



SEE  
PAGES 8  
AND 9.

The 4 Stages of  
**Summer**  
See infographic on page 3.

# ATA NEWS

The Alberta Teachers' Association

100 years  
Learn from the past.  
Inspire the future.

June 12, 2018 | Volume 52, Number 19

News Publication of The Alberta Teachers' Association



CORY HARE

Jen Kish, former captain of Canada's Women's Sevens Rugby Team, speaks at W.P. Wagner High School in Edmonton on June 6. Her former high school (and Edmonton's mayor) declared the day Jen Kish Day. Kish recently announced her retirement due to injury. Her message to students was to love themselves enough to make good choices in life.



## Calling retired teachers

Public education needs your wisdom and voice.

Read Jonathan Teghtmeyer's editorial on page 2.



## Let's make change

Properly funded inclusion model is worth fighting for.

Read Viewpoints on page 3.

## From the Archives

New teachers' organization makes an impressive entrance.

See story on page 4.



## The wisdom of elders

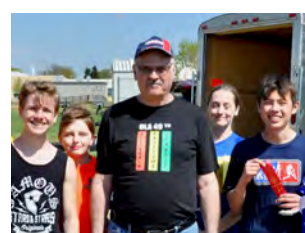
Indigenous knowledge keepers share their views on reconciliation, education and the future.

See page 7.

## Going international

Partnerships provide once-in-a-lifetime opportunities.

See page 6.



## Golden milestone

Volunteer not slowing down after 50 years.

See story on page 11.



**This**   
from ATA President Greg Jeffery

**Whew, it's summer!** See page 5.

## Retired teachers: Lend us your power!



### EDITORIAL

Jonathan Teghtmeyer  
ATA News Editor-in-Chief

The countdown is on and there is nothing like the feeling of the last day of school. As teachers, we are pretty lucky to get that experience each year.

But some of you are headed toward your last, last day of school.

I can only imagine how bittersweet that must be, with the regular anticipation of summer, the added enthusiasm of not having to go back in the fall combined with a strong sense of melancholy marking the end of your career. Oh yeah, and don't forget all the added work associated with packing up a classroom.

For those who are retiring, I would like to take a moment to congratulate you on your achievements, your accomplishments, and a successful career and retirement. I also want to thank you, on behalf of your colleagues and the profession, for all of your service for students and the cause of public education in Alberta. All the best in retirement.

You now join the large list of ATA life members — and I would like a minute to speak to all of our retired teacher readers. And I know you're listening.

I am always impressed and amazed by our large and loyal retiree readership. The *ATA News* receives a large amount of feedback and submissions from retired teachers. And I also hear regularly from retired teachers who say they enjoy reading the *News* — and that they enjoy having the time now to read the *News*.

Well, I enjoy hearing from you. Please keep that feedback coming in. But I have a request for you.

The year ahead will be an interesting year for public education. The Alberta economy is recovering from recession and the provincial treasury is improving. But yet there is still a significant deficit, growing debt and pressure to bring the budget into balance.

In schools, class sizes are at the largest they've been in at least two decades, and more English-language learners and students with complex needs are included in classrooms without adequate supports. These two issues are the top priorities for teachers as bargaining approaches for collective agreements that expire in the fall.

At the same time we are moving into a provincial election where the political parties are positioning a number of issues related to education as election wedge issues: building new schools, education funding, school choice, curriculum and supports for sexual and gender minority students.

And so, I have been thinking about the power of our retired teachers.

I won't assume that retired teachers have a ton of free time. There is no doubt that you have earned the right to spend more time with family, to get to the gardening and housework you have always wanted to do, to travel the world and to pick up a new hobby or practise the one that you weren't able to do when you were working.

But I'm hopeful that you might be able to access some of that time to help out your colleagues and the students that you have always shown such dedication and commitment to. I'm hoping that you might see advocacy and participation in support of public education as a valuable and rewarding way to spend some of the time that you used to use for work.

At last month's 100th-anniversary celebratory banquet, former ATA president Larry Booi told attendees about former Alberta Retired Teachers'

Association president Floyd Sweet. Booi said that he believed most teachers were motivated to become teachers because of the simple desire to "make a difference." But he also shared something similar that Sweet had to say about retired teachers.

"Well, Larry, just because you are no longer employed by a school board doesn't mean that you stop being a teacher."

Well, retirees, you never stop being a teacher, you never stop caring about children and our future, and I do not believe that you ever stop wanting to make a difference.

I'm hoping you will help us out in the year ahead by talking with your family, friends, neighbours, MLAs and candidates about public education. Write letters (to me, to the local paper, to your MLA), meet candidates for election and get involved in political campaigns.

You know what students need, what teachers need and what public education needs to be the difference. I look forward to hearing your voice. ■

*I welcome your comments — contact me at jonathan.teghtmeyer@ata.ab.ca.*

## Non-partisan doesn't mean apolitical



### Q & A

Dennis Theobald  
ATA Executive Secretary

**Question:** In a recent Q&A, you were highly critical of a United Conservative Party (UCP) policy to divide the ATA into two separate organizations: a union and a professional association. How can you criticize the UCP when the ATA is supposed to be non-partisan?

**Answer:** Well, this may be the first time we've run a Q&A on a Q&A, but the question is an important one and highlights some important issues around the role of the Alberta Teachers' Association in the political life of the province.

To start with, the Association is, by policy, non-partisan. Long-range policy 14.A.3, which has been in place in its current form since 1977, states that "the Alberta Teachers' Association avoids alignment with any political party or candidate for political office." The practical effect of this is fleshed out in other long-range policies. For example, policy 14.A.4 states that "the Alberta Teachers' Association

maintains contact with all major political parties," while 14.A.16 stipulates that "the Alberta Teachers' Association and its subgroups are prohibited from making financial contributions to parties or candidates for political office."

The ATA's approach is not necessarily consistent with the practices of other teachers' organizations in Canada. In British Columbia and Ontario, for example, some teachers' organizations have chosen to formally align themselves with, or actively and explicitly support, individual political parties. Throughout the history of the Association, its leaders have been of the mind that such an approach does not yield the best results for teachers. When the party supported by the teachers' organization is in power, it is all too easy for politicians to take for granted the teachers' contribution to their success. When a hostile government is in place, it has scant motivation to accommodate teachers' interests or concerns as long as teachers are perceived to be aligned with the opposition.

But being non-partisan does not mean that the Association is not active politically. The *Teaching Profession Act* lists among the legislated objects of the Association "to advance and promote the cause of education in Alberta" and "to arouse and increase public interest

in the importance of education and public knowledge of the aims of education, financial support for education, and other education matters" (sections 4(a) and (c)).

The implications of this mandate for the political activity of the Association are set out in policy as well: policy 14.A.1 states that the Association "works within the political system to influence decisions affecting education" while 14.A.2 says the Association "undertakes both formal and informal political engagement."

For the most part, the Association's political activities are educative: we try to highlight to the public, to elected leaders and to civil servants teachers' concerns and then advocate for legislation, policy and funding consistent with the extensive body of policy that has been approved by the Annual Representative Assembly. To this end, policy 14.A.11 states that the Association encourages political parties and candidates to articulate their education policies and plans for financing them.

The Association recognizes that, as far as personal beliefs are concerned, its membership spans the political spectrum, and it encourages individual teachers to be politically active. In policy 14.A.15, the Association "encourages the active participation of individual

teachers, as citizens, in the political process, including through partisan activity."

Ultimately, the power of the profession is maximized when the largest number of individual teachers are actively engaged in the political life of the province by participating, supporting and funding the political parties that best represent their beliefs.

Walking the non-partisan line can be tricky at times, and one concern I have is that the Association's ability to have meaningful dialogue with all political parties depends largely on the willingness of every party to have meaningful dialogue with the Association. President Greg Jeffery's letter to Jason Kenney following the UCP convention was an effort to initiate a conversation with the UCP leader — unfortunately we have not yet heard back from him, but we continue to be open to a dialogue.

