

# Equity and Inclusion

A monthly newsletter to support EI in LKDSB.

Volume 18, November 2013

## Equity and Inclusion Symposium a Success!

On Tuesday, October 8, 2013, the Lambton Kent District School Board invited teams of staff and students to an Equity and Inclusion Symposium. The purpose of the Symposium was to guide students and staff in their efforts to improve equity and inclusion in all elementary and secondary schools across the district. In this article, the students from Brigden Public School have shared their thoughts about the Symposium and how it inspired them to promote equity and inclusion around their school. After reflecting on the Symposium, Skylar Anderson (Gr. 8) stated, "I enjoyed trying new instruments, listening to the key speaker Chris D'Souza, and trying to think of ways to make our school a better place."



As the crowd gathered in the gymnasium of Wallaceburg District Secondary School for the beginning of the Symposium, there was a buzz of excitement as the chairs were set up in a large circle around the gymnasium. Accompanied with every chair in the gymnasium was a bongo drum, a drumstick, and a boomwhacker. The morning session was lead by Doug Sole, an internationally known Drum Circle Facilitator. Doug inspired the 400 plus attendants to join as one group and create harmony with their instruments. Drew Pepper (Gr.8) truly enjoyed the drum circle as he mentioned, "The soul drumming was very instructive and made me think about the importance of people working together and making people feel welcome." Riley Brown, (Gr. 7) said "the drumming was really cool how we all played together, and then he had us doing different beats, but it all sounded so good."

After a short break, the



Doug raved about our students. He commented, *"In the future I will reflect on your students' 'top 10 level' participation as the new normal that I rate audience engagement from."*

crowd gathered back into the gymnasium to listen to the keynote presentation led by Chris D'Souza, an Equity and Inclusive Education Expert and secondary school teacher. At one point in Chris's speech, he had the students play a simple game of Simon Says to highlight how every action people make is very impressionable on others. Sydney Robins of Brigden noted, "I liked the Simon Says activity the best because it made me think about what I would do in a real life situation and whether it is the right or wrong decision." Chris's real life experiences, picture books, and true passion for equity and inclusion lit a spark in his audience. Haley Heidrich (Gr.8) exclaimed, "I loved listening to Chris D'Souza, working with him for an hour, and learning his perspective of what he thinks of equity and how we should change the world."



As the day came to an end, every attendee left the Symposium motivated with a new perspective on Equity and Inclusion. The students of Brigden have since planned monthly meetings to plan equity and inclusion events around Brigden Public School.

**Next Steps: Build on your students' enthusiasm and energy for bringing EI to your school. Give them a voice!**

As Affy Y. said, *"Chris has reached their hearts and sown the seeds; we hope they will sprout and bear lots of fruits for our society."*

*"From Awareness to Action"*

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## MULTICULTURAL DATES FOR November

- 1—All Saints' Day (Christian)
- 2—All Souls' Day (Christian)
- 3—Diwali (Hindu)
- 4—Al-Hijira (Muslim)
- 11—Armistice Day (Multifaith)
- 12—Birth of Baha'u'llah (Bahai)
- 13—Ashura (Muslim)
- 15 Shichigosan (7-5-3 festival) (Shinto)
- 17—Birthday of Guru Nanak (Sikh)
- 17—St. Hilda (Christian)
- 23—Niinamesei (Shinto)
- 24—Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Behadur (Sikh)
- 26—Day of Covenant (Bahai)
- 28—Ascension of Abdu'l-Baha (Bahai)
- 28—Hanukkah (Jewish)
- 30—St. Andrew's Day (Christian)

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<http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/>

## Eva Olsson, Holocaust Survivor

On September 30th, Eva Olsson, Holocaust survivor, spoke at SCITS. The people who attended were shocked by her life story and awed by her resilience and compassion.

### Resources:

If you were not fortunate enough to hear her story first hand, we have an alternative for you. We have purchased her documentary on DVD called, "**Stronger than Fire: The Eva Olsson Story**," as well as a book called, Unlocking the Doors: A Woman's Struggle Against Intolerance, and an audiobook by Eva and her son, Jan, called Every Step of the Way.

The audio book was written for teachers to share with their students and deals with resilience, maintaining relationships, and showing compassion.

If you would like to borrow any of these resources, please email Ruth Kohut.



### Did you know?

- On November 1, a new accessibility symbol for Ontario will be unveiled to replace the one shown above. Stay tuned!
- Muslims are prohibited from creating visual depictions of Muhammad.
- Vietnamese never touch another's head as it disrespects their ancestors. Only the elderly can touch the head of a young child.
- Vietnamese women do not shake hands with each other or with men.
- Most Japanese schools do not have custodians. Students do the cleaning daily as a practice of morality and discipline.

