech lingo for character) that I never imagined! The Kinders love coding, in fact, they chose to do it on their own time during centres and were carrying it over to their life outside of school.

So what was my take away from this tech experience? Kids these days have "got this!" when it comes to exploring technology. I was skeptical and unsure yet the kids loved the challenge and felt comfortable with the app. So take the leap (with your kids) and get friendly with Scratch.

Scratch Jr. is free and available for tablet use.

<https://www.scratchjr.org/>

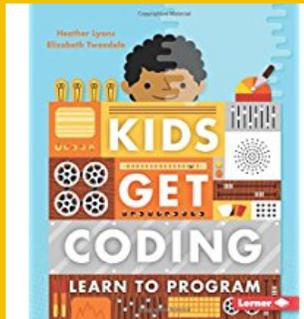


Teacher Wish List



ROBOT TURTLES

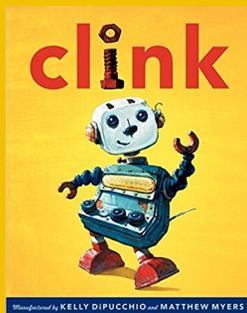
A fun and exciting board game for little programmers that teaches the basic coding concepts in game format.



KIDS GET CODING -

Learning to Program by Heather Lyons and Elizabeth Tweedale

A great book to start your journey in coding and deepen your understanding of programming.



Why Kids Should Learn To Code (And How To Get Them Started)

By Erik Missio, CBC parenting website

Coding (also called programming or developing) is telling a computer, app, phone or website what you want it to do. Some educators and experts are calling it the 'new literacy'—a subject so important that **every child needs to know the basics** to excel in our rapidly changing world.

Four- and five-year-olds can learn the foundations of coding and computer commands before they can even write and spell words. Older kids can learn to code through classes, mentors and online tutorials (see below for learn-to-code resources for all ages).

Learning to code prepares kids for the world we live in today. There are tons of jobs and occupations that use code directly, like web designers, software developers and robotics engineers, and even more where knowing how to code is a huge asset—jobs in manufacturing, nanotechnology or information sciences. However, for most kid-coding advocates, reasons for learning to code run much deeper than career prep.

Understanding Code Helps Explain The World

Today, computing is involved in almost all aspects of our lives, from communications and education to social media, banking, information, security and shopping. Networked computers are capable of controlling our homes' thermostats and lighting, our cars and our health records.

If grade-schoolers are taught biology and mathematics in order to understand the world around them, then knowing the basics of how computers communicate—and how to engage with them—should be a given.

*The contents of this article were taken directly from the CBC webpage and can be found at <http://www.cbc.ca/parents/learning/view/why-kids-should-learn-to-code-and-how-to-get-them-started>



Early Childhood Education Council

Alberta Teachers' Association

A specialist council for ECS and grades I, II, III teachers

Families,

We are currently building up our Studio space! The Studio is a place where people can come together to use, and learn to use materials as well as develop creative projects. Our goal is to make it a place that can be used for a range of activities with changing and flexible educational goals and creative purposes. While a maker space is often associated with technology, our primary goals for The Studio is to create an area that will:

- Foster play, exploration and participatory learning.
- Facilitate informal learning opportunities where connections between home, school, and community are enabled and encouraged.
- Collaborative learning where teachers and students pool their skills and knowledge and share in the tasks of teaching and learning.
- Develop a culture of creating as opposed to consuming.

While those are big goals, we are already making steps towards our vision. One thing we really need help with is building our material collection. We want to promote reusing materials and packages when creating to help reduce our environmental impact. If you have any of the following (or similar) listed in the table below, please consider sending them in for our students to use. Don't worry about sending in too much or items we already have; we will recycle or donate any extra items. If you have large amounts of a material or an item you're not sure

Materials	Old Electronics	Tools
Wood - logs, scrap, dowels, stumps Cardboard - large boxes/sheets Recyclables - (Jars, egg cartons) Craft Supplies - Felt, foam,etc Tape - Duct, painters, masking, electrical Post-it Notes - all colours Nails, Nuts, Bolts, Screws, etc Wire Office Supplies - Clips,etc Fabric - All types Toys Plastic containers - cleaned! Plastic sheets (signs,plexi,etc) Glass - panes, jars (not broken) Zip Ties/Tape/ Glue Lego/K'Nex/ETC Other awesome stuff	Computers, laptops, hard drives, servers TVs and monitors: LCD, LED, plasma (no CRTs) Routers, hubs, modems Printers and scanners: inkjet, dot-matrix (no laser) Mobile phones, tablets, pagers, PDAs, GPS devices Telephones (rotary ones are gold mines!) and answering machines Keyboards, mice, microphones VCRs and DVD players Cassette players and stereo tape decks Webcams and digital cameras Battery-powered children's toys Scanners Loose components from any items above	Screwdrivers , including a full range of Phillips, Torx, and Security screwdriver bit sets Magnetic parts bowls Wire cutters/strippers Nut drivers in SAE and metric sizes Clip leads and batteries, to test motors Hacksaw Needle-nose pliers Adjustable crescent wrenches Hammer/Mallets Rotary cutter, such as aDremel Shop-Vac Sewing Machine Knitting/Crochet/Sewing needles



Let this letter be the way you gain access to many amazing supplies for your maker projects! And the best part - it won't cost a cent!

Mark your calendars:
April 26th, 2018
ECEC Spring
Felting Fever
4:45-6:30 pm
Needle Felting
Sampler Session
with Leah C. Donald

[https://event-wizard.com/ECECSpringFever_\(1\)/0/register/](https://event-wizard.com/ECECSpringFever_(1)/0/register/)

Please register ECEC as your free ATA specialist council. The benefits of being an ECEC member include reduced prices for workshops and conferences, and our newsletter.

Copyright by the Alberta Teacher's Association (ATA) Early Childhood Education Council, Calgary Regional