



# The Bark

## Winter 2020

Celebrating the New Year and looking forward to 2020!

The Aspen Foundation for Labour Education is working on several new projects to create resources that support educators in teaching social justice concepts to children and youth, and we are looking forward to seeing what the new year brings!

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## Aspen at Teachers' Conventions

Watch for an Aspen Foundation presentation on our new resource, ***Citizens in Action: More Than Just Voters***, at one of these 2020 Teachers' Conventions.

### **NCTCA**

February 6

- *Hey, That's Not Fair: Kids Inspire Change* - 1:30-3:00 pm

February 7

- *What Matters-Students Take Action for Democracy* - 9:00-10:30 am

- *Stories of People Working Together to Build Alberta* - 10:45 am-12:15 pm

### **SWATCA**

February 20

- *GWG: Forever In Blue Jeans* - 10:30 am-12:00 pm

- *What Matters? Students Take Action for Democracy* 12:30-2:00 pm

### **Palliser**

February 21

- *Hey, That's Not Fair: Kids Inspire Change* - 10:00-11:15 am

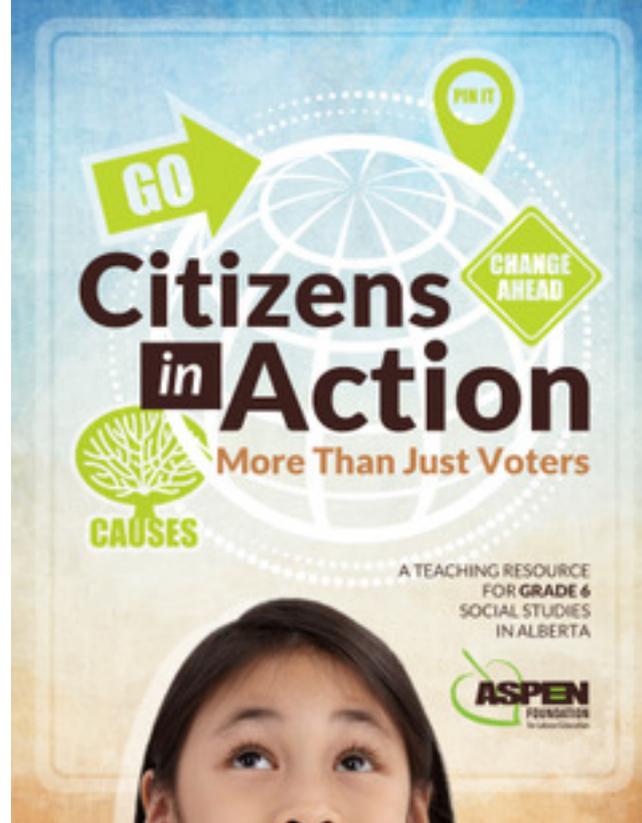
- *Forever In Blue Jeans* - 11:30 am-12:45 pm

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***Citizens in Action: More Than Just Voters***

***- A Teaching Resource for Grade 6 Social Studies***

If you have not seen the latest teacher resource developed by the Aspen Foundation, please check out our web site: [www.afle.ca](http://www.afle.ca). The newly developed resource for Grade 6 includes lessons based on the Alberta Social Studies Curriculum that identify Outcomes, Competencies, Concepts and Inquiry Questions.



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## Students Doing Social Justice Work in Schools

*Congratulations to this year's recipients of Aspen's Social Justice grants!*

Having conversations about the issues of social justice helps students understand the important societal issues that affect us today. By becoming aware of social justice issues, students are taking the first step in creating an increased sense of belonging and community for everyone. Aspen is proud to provide funding for 12 new social justice projects in schools across Alberta.

This year's applications will help raise awareness about a wide array of important social issues.

Seven different schools are putting grant funds towards engaging youth in a discussion on reconciliation and strengthening the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in their school and community. Students at Ross Sheppard High School (Edmonton) are creating a monthly podcast to create an awareness campaign to engage in social justice conversations. The Alexander Forbes Academy School (Grande Prairie) is hoping to integrate the Seven Sacred Teachings into their school culture to promote awareness for all students, while the Morinville Community High School (Morinville) is using a stew and bannock event to share the positive aspects of Indigenous culture. In

A.E. Bowers Elementary School (Airdrie), students are creating “Ripples of Change” by building relationships between students and the Indigenous community through planned visits by Elders in the community.

Students are also using art to help raise awareness of Indigenous culture and learn about colonialism. In Sherwood Park, students at Salisbury High School are painting skateboards with Indigenous art forms, while the St. Luke Catholic School is creating a quilt to demonstrate Cree worldviews and values. By integrating art with the discussion of reconciliation, students gain pivotal knowledge in an engaging way.

Social justice is fundamentally about taking action and connecting with community. Three schools came up with the goal to lay the foundation for Indigenous students to become academically and socially successful. The Sacred Heart School (Wetaskiwin) are creating a project called "The Path Forward" where students are given the opportunity to attend the Shaping The Future Conference to share stories and gather tools to become leaders in their community. In Lester B Pearson High School (Calgary), the Social Justice Student Club is planning a high school human rights conference to tackle the issues of division based on race and ethnicity. Their goal is to create a community that is unified and celebratory of difference. Students in Strathcona High School (Edmonton) are creating a student-directed cultural exchange program rooted in Indigenous foundations to help students develop life and interpersonal skills. The aim is to foster strong connections to community while blending academic opportunities for their students.

An important aspect of community is creating sustainable ways of living, along with finding ways to give back to people in need. St. Bonaventure School in Edmonton is tackling the issue of healthy eating by creating a garden tower that is available for students to take food from and bring back to their families to provide a little extra support. In addition, the project will also include making sandwiches for the homeless with produce from the garden tower. In Calgary, students at St. Michael School are creating intergenerational connections within their community by partnering with a Community Extendicare Facility that allows students to help residents take care of their gardens. Olds High School, recognizing the importance of fair trade, is bringing in a Fairtrade Cacao Producer to educate students about selling through the Fairtrade International System. Not only will students learn how this benefits their families and

communities, but also the environment and helps to eliminate poverty.

We can't wait to see these projects unfold throughout the year. As always, we at Aspen are incredibly impressed by the passion that students have for social justice, and their enthusiasm for taking action to create a more just and sustainable world. You can read more about school projects [here](#) - and if you're a teacher or student feeling inspired, keep an eye out for next year's applications in summer & fall 2020!

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## Resource Corner

### Black History Month

Want to attend an event for Black History Month?

[Alberta](#)

### Teaching about Gender Rights?

How about a focus on the topic of gender rights and their history on

Pink Shirt Day

February 26th

Resources can be found at:

[Pink Shirt Day- Alberta](#)

[CBC](#)

[Safe and Caring Schools](#)



*Upcoming Dates*

## UN Observances

January 19-25 – National Non- Smoking Week

January 22 – Weedless Wednesday

January 27 – International Day of Commemoration in  
Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust

February – Black History Month

February 04 – World Cancer Day

February 15 – National Flag Day of Canada

February 17 – Louis Riel Day

February 20 – World Day of Social Justice

February 26 – Pink Shirt Day

March 1 – Zero Discrimination Day

March 3 – World Wildlife Day

March 8 – International Women's Day

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The Opportunity Agenda © Nina Montenegro 2018

## *Resources*

News:

[Job readiness, literacy, numeracy focus of report on direction of Alberta's curriculum](#)

[Education minister unveils 'new' vision on K-12 curriculum with no clear changes](#)

Creating an active and healthy lifestyle: [Canadian Olympic Activity Challenge](#)

Video: [The Story of Citizens United v. FEC](#)

Education Programs: [Youth Workshops](#)

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### **Aspen Foundation Feedback and Participation**

We always value your feedback. If you would like to write an article regarding social justice work in the classroom, please contact Brandon at [aspenfoundation@gmail.com](mailto:aspenfoundation@gmail.com)



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