Finally, we are non-partisan because the work of political engagement is never easy or finished, no matter which party is in power. I am reminded of the old joke that the problem with democracy is that, no matter who you vote for, the government still gets in. ■

*Questions for consideration in this column are welcome. Please address them to Dennis Theobald at dennis.theobald@ata.ab.ca.*



# The 4 Stages of Summer

A teacher's journey to getting reconnected and recharged



## Inclusion is worth fighting for



### VIEWPOINTS

Carol Henderson  
Former ATA President

I accepted my first teaching position in Alberta in 1977. It was a large elementary school in High River, and my assignment was a Grade 1 class. There were two or three classrooms at each grade level, one junior special education class and one senior special education class. Each special ed class included five or six students, a highly specialized teacher and at least one assistant. Some students required a one-on-one assistant. With small numbers, teachers were able to provide individualized programs and life skills. These children played in their own space at recess and were kept very separate from the rest of the students. Change was necessary.

In the early 1980s, our assistant superintendent visited each school and described to the staff the merits of "integration." Dr. Porter cautioned us that this initiative would be more expensive but better for students, and we were convinced. Some were skeptical, but the following school year we were ready and went forward with the plan. It worked very well. The students came to age-appropriate classrooms for certain subjects. They were accompanied by a teaching assistant. They played outside with their friends and learned how to be a part of the school community. They still spent a good part of the day with the special ed teacher and continued small-group instruction and individualized programs. We recognized that integration was the right approach and long overdue; we embraced it and were excited to be part of its success.

But similar to many successful education initiatives, employers started looking at costs. Could two or three students share a teaching assistant? Could assistants work in two or three classrooms? Could

the school manage with one special education teacher? Over time, this wonderful proven program eroded to the point where students who needed the special help and special programs were included in overcrowded and underfunded classrooms. It became more difficult and often impossible to meet their needs. It saddens me that our young teachers have never experienced how well inclusion can work.

Now, 35 years later, we have more students bringing with them their strengths and their needs, making up highly complex and diverse classrooms. Students come to school not ready to learn because of poverty, chaos or abuse, or because they are hungry or not mentally healthy. We have students who come to our classrooms not speaking or understanding the language of instruction. Teachers are expected to diversify their instruction to include all students. Children who have not learned to control and manage their emotions put other students and teachers at risk of injury. Under these circumstances, teachers have little time to celebrate the richness of diversity.

So what has our profession done? I will briefly comment on only three initiatives of the Alberta Teachers' Association. If you review the research, you will find that the profession has shared and continues to share the evidence with policy makers, education partners and ministry officials. About 10 years ago, the Association partnered with Finland in a joint research initiative. I had the opportunity to visit three schools in Finland. We reviewed their early childhood policies. The cornerstone of their education system is equity. Intervention starts at birth, and the children are monitored throughout their preschool years. If speech and

occupational therapy are needed, intervention is immediate and every possible reason for not being successful in school is addressed. Parents are supported and participate in the intervention.

Once the children enter school, the support continues as necessary. Class sizes are less than 20. All students access the no-cost lunch in the school cafeteria, ensuring they all have a nutritious meal.

We can do this in Alberta. It merely takes political will.

*A Great School for All: Transforming Education in Alberta* is another example of the outstanding leadership of the province's teachers. This research document outlines a clear vision of how we can support equity and capitalize on diversity. It has received worldwide recognition.

In September 2014, the Association released the *Report of the Blue Ribbon Panel on Inclusive Education in Alberta Schools*. The panel listened to teachers, completed a comprehensive research review and outlined 38 recommendations.

"Alberta has a choice — to accept inadequate implementation or to become a world leader in research and successful inclusion practices," the report stated.

So what is the main takeaway message from these three initiatives? Hint: what did I conclude from the special education situation I encountered in 1977? The answer: Change is necessary.

How can teachers effect change?

At the Annual Representative Assembly a few weeks ago, ATA president Greg Jeffery encouraged teachers to make education a priority in the next provincial election. And former president Larry Booi stated, "We don't get what we need or what we deserve. We get what we fight for."

Our students, especially our students at risk, are worth fighting for, so let's make life better for them by raising our voices and making education an election issue now and in 2019. ■

Carol Henderson was president of the Alberta Teachers' Association from 2009 to 2013.

## YOUR VIEWS

### FACEBOOK FEEDBACK

#### On Shannon Dube's Viewpoints article calling for more women in education leadership

Travis Bevan

So as a male I should accept my odds of being a leader as only equal to the male representation in the industry? I would prefer we have the best people leading our schools and union no matter the gender. I don't want to be hired because I am male.

Jennifer Anne

Perhaps this idea can initially be polarizing because some automatically assume it puts women against men. I'd like to argue that a well-run organization needs balanced representation as well as equity of opportunity. I'd also like to see a Council of Women be made up of anyone who has something purposeful to add to the conversation.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### Editorial on UCP policy a 'pointless commentary'

RE: editorial "UCP policymakers get it right," May 15, ATA News

I was shocked and dismayed by your editorial choices in the May edition of the *ATA News*. You skipped quickly over the United Conservative Party's stated hostility to our profession and our union in one sentence. You skipped quickly over their stated hostility to our LGBTQ students in one sentence. You then lavished half a page on praising UCP delegates simply for retreating from resolutions to significantly defund public schools and do away with elected school boards.

Those were resolutions, remember, that UCP riding associations submitted and were approved for debate at their convention.

On top of all this was the appalling headline "UCP policymakers get it right." What did they get right, exactly? Their goal of breaking up the ATA? Their goal of taking away an LGBTQ youth's right to come out on their own terms?

There is a reason that "much will be said and written" about the approval of these resolutions. They are a clear indication of the UCP's plans should they ever form government, and that should alarm every teacher.

To distract from that with pointless commentary on resolutions that were watered down or abandoned is a serious disservice to members. I am hurt that our members' dues were used to mislead them. I strongly urge you to reconsider your choices and retract your comments in your next issue.

Danielle Kasimer

Teacher, Edmonton Public Teachers Local No. 37

Letters to the editor represent the views of the writer and do not necessarily reflect the position of the Alberta Teachers' Association.



# ATA makes an impressive entrance

## FROM THE ARCHIVES

Maggie Shane  
ATA Archivist

Leading up to its official 100th anniversary on June 24, 2018, the Alberta Teachers' Association is celebrating its history through a number of initiatives, one of which is this column, entitled From the Archives. Curated by archivist Maggie Shane, this column has appeared in each issue of the ATA News this year, featuring significant moments and individuals in the Association's history as well as interesting artifacts or documents from the Association's archives. This last instalment focuses on the very birth of the ATA.

It is rare for an organization to note the exact date and time of its birth. But the ATA archives houses a document that serves as both court filing and "birth certificate" for the organization that became the Alberta Teachers' Association.

The Alberta Teachers' Alliance, as a legal and corporate entity, was born at 2:45 p.m. on June 24, 1918, at the Supreme Court of Alberta. Its entry into the world was attended by barrister George Van Allen. Witnesses to its birth were Morden Long, T. E. A. Stanley and Rachel J. Coutts. The proud parents were the teachers of Alberta, and the newborn's guardians were President George D. Misener and John Walker Barnett.

The Declaration for Incorporation is replete with somewhat dense legal language and terminology. Its official title, for example, reads thus:

*In the matter of an Ordinance Respecting Benevolent and Other Societies Being Chapter 66 of the Ordinance of The North West Territories in Force in the Province of Alberta, and in the Matter of the Declaration of George D. Misener, Morden H. Long, John W. Barnett, T E A Stanley, and Miss R J Coutts to Become Incorporated in Pursuance of the Said Ordinance Under the Name of The Teachers' Alliance of Province of Alberta.*

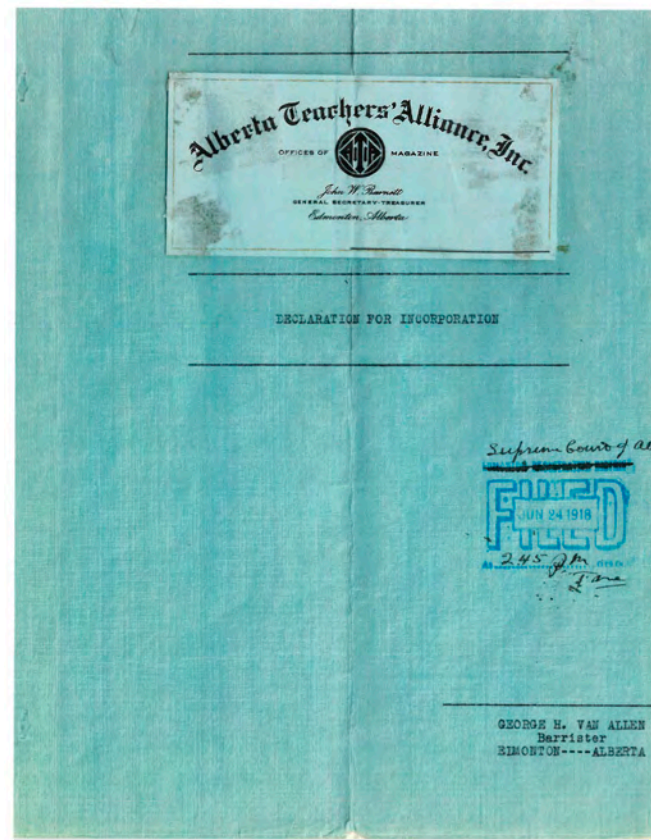
Impressive, yes? More impressive, however, are the stated objects of this new benevolent society. These have the weight of statements sworn under oath on behalf of Alberta's teachers. A century has passed, yet the words have only gained in significance.

The purpose of the Society shall be

- (a) to advance and safeguard the cause of education in the Province of Alberta;
- (b) to unite the members of the Society in an association for their mutual improvement, protection, and general and individual welfare;
- (c) to bring about united action on any matter of common interest to the teachers of the schools under the Jurisdiction of the Province of Alberta.

The entirety of the past century's advocacy, actions and advancements by and through the ATA flows from this document. It is foundational in every respect and, in the fullness of time, contributed important language to the 1935 *Teaching Profession Act*.

On a personal note, as our centennial celebrations come to an end, I would like to extend my thanks to all ATA News readers who have read and responded to this year's series on the ATA archives' holdings. It is a privilege to be the custodian of the story of the ATA. ■



*The declaration for incorporation that created the Alberta Teachers' Alliance is now a treasured item within the ATA archives.*

# Annual Pride Week fosters safety and acceptance

## SUCCESS STORIES



Patricia Marie Budd  
Father Patrick Mercredi  
Community High School

Every spring, the gay-straight alliance (GSA) at Father Patrick Mercredi Community High School in Fort McMurray runs a Pride Week.

This tradition began in April 2016. Every year since then the GSA (which we call the Safe Zone) has been presenting fun-filled activities to help educate the staff and student body about LGBTQ students and encourage acceptance and understanding at our school.

During Pride Week, classes start each day by viewing a PowerPoint presentation dealing with an issue regarding LGBTQ students. The following themes are among the presentations that have been featured: "How to Be an Ally," "What Not to Say," "Why Pronouns Are Essential," and "Gender-Neutral Bathrooms." These short presentations only take five minutes out of the first block, but they provide teachers and



Pride Week is an annual event at Father Patrick Mercredi Community High School in Fort McMurray. It includes a variety of activities, such as bake sales, face painting, limbo and hula-hoop contests, and a trivia contest.



PHOTOS SUPPLIED

students with valuable information about LGBTQ issues in school as well as opening the door for mature discussion on these matters.

At lunch, the Safe Zone students present a variety of activities, such as bake sales, face painting, limbo and hula-hoop contests and (every year) a trivia contest using the information learned in the week's slide shows. The staff comes out to support the students by volunteering to do extra supervision during lunch

while the students present their activities to the student body. Each year, as a result of Pride Week and its repetition every spring, inclusion and acceptance is becoming stronger. Slowly our students are starting to feel safer and more accepted at our school. ■

*Patricia Marie Budd is a teacher and GSA supervisor at Father Patrick Mercredi Community High School in Fort McMurray.*

*Each year, as a result of Pride Week and its repetition every spring, inclusion and acceptance is becoming stronger. Slowly our students are starting to feel safer and more accepted at our school.*



### STORIES AND PHOTOS WANTED

If something newsworthy is going on in your school, district or local, please let us know. We will also consider articles, photos and cartoons. Please email tips and submissions to managing editor Cory Hare: [cory.hare@ata.ab.ca](mailto:cory.hare@ata.ab.ca).



Protegé Rayel Reid (left) collaborates with mentor Trina Harris during a group day.

## New teachers get a good start through ATA mentorship program

### IN FOCUS

Cory Hare  
ATA News Managing Editor

Adele Lowen remembers how difficult it is to be a beginning teacher.

That's why she's now a teacher co-ordinator for a formal mentorship program that her Northern Spirit local provides in partnership with the Peace Wapiti School Division and the Alberta Teachers' Association.

The program pairs new teachers with experienced colleagues who act as volunteer mentors, providing protegés with a guide and a sounding board so they can get established without having to figure everything out on their own.

"It gives them a chance to have almost constant professional development at their fingertips," Lowen says.

Throughout the school year, mentors and protegés communicate regularly, whether it be in person or by email, phone, social media or Skype. The program also includes three scheduled "group days" each year that enable all the division's mentors and protegés to gather for workshops, PD sessions, networking and collaboration.

For protegés, the program provides a feeling of welcoming and warmth, Lowen says.

"It's that support that they need so they don't have that breakdown in the middle of the year or at the end of the year and want to leave the profession."

The Association has been involved in formal mentorship programs for more than two decades. Through the Professional Development program area, the current version of the program operates as a partnership between the ATA, locals and their corresponding districts, says Monique Gravel, an executive staff officer in the PD program area.

When initiating the program, the partners establish a formal steering committee comprising members from the ATA, the local and the district. While some districts have less formal mentoring programs, Gravel says the ATA's formalized structure brings the benefit of being a true partnership.

"It demonstrates that we have a relationship with the district," she says. "We all have an equal voice at the table and we are working toward a common goal — professional growth."

Another key aspect of the program is that locals and districts each contribute funds to cover the cost of substitutes when program participants need release time. And when requested Association PD

staff officers visit schools in their region to deliver workshops for administrators who will be involved in the program.

"Administrators play an important role because not only do they supervise teachers, but they have to evaluate them as well," Gravel says.

Districts and their administrators benefit from the program through higher teacher performance and reduced attrition, she says.

**“Too many of our new teachers leave the profession because they feel overwhelmed.”**

— Rhonda Schneider, professional development chair, Trumpeter Local No. 26

Mentors benefit by increased learning, renewal and teaching performance, enhanced focus on instructional practices and development of reflective skills.

"Even if you're a teacher with 20, 25 years of experience, you're still learning through this program because that beginning teacher is bringing new things, new initiatives, new ideas to you," Gravel says.

"It's reflective practice because now you're questioning yourself through what this beginning teacher is asking you. It's a win-win partnership."

Last year at Summer Conference, Rhonda Schneider of Trumpeter Local No. 26 witnessed a presentation by Northern Spirit's Adele Lowen. Although her district has had its own mentorship program for the last eight years, Schneider was convinced that she should initiate the Association's mentorship program in her district.

"I liked how it was a partnership between the district and the ATA," she says.

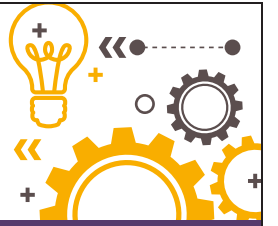
The program is set to roll out in the fall. Schneider is eager because she sees a real need to do more to help new teachers.

"Too many of our new teachers leave the profession because they feel overwhelmed," Schneider says.

"It's kind of like kids — they need to have a good start in life — you need to have a good start in your career in order to want to continue." ■

# This...

from ATA President Greg Jeffery



### TGIS!

Right now, many of you have probably just put a big X through another date on your June calendar. Yes, summer is here and another school year is almost over.

For some of you, this may have been your first year teaching. Just like college football players who turn professional and find the game at that level is a lot faster, you sometimes may have felt a little overwhelmed at the pace you had to maintain to keep on top of things in your classroom. Here in my 34th year in the teaching profession, I felt your pain.

I too had a steep learning curve to navigate this year. It was my first as president of the Alberta Teachers' Association — the first year since 1984 (sadly, before most of you first-year teachers were born) that I wasn't in the classroom.

Being president is a serious undertaking and can get quite hectic from time to time (two ATA staff members were in my office talking to me about four media requests that I needed to respond to as I was writing this very sentence), but I am proud to deliver the messages of Alberta teachers.

Speaking at more than 30 events (inductions, retirements, annual meetings) hosted by various locals around the province, I have learned about different local traditions and witnessed the pride each one takes in celebrating its members.

Working with Provincial Executive Council has kept me busy. I can tell you they represent very well those of you who teach in their districts. They are very dedicated, and they have many, many perspectives and ideas for the Association to explore and pursue in the interest of improving the profession.

Conferences, speaking engagements, meetings with government officials, media requests, even our own Council meetings — preparing for all of these things (and more) is a lot of work. The staff at the ATA are extraordinary, and without them I would not have survived many different times throughout the year. They too are dedicated to supporting the work of teachers.

I have no doubt that next year will be a busier one for the Association. I have been making many contacts with the leaders of other provincial organizations, both in and outside of Alberta, in preparation for the upcoming provincial election.

*Have a restful and happy summer.*

I have to admit that every now and then, out of the blue, I get a wave of nostalgia for my band room, my students and the sheer adventure of being a classroom teacher. I miss those things, but having survived my first year as president, I can tell you that being entrusted with the honour of representing more than 46,000 remarkable teachers is pretty special too.

That said, I feel that one of my last presidential duties of this year is to give you five things (in no specific order) to think about over the summer:

Nothing.

Sun.

Family.

Friends.

Fun.

Have a restful and happy summer. You deserve it! ■

*I welcome your comments — contact me at [greg.jeffery@ata.ab.ca](mailto:greg.jeffery@ata.ab.ca).*

# Going international

The Alberta Teachers' Association has several international partnerships that are in various stages of their life cycles. Here are summaries and comments from participants.



SUPPLIED

The Norway-Canadian (NORCAN) partnership has come to the end of its three-year term.

## NORCAN

Now concluding after launching in March 2015, the Norway-Canadian (NORCAN) partnership brought together school teams in Norway, Ontario and Alberta to examine the issue of equity in mathematics. The project involved principals, teachers and students working side by side to engage in questions like, What does it mean to be good at math? Is there such a thing as natural ability in math? or, for a student, What does it mean to ask for help?

This project has reached the end of its initial three-year term and its final report will be published in the fall.

### Participants' perspective

"We often say our students are the leaders of tomorrow. It is through programs like NORCAN that make me believe tomorrow is already here and that we educators need to take a step back allowing our students to guide not only their learning but ours as well. As we have seen through NORCAN, a student voice is a very powerful medium."

*Jeff Landry, teacher, Westwood Community High School, Fort McMurray*

"NORCAN for me was incredible. It was truly a time when I could flourish in personal growth and develop myself as a better leader. My personal experience was beautiful beyond what words could ever express, and it was genuinely a one-in-a-million experience."

*Nandini Dalwadi, Grade 12 student, Westwood Community High School, Fort McMurray*

"This project brought out my leadership skills and the voice that was hidden within me. I will continue to spread the voice and share ideas within my school and city to make an impact within our global community."

*Aksh Patel, Grade 11 student, Westwood Community High School, Fort McMurray*

"The opportunity to discuss governance, curriculum, pedagogy and life between three political entities has been enlightening and has made Olds High School a better place for students and staff to learn."

*Olds High School, NORCAN report*

"NORCAN has been an amazing and unforgettable experience. Being with young leaders from all over has been an amazing time. Coming to Norway has been eye-opening and has given me a better lens on the world around me."

*Myranda Champagne, student, W.P. Wagner High School, Edmonton*

"From staying with a Norwegian family to sitting in on classes, this exchange has given me a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to experience another country's school system from a student's perspective, and to reflect on education from a constructively critical lens. I am excited to work with my classmates and teachers to create equity in our school, and to incorporate aspects from NORCAN into our classrooms. One of the most surprising realizations that came of this experience was that adolescents are the same everywhere, and Canada isn't so different from Norway."

*Maddie Wait, student, W.P. Wagner High School, Edmonton*

## Alberta-New Zealand

This international partnership saw the formal pairing of two Alberta schools with schools in New Zealand. Both participating Alberta schools are in Brooks: Eastbrook Elementary and Brooks Composite High School.

Teams from the Alberta schools visited New Zealand in March in order to reconnect with the New Zealand teams that travelled to Alberta last year, and also to meet with researchers from the New Zealand Council for Educational Research.

The three schools visited in Porirua, a suburb of Wellington, are made up primarily of Maori students and students of families from the Pacific Islands. In both Alberta schools, more than 30 per cent of the student population are English language learners.

The diversity present in the New Zealand and Alberta schools provide both teams an opportunity to compare how they work with complex and diverse school populations. Students, teachers and school leaders engage in the question, How do we develop leadership in support of transitions in learning?



SUPPLIED

The Finland-Alberta (FINAL) partnership is being renewed to involve a new group of high schools from Alberta and Finland.

## FINAL

The Finland-Alberta (FINAL) partnership was initiated in 2011 by the Finnish National Board of Education, the Centre for International Mobility and the Association. The foundational goal was to build capacity for principal, teacher and student leadership in the participating schools.

While the first iteration has concluded, the project is being renewed to involve new high school partners and a focus on collaborating on curriculum renewal and implementation, assessment, innovative teaching practices, student engagement and inclusive and equitable education. Selection of schools is currently under way.

### Participants' perspective

"The leadership lessons learned from our Finnish colleagues and indeed from each other are simple yet profound. We are, not surprisingly, stronger together, able to do more despite the ever shrinking resources of public education and the ever increasing pressures, expectations

and demands upon public schools. Yet there is an additional, less obvious and perhaps more surprising insight.

The work of high school principals in Alberta is rich, demanding and complex. So too is the work of high school principals in Finland. Many of the issues are identical — reductions in budgets, increasing numbers of students with greater needs, less certainty about what skills students need for their future lives, etc. In Finland those issues are often met with *sisu*, the Finnish word encompassing extraordinary determination, courage and resoluteness in the face of extreme adversity. Herein lies the leadership lesson: it is an action mindset which enables individuals and groups to reach beyond present limitations and transform barriers into frontiers. It is more than seeing challenges as opportunities. It is seen and lived as a universal capacity which we all share, not just the gifted or the leaders or some people — all of us."

*Matt Christison, principal, Robert Thirsk High School, Calgary; and Jana Macdonald, principal, Bowness High School, Calgary*

### Participants' perspective

"The overwhelming feeling we got from each of these schools was the sense of *whanau* (family) that was apparent among all of the students as well as the staff. These are students from a variety of cultural backgrounds, yet they all take part in the welcoming *haka* that each of the schools presented."

*Geoff Petley-Jones, principal, and Olivia Stroeder, special education, Brooks Composite High School*

"A similarity between our representative schools and the schools we visited was the noted diversity of our student populations as well as a similar economic reality of the types of employment available and income stratification. In this common reality, teachers and school leaders are challenged to take a provincial curriculum (national curriculum in New Zealand), and transform it into something relevant to the local context. Repeatedly in the Porirua Schools we heard the need to engage in or focus on place-based learning, connecting all learners to their local community and local ecology."

*Tim Rodgers, principal and Erin Norrish, learning support teacher, Eastbrook Elementary School, Brooks*



SUPPLIED

The Alberta-New Zealand partnership had students from Brooks visit New Zealand schools that are made up primarily of Maori students.

*The overwhelming feeling we got from each of these schools was the sense of whanau (family) that was apparent among all of the students as well as the staff.*

# Conversations with Indigenous elders and knowledge keepers

*Thoughts on reconciliation, education and hope for the future*



CORY HARE

Métis elder Irene Loutitt and First Nation knowledge keeper Rocky Morin.

## Despite challenges, future is bright for Indigenous people, elder says

Cory Hare  
ATA News Managing Editor

When Irene Loutitt was a girl, her long, braided hair and her race made her obviously different.

"I went to a non-Indigenous town when I was 11 years old to go to school, and I ran into so much racism," says the Indigenous elder, who is originally from the Paddle Prairie Métis Settlement in northern Alberta.

"It was terrible the harm it did me. It gave me a lot of bitterness, and I didn't like white people because of that. Now, it's come a long ways."

While racism still exists, it's not like she experienced it as a girl, Loutitt says.

"I think it's improving ... because we're out there now. We see successful Aboriginal people lots of times. There's lawyers, doctors, teachers ... nurses."

"Years ago — I can remember back 50 years now — you didn't hear of any [Indigenous people] going to university. Now we're getting educated and getting degrees and being role models for our community."

**“ I hope that all Indigenous people keep moving forward and that there's acceptance among all people. ”**

— Irene Loutitt, Métis elder

Loutitt now lives in Wetaskiwin and works in children's services. She says she feels proud every time she sees an Indigenous person in a visible professional role or doing well in business. While this is happening more and more, Indigenous people still live with serious challenges.

"I like to think they're doing well, but at the same time we need to be honest ... their housing — there's so many that live in one house, for example," Loutitt says.

Housing, health and education are the main issues that need to be addressed.

**BRIGHT FUTURE** continued on page 12

## Resilience drives Indigenous people to success

*Q&A with knowledge keeper Rocky Morin*

A member of the Enoch Cree Nation that borders Edmonton's western boundary, Rocky Morin does a lot of cultural engagement work with teachers, school administrators and students. Sometimes referred to as a knowledge keeper, he prefers to refer to himself simply as a helper. The *ATA News* sat down with Morin after he'd spent a day helping at an event for teachers learning about the ATA's latest Walking Together: Education for Reconciliation workshops.

**It seems like reconciliation is being embraced by non-Indigenous people. What is your perspective on reconciliation?**

I find for some [Indigenous people] there's hesitancy, and I've heard directly from some that we shouldn't have to reconcile because we haven't really done anything that requires us to reconcile what happened. So some view it as a one-way street.

But in talking with many others, including a lot of elders, they say it has to go both ways, that relationship. So I think it's important for Indigenous people to educate themselves about what that means — reconciliation — and what they can do on their part.

**What would you like non-Indigenous people to know about your traditional ways, language, values and culture?**

To try to understand or acknowledge that our ways are alive, our languages, our ceremonies. Our world view is all based on the idea that there's a life force. That's how we live in balance and harmony, and we treat everything — from the insects, the plants, the animals, the grass, the air — we treat it all with great respect because our understanding is that it's alive. It deserves the respect from us as humans, Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike.

**To what extent do you feel it's possible for Indigenous people to adhere to traditional ways, language, values and culture within the context of modern society?**

It's always been a struggle to find that balance, to walk in both worlds. On one hand, our elders direct us to maintain our languages, our sovereignty, our nationhood, to still have that relationship with the land, hunting, trapping and fishing, continue with our age-old ceremonies, the songs — all those things. On the other hand, we have to find ways to survive in modern society with housing, infrastructure, health, governance, education, so it's trying to find that balance to be able to walk in both worlds.

I know the elders have always had a fear that if we forget our traditional ways, then we become assimilated and that's not what they had wanted. I think it's an ongoing struggle, but at the same time there is hope. There are younger

people that are taking an interest in re-discovering themselves, their language. There are young people wanting to pick up the drum, learn the songs, put on an outfit and dance. The languages are surging even at the early level ... there's a lot of hope right there.

**How would you describe the state of education of Indigenous children and youth?**

We're gradually increasing the number of our students graduating high school. In post-secondary we see an increase in graduates getting their degrees, getting their doctorates, PhDs. We're seeing those numbers climb. It is gradual but it is happening so I think, on the positive side, things do look good moving forward.

But again, it's an ongoing struggle. We're faced with higher unemployment numbers, poverty, incarceration, addictions, those kinds of things, so again it's trying to balance it out and bring our people up so they can succeed in this world.

*I think our people are doing much better and I think it will continue.*

— Rocky Morin, First Nation knowledge keeper

**What changes would you like to see take place?**

Language, also land-based teachings, taking the kids onto the land and helping them to connect to their surroundings. It will have an effect on them that will only supplement their classroom learning.

If they're outside spending a little bit of the day under the sun or standing on the grass, putting tobacco down by a tree, all those land-based teachings are going to help to restore that balance of traditional knowledge and Western [knowledge]. Some schools — not too many yet but some — are doing that. That's something I'd like to see more of moving forward.

**How would you describe the overall state of Indigenous people today?**

A lot of it is resilience despite the past. Despite what's happened, our people are here still.

We're still faced with all these struggles, but at the same time, on the positive side, we are seeing progress. With racism ... even as little as 20 years ago when I was in high school, it's different now than how it was for me.

**RESILIENCE** continued on page 12

2018  
**got a no!**  
PHOTO CONTEST

# AND THE WINNERS ARE ...

1<sup>st</sup>



2<sup>nd</sup>



**1st** — Student Monica Wantok enjoys a beautiful spring day with a gleeful swing.

**Photographer:** Dawnelle Salant  
St. Mark School, Calgary

**Date of photo:** May 8, 2018

**Judges' comments:** The photographer has captured the subject at the pinnacle of glee. Beyond the captivating facial expression, the vibrancy of the girl's top adds interest and impact. The lines created by the swing set and its chains help draw the eye to the subject.

**2nd** — Grade 12 student Carley Doneff of Monsignor McCoy High School in Medicine Hat battles her way down the court during a basketball tournament at Savanna High School in Anaheim, Calif.

**Photographer:** John Laing  
Medicine Hat High School

**Date of photo:** Dec. 27, 2017

**Judges' comments:** The photo captures the gritty and intense facial expressions that are generated by sporting competition. Compositionally, the background is relatively free of clutter — difficult to achieve with action-packed sports.



3rd



**3rd** — Grade 3 pupils Lincoln Smith, Riley Burdess and William Houle exhibit joy and excitement of having phys. ed outside with no snow on the ground.

**Photographer:** Bilyana Tokusheva, St. Catherine School, Grande Prairie

**Date of photo:** April 30, 2018

**Judges' comments:** This is another photo in which pure glee is a strong, fundamental element. Like the boys leaping into the play area, this unbridled joy leaps out of the image.

*Thank you to all the teachers who participated in the contest. You made the judges' decisions very difficult.*



HM

## HONOURABLE MENTIONS

**BOTTOM LEFT** — Students Sophia Rubiano and Aaron Selassie peer through a lens ball while climbing a play structure. Note: the photo is presented upside down in order for the students to appear right side up.

**Photographer:** Dawnelle Salant  
St. Mark School, Calgary

**Date of photo:** May 10, 2018

**Judges' comments:**

This photo immediately grabs the viewer's attention because of the uniqueness of the composition. It also presents a fun challenge for the brain to figure out what's going on.

**TOP RIGHT** — Students Addison Kobza and Faith Loblick (reflected) share a mirror as they prepare to participate in a mime show.

**Photographer:** Darryl Propp  
Landing Trail School, Gibbons

**Date of photo:** Oct. 26, 2017

**Judges' comments:** Reflections often make for compelling images. With this one, the photographer was able to create a nifty funhouse effect that is initially confusing, and then satisfying.

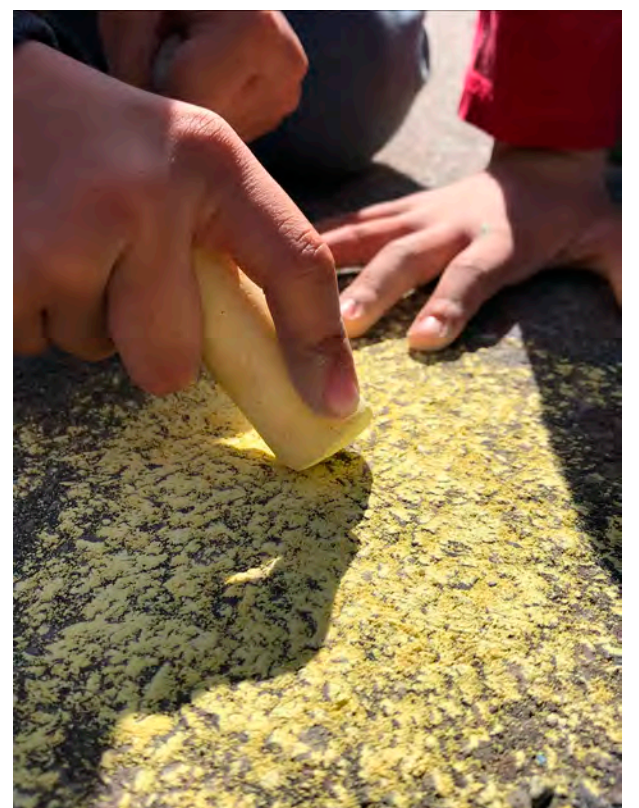
**BOTTOM RIGHT** — Grades 1 and 2 students create sidewalk chalk drawings for others to enjoy at their school.

**Photographer:** Laura Farley  
Colonel J. Fred Scott School, Calgary

**Date of photo:** April 5, 2018

**Judges' comments:**

This photo has a lot going on that generates interest — light, shadow, textures, colour — as well as the lingering question: What are they drawing?



# Superintendent pay cap a good step, says ATA president

Jen Janzen  
ATA News Staff

It's a step in the right direction. That's ATA president Greg Jeffery's reaction to a new compensation framework that introduces limits to the salaries of Alberta school superintendents. "Teachers have lived with five zeros in the last six years," Jeffery said. "I'm glad to see superintendent compensation reined in."

Education Minister David Eggen announced the framework June 1. A new

five-level salary grid starts at \$60,000 and goes up to a maximum of \$275,000. The grid will apply to new contracts but won't affect existing ones.

It is expected that the changes will reduce overall compensation for superintendents by an average of 10 per cent across Alberta and save \$1.5 million per year once all existing contracts are renewed under the new rules.

The cap follows a March review on compensation for the 74 Alberta superintendents of public, francophone, Catholic and charter school boards. A February report by the Alberta School

Boards Association revealed that superintendent pay in Alberta rose 10 per cent over the last five years.

"Superintendent salaries were running out of line with the rest of the country and there just wasn't much regulation at all," Eggen told the *Calgary Herald*. "So I mean, it's high time that we did build a fair system."

The top superintendent salary in the province went to Joan Carr of Edmonton Catholic Schools, whose compensation totaled \$426,834 last year.

Following Eggen's announcement, Edmonton Catholic board chair

Terry Harris issued a statement indicating that the board and Carr remain committed to working together until her contract expires Aug. 31, 2020.

The new framework also includes the removal of perks like golf club memberships, money for children's post-secondary tuition and other benefits, including spending accounts of up to \$25,000.

United Conservative Party leader Jason Kenney said on Twitter that capping salaries for superintendents was a "commendable move." ■



STOCK

The Alberta Teachers' Association recommends that substitute teachers and those under temporary or probationary contract keep their own records of hours worked in order to improve their chances of qualifying for employment insurance.

## Keep a work log to help qualify for employment insurance benefits

ATA Teacher Welfare

Are you currently substitute teaching or teaching under a temporary or probationary contract of employment?

If the answer to this question is yes, you may qualify for regular employment insurance (EI) benefits when your employment comes to an end. Qualifying for regular benefits under EI regulations is contingent upon the following criteria:

- Your employment contract as a teacher has ended and you are not in receipt of an employment offer for the next school year or benefit premium contributions for the summer.
- You have not worked for at least seven consecutive days.
- You have the required number of insured hours accumulated in the past 52 weeks to qualify for EI.

The Alberta Teachers' Association helps teachers with questions about EI benefits on a regular basis. The following are answers to some common questions:

### How many hours do I need?

This depends on your teaching status and location within the province. It also depends on whether you are new to the workforce and if you've filed a previous EI claim. Check EI's website for the required number of hours in your particular circumstance.

### What happens if my Record of Employment (ROE) does not have enough insured hours?

Keep your own records of hours worked, including preparation time before and after school, supervision and extracurricular time after school and time spent marking assignments at home. Where possible, have your log

book hours signed by a principal or other supervisor who can certify that these are hours you spent working. Although not a guarantee, this log book record can be helpful in your reconsideration request of a denied claim.

### I am filling in for another teacher for a longer period of time. Could I use my plan book in place of the log book noted above?

Yes, ensure that you record any time such as coaching, planning, marking or other assigned duties/professional responsibilities in the plan book. Have the administrator sign off on your time. Again, this can be helpful for your reconsideration request of a denied claim.

### Should I apply anyway?

Unless you are extremely short on hours to qualify (100 or more), the Association usually recommends applying regardless, as waiting too long to apply can be another reason your claim could be denied.

### What if I am turned down?

Within the required timelines noted within your letter from EI, contact the Alberta Teachers' Association's Teacher Welfare program area for advice on the merits of filing an appeal. In Edmonton and area, call 780-447-9400. From elsewhere in Alberta, call toll free at 1-800-232-7208.

For more information on employment insurance, visit the ATA's website ([www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca)) and click on Employment Insurance, located under Salary and Benefits, or call the EI general inquiries line at 1-800-206-7218. Apply for benefits online through the Human Resources Development Canada website: [www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/ei-regular-benefit.html](http://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/ei-regular-benefit.html). ■

## ASBA under new leadership

ATA News Staff

After the resignation of its top three officials, the Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA) is now under new executive leadership.

Voted in at the ASBA's annual spring general meeting on June 4 were president Lorrie Jess, board chair of Wolf Creek Public Schools, and vice-president Trina Boymook of Elk Island Public Schools. Valeria Palladino has been appointed interim CEO.

"I am honoured to have been named president of ASBA," said Jess in an ASBA media release. "I would like to thank the membership for its confidence in me, and look forward to meeting this new challenge head on."

The appointments follow the sudden and unexpected June 1 resignation of president Mary Martin, vice-president Darcy Eddleston and CEO Suzanne Polkosnik.

The annual spring meeting took place in Red Deer. ASBA members represent Alberta's 61 school boards. ■

## What is an EFAP and is it for me?

*Employee and family assistance programs help employees and their families*

ATA Member Services

An employee and family assistance program (EFAP) is a service designed to assist employees who are experiencing personal and job-related problems that affect work performance, general health and well-being.

An EFAP provides problem identification and assessment, consultative advice and referral to appropriate agencies, and the promotion of wellness through various programs and activities. Employee participation is voluntary and this added benefit is part of your health benefits plan that may also be extended to family members. Programs are open-ended and comprehensive and emphasize individual welfare.

### Why have an EFAP?

Each of us faces a variety of challenges and problems in our daily lives. While most difficulties can be resolved personally, some problems persist over a period of time, either constantly or intermittently. When these problems become too much to handle, they can affect personal happiness, family relations, performance at work and general health. Help in dealing with these problems can result in higher job satisfaction and performance, increased self-esteem, improved personal and interpersonal relationships, better coping skills and reduced sick leave.

### What kinds of problems will an EFAP deal with?

Problems for which an employee assistance program can be effective include

- physical and emotional illness,
- marital and family difficulties,
- drug and alcohol abuse,
- financial problems,
- grief and bereavement,
- career concerns and job dissatisfaction,
- distress and
- harassment.

Early identification is the key for an effective EFAP. Serious problems do not go away by themselves and the services offered by EFAPs are a good starting point to deal with challenges you may experience in life.

### Who pays for EFAP services?

Depending on your benefit package, the program is either sponsored by the Alberta School Employee Benefit Program (ASEBP) in conjunction with their extended disability benefit, by the school board directly or by using another benefit provider. EFAPs do not replace current benefit coverage. Extended health-care benefits can be accessed when more or additional services are necessary.

Members covered by an EFAP through ASEBP (provided by Homewood Health) can find more information at [www.asebp.ab.ca](http://www.asebp.ab.ca) or from their benefit provider. ■



PHOTOS GARRY KUMPF

Walter Long is a retired teacher who just volunteered for his 50th consecutive track and field day at Our Lady of the Angels Catholic School in Fort Saskatchewan.

## Retired teacher reaches golden milestone

*Fort Saskatchewan's Walter Long volunteers for 50 consecutive track meets*

Garry Kumpf

Special to the ATA News

Fifty years is a long time, especially if you measure it in track meets and your name is Walter Long.

Friday, May 11, marked Long's 50th track meet at Our Lady of the Angels Catholic School in Fort Saskatchewan. Long taught at the school for 32 years and organized its annual track and field day until his retirement in 2001. Since then he has volunteered weekly at the school, including at each year's track and field day.

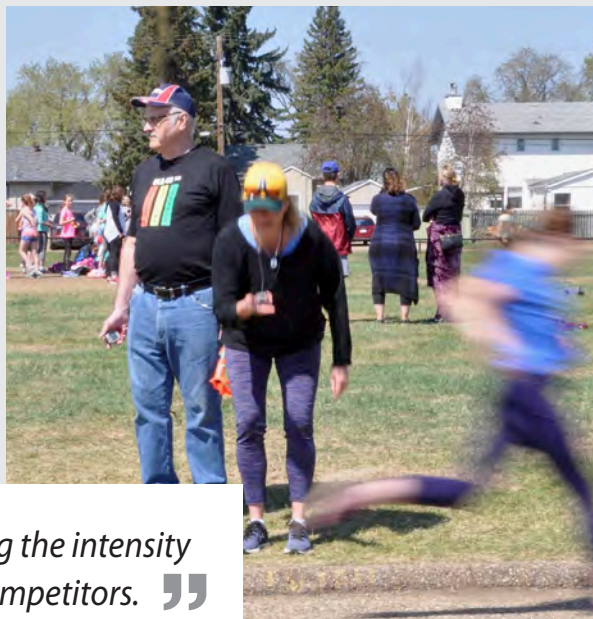
"I used to love track when I was in school," Long says. "I still love seeing the intensity on the faces of the competitors."

Long has served as the head timer for the past 17 years. He co-ordinates a crew of track timers comprised of parent volunteers, many of whom are former students whose children now attend the school. As well, Long has maintained the school's track meet records since 1970 and knows by name almost all the record holders.

This year will probably not be Long's last year of volunteering at Our Lady of the Angels, but it will likely be his last track meet there. The school has been designated a K-4 school next year and, consequently, will not have a track meet. Long says he will likely volunteer at the new middle school's track meet next year but confesses to some sadness at the change.

"It won't quite be the same. It won't be home anymore." ■

Garry Kumpf is a former teacher at Our Lady of the Angels Catholic School and currently works as a substitute teacher with Elk Island Catholic Schools.



**“ I still love seeing the intensity on the faces of the competitors. ”**

— Walter Long, volunteer



## Book project seeks stories about subbing

Jen Janzen

ATA News Staff

It was the ATA's 100th anniversary that got Marcheta Titterington thinking about the contributions that substitute teachers have made in the last 100 years.

A substitute teacher for her entire teaching career, Titterington, in conjunction with Calgary Public Local No. 38, is compiling stories from around the province that speak of the unique role substitute teachers play in the public education system. She, along with colleague Penny Smith, is seeking stories of substitute teaching from around the province for their compilation book, *100 Years of Subbing in Alberta*, which will be published in late 2018 or early 2019.

*From a teacher who had to perform double duty as a midwife to a teacher standing in the pulpit to replace a parish priest, many interesting stories have already crossed Titterington's desk, and she's been happy to receive them.*

"Over the course of the past year, archival stories were appearing in the *ATA News*, and it got me thinking," she explained. "There are so many stories around subbing in Alberta that could be told."

From a teacher who had to perform double duty as a midwife to a teacher standing in the pulpit to replace a parish priest, many interesting stories have already crossed Titterington's desk, and she's been happy to receive them.

According to the Alberta Teachers' Retirement Fund Board, there are 232 retired teachers in Alberta who are 95 and over. Of those, 28 retired members are older than 100. They have a unique perspective on teaching in Alberta and, Titterington says, there's a limited amount of time left to capture their memories.

"Once these older people have passed on, they'll take their stories with them," she said.

She points out that the group isn't seeking stories only from retired members. Teachers at any stage of their career can participate as long as their stories reflect the experience of substitute teachers.

"We want stories right up to the present," Titterington says. "Maybe somebody else will write about the next 100 years."

Titterington herself graduated from university when she was 49 years old. Getting her teaching credentials was a lifelong dream.

"I'm really glad I took that leap, even at a later age," she said. "It's been really rewarding over the years."

Now 74, Titterington is still teaching in Calgary classrooms from kindergarten to Grade 12.

"I still have energy and I love what I do, and I absolutely love what I do and the kids I teach. Why would I stop?" ■

### How to submit

If you have a story about substitute teaching in Alberta and would like to participate in this project, contact [info@ata38.ab.ca](mailto:info@ata38.ab.ca). You can also mail your stories to Attn: Tammy Auld, ATA Office Local 38, 212 - 3016 5th Ave NE Calgary, AB T2A 6KA. The team will be accepting submissions over the summer.

## BRIGHT FUTURE

continued from page 7

“They all go together,” she says. “I think, in general, things are getting better.”

While racism has decreased, other trends are a concern. For example, it’s a challenge to ensure that traditional ways aren’t forgotten.

“Long ago almost everybody in my community hunted and trapped,” Loutitt says. “There are just a few in my community still that know. Most of the old-timers are gone.”

She stressed how important it is for Indigenous people to tell their stories and teach their language.

“I didn’t teach my kids [Cree], which I totally regret now,” she says. “I was younger then and didn’t really see it as really, really important as I do now.”

Regarding reconciliation, Loutitt says “it can be a good thing.”

“I think that it’s going to take a lot of effort for everyone to make it happen, to make those calls to action happen,” she says.

Loutitt’s message for non-Indigenous people is to break free from any fears that may be preventing them from reaching out.

“They need to not be afraid to ask the Aboriginal community, and to not be afraid of doing something wrong or saying something wrong,” she says.

For Indigenous people, she hopes to see more and more improving themselves through education and taking on visible professional roles.

“I hope that all Indigenous people keep moving forward and that there’s acceptance among all people.” ■

### Elder protocol

Indigenous people generally do not refer to themselves as an elder. While she’s considered an elder by her community, Loutitt refers to herself as a storyteller/teacher.

## RESILIENCE

continued from page 7

It’s different for my son today, as he tells me. I think there’s definitely progress there.

There was a time when, not too long ago, our ways, our ceremonies were outlawed. It was against the law to gather and do these things. There was a time when our people weren’t allowed to vote; we weren’t considered citizens. We couldn’t go to bars. Even university — there was a time when we weren’t allowed to seek an education.

Now we look today and so much progress has been made in that amount of time, so it makes you think, in the next 20, 30 years, how’s it going to look? I think our people are doing much better and I think it will continue.

### What is your hope for the future?

I’d like to see a respectful relationship with non-Indigenous and Indigenous people, one that’s based on mutual respect, kindness and helping one another, sharing. And I think it’s going to be the next generation to kind of see that through. That’s really oftentimes what motivates me to continue to do work with education and culture, is knowing that I’m being a part of that change that will happen, that’s happening right now.

And the elimination of racism, that’s really what I would love to see one day, and I think it’s possible. I think we’re moving in the right direction. ■

*Note: Some answers have been condensed and edited for clarity.*

### More to come

Watch for more interviews and stories with Indigenous elders and knowledge keepers in the ATA News next year.

## WHO IS AN ELDER?

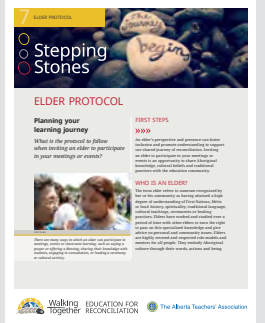
The term *elder* refers to someone recognized by their community as having attained a high degree of understanding of First Nations, Métis or Inuit history, spirituality, traditional language, cultural teachings, ceremonies or healing practices. Elders have worked and studied over a period of time with other elders to earn the right to pass on this specialized knowledge and give advice on personal and community issues. Elders are highly revered and respected role models and mentors for all people. They embody First Nations, Métis and Inuit culture through their words, actions and being.

Gender and age are not factors, nor are they criteria in determining who is recognized as an elder. Some elders may be female. Other elders may be comparatively young in age but very well versed in ceremonial and cultural practices.

Elders don’t describe themselves as such, but rather it’s the First Nations, Métis and Inuit community that recognizes and identifies the person as having acquired and earned the gifts of an elder.

*Knowledge keepers* or *cultural advisors* are persons recognized and identified by elders of the community as being knowledgeable about cultural practices or world views. Rather than being called elders, these people may be referred to as knowledge keepers or cultural advisors.

Source: Stepping Stones — Elder Protocol, the Alberta Teachers’ Association



## NATIONAL INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY: JUNE 21

June 21 is National Indigenous Peoples Day (formerly known as National Aboriginal Day). This is a day to celebrate the rich, vibrant and diverse cultures, languages and histories of Indigenous people in Canada. Indigenous organizations and the Government of Canada selected June 21, the summer solstice, as this day is significant to many Indigenous people. National Indigenous Peoples Day is an opportunity for school communities to participate in the celebration. Here are some ways to celebrate National Indigenous Peoples Day in your school community:

- Invite an Indigenous elder, knowledge keeper or cultural advisor to share knowledge about your local area
- Highlight First Nations, Métis and Inuit literature in your classroom
- Check out the Government of Canada’s website for additional information, including suggestions to plan for National Indigenous Peoples Day ([www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100013248/1100100013249](http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100013248/1100100013249))

Look for events happening in your area to celebrate National Indigenous Peoples Day.



The Alberta Teachers’ Association



## Teacher Growth, Supervision, Evaluation and Practice Review Workshop

for Administrators

August 23–24, 2018  
Barnett House, Edmonton

This workshop focuses on the principal’s critical role and the duties he or she must perform as outlined in the *School Act* and the provincial Teacher Growth, Supervision and Evaluation Policy 2.1.5.

To register and for more information go to <https://tinyurl.com/TGSE2018>.  
Deadline for registration is August 15, 2018

The Alberta Teachers’ Association

MS-55-6-2018 05

# What Will Your Retirement Look Like?

If you could retire tomorrow, what would you do?

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Submit your story (no more than 250 words) by September 1, 2018 and your name will be entered for a chance to win a \$50 Chapters gift card. You can stay anonymous or choose to share your name, but please include your age, your city/town and the grade(s) you teach.

We may share your story on our website and in public documents, like our annual report.

Please email your story to [retirementstory@atrf.com](mailto:retirementstory@atrf.com)

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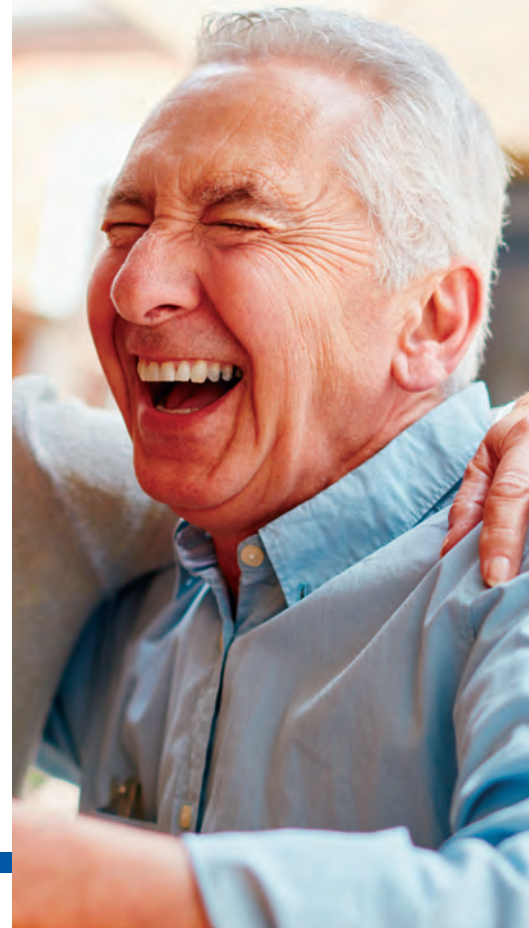
ARTA offers the ARTA Retiree Benefits Plan, emergency travel coverage, special rates on home and auto insurance, the Edvantage discount program offering discounts, scholarships for family members, and affiliation to ARTA branches that provide localized community activities.

**Why wait? Join now!**

Enjoy a free membership in your first year of retirement. Connect with us today to find out how.



**1-855-212-2400**  
[www.arta.net](http://www.arta.net)



**SAVE THE DATE!**

Your favourite Festival returns next May!

May 28 – June 2, 2019  
St. Albert, Alberta

**SO MUCH FUN**

Your students won't know they're learning!

- Kindergarten to Grade 6 curriculum connections
- Experience a day of learning with performances and interactive, hands-on activities from around the world
- Student Value Packages
  - \$19 – 2 Feature performances and 1 site activity
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[childfest.com](http://childfest.com)



De l'info, des jeux et des pages scolaires...  
En français !



Tous les jeudis !

**Get 2Know 2Learn.ca**

Educational resources for teachers



**Exploring art with 2Learn**

Taking Art to the Street is a curated collection of resources that explore street art. Visit [www.2learn.ca/specialedition/streetart](http://www.2learn.ca/specialedition/streetart) to learn about some prolific street artists, see examples of their work and learn about the social context of street art. Students can create their own digital street art or graffiti with the tools included. In addition, the 2Learn Student Sites, organized by division, have additional videos, virtual art exhibits and digital art creation tools. These student sites are available from the 2Learn.ca home page. Select the grade level and then find Art or Fine Arts on the menu to access the many interactive resources.

## CLASSIFIEDS

### Travel and Recreation

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**CUBA, COSTA RICA, NICARAGUA AND COLOMBIA**—Escorted Travel the Civilized Way! We took the “hurry” out of touring. Leisurely paced, small groups, unique experiences and terrific value balancing nature, history and culture. [www.thediscoverytours.ca](http://www.thediscoverytours.ca), 1-800-417-0250, Monday-Friday

**Disclaimer** The Alberta Teachers' Association does not necessarily endorse the products or services presented in paid advertisements or in the Notices and Events column.

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**For advertising information**, contact the advertising manager:

780-447-9417 direct  
1-800-232-7208 toll free  
email: [advertising@ata.ab.ca](mailto:advertising@ata.ab.ca)

**Next Deadline**  
Friday, Aug. 23, 2018, 4 p.m.  
(publication date Aug. 28, 2018)

Please note: advertisers are encouraged to book their advertisement space early—space is limited.

**Cost**  
*Classified ads:* \$1 per word plus GST (\$15 minimum); *Display ads:* varies according to size

**Payment**  
Prepayment is required. We accept VISA, Mastercard, cash or cheque.

**Circulation:** 44,000

## THE ALBERTA TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

Read the *ATA News* online at [www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca)

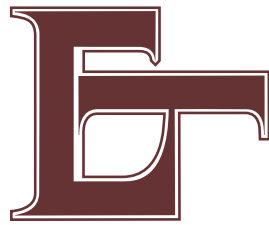
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Sign up for email to receive *Members' Updates*: [bit.ly/membersupdate](http://bit.ly/membersupdate)



## The ATA Educational Trust

### The \$600 Morgex/Johnson Insurance Centennial Fund for Teacher Professional Development

Deadline to apply: September 30, 2018

Supporting teachers and prospective teachers to attend workshops, conferences, seminars, institutes or symposia to enhance their professional knowledge.

**For more information visit:**

[www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca) > My ATA > Programs and Services > Grants, Awards and Scholarships > ATA Educational Trust



The Alberta Teachers' Association



## Apply today for the Aspen