### Free Online Workshop: Teaching the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Monday, December 9 – Friday, December 13

*This workshop is free and designed for you to work at your own pace and convenience throughout the week.*



*For more details see*

<http://hosted.verticalresponse.com/1439135/e6e2766b60/545136335/14f081225e/>

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## EI Book Talk

### EI BOOK LENDING LIBRARY

*Recommended books available to borrow:*

[Little Bee](#)

by Chris Cleave

[The Kite Runner](#)

by Khaled Hosseini

[Far To Go](#)

by Alison Pick

[Secret Daughter](#)

by Shilpi Somaya Gowda

[They Fight Like Soldiers; They Die](#)

[Like Children](#)

by Romeo Dallaire

[Caleb's Crossing](#)

by Geraldine Brooks

[Indian Horse](#)

by Richard Wagamese

[The Immortal Life of Henrietta](#)

[Lacks](#)

by Rebecca Skloot

[The Patience Stone](#)

by Atiq Rahimi

[Rush Home Road](#)

by Lori Lansens

[Prisoner of Tehran](#)

by Marina Nemat

[Ru](#)

by Kim Thuy

### OUTShine 2013: Canada's First National Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) Summit



**Lauren Breschetti  
and Falcity Dewey**

Five students, along with two teacher advisors from JMSS travelled to Toronto over the weekend of May 17, 2013 to attend OUTShine 2013, Canada's first national GSA summit. While there students and educators from across the country came together for a weekend of workshops and discussions to celebrate the experiences of LGBTQ youth and allies in our nations' schools. Some of the workshops that were attended include "Demystifying Homosexuality and Bisexuality in Schools",

"Sustaining a GSA", "Youth Have the Power: Make Your Mark!" and "Coping with Bullies". There were also several social events to attend throughout the weekend; a concert featuring Molly Thomason and The Cliks, an LGBTQ prom and a film festival. The weekend ended with a culminating activity where the youth that attended came together to create the First National GSA Charter to unite goals and interests for GSAs across the country.

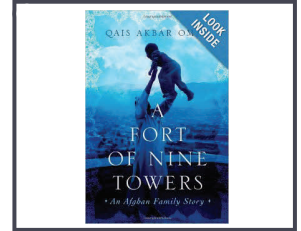
The students in the photo are Colin Rawlings, Falcity Dewey, Lauren Breschetti, Logan McQueen, Rebecca Landon



### Where can I check my own biases?

**Project Implicit**—<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>

Examine your own possible biases. It is an important step in understanding the roots of stereotypes and prejudice in our society.



### A Fort of Nine Towers

**By Qais (rhymes  
with rice) Akbar  
Omar**

Excellent read about a boy growing up in war torn Afghanistan. It reminds us that the majority of the people there, like anywhere, just want to make a living, raise their families and live in peace. This book shows that the actions and fanaticism of a few can change a million lives. Author's Note: "I hope this book will lead others to become curious about the many layers of Afghan culture that so unexpectedly and for so many of the wrong reasons have become the focus of the world's attention."

*"From Awareness to Action"*

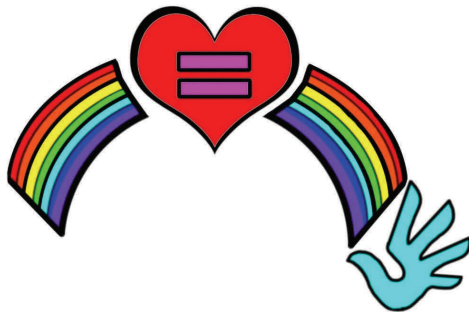
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## Rainbow Day at King George VI (Sarnia)

The Student EI Team at King George VI (Sarnia) decided we should have a Rainbow Day as one of our spirit days in October. Older kids were taught about the significance of the rainbow as a symbol of gay pride and younger students celebrated that we all make up a racial rainbow within our world.

To symbolize our day, Melissa Dent (resident artist and Grade 7 teacher)

designed a new logo that represents what we hope our children will get out of the day.



### Rainbow Day Design

by Melissa Dent (October 2013)

This is my design for Rainbow Day. It is my hope that children will recognize that our worth as a human is dependent on character, not on race, religion, gender or sexual preference. I combined the LGBT rainbow with the human rights symbol for same sex marriage (the Human Rights Campaign equal sign logo reworked in red) in a heart and added the human rights sign (dove-like hand) at the end of the rainbow, because we are aspiring to live in a society where all people are deserving of equal rights.

#### The Components:

The **rainbow flag**, sometimes **LGBT pride flag** or **gay pride flag**, is a symbol of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT)



pride and LGBT social movements in use since the 1970s. The colours reflect the diversity of the LGBT community, and the flag is often used as a symbol of gay pride in LGBT rights marches. It originated in California, but is now used worldwide.

As of 2008, the most common variant of the design consists of six stripes, with the colours red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and violet. The flag is commonly flown horizontally, with the red stripe on top, as it would be in a natural rainbow. (From wikipedia.org)

This image, **the equal sign**, released by the Human Rights Campaign, shows a redesign of their logo. A square box with thick pink horizontal lines (the mathematical equal symbol) is a makeover of the Human Rights Campaign's logo, usually a blue background with bright yellow lines. The HRC made it in red-for the color of love. It also symbolizes that all love is equal. (From wikipedia.org)



Do you know that we now have an internationally recognized **symbol for human rights**? It is a dove-like hand – a simple logo, elegant and easy to understand everywhere in the world. The designer, 32-year-old Serb Predrag Stakic, said he was inspired by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that human rights are the foundation for creating a free, just and peaceful world. "I've put that in the design, using two universal symbols – a hand and a dove – to make something new," explained Stakic. (From <http://therighthuman.blogspot.ca/2011/10/first-universal-human-rights-logo-by.html>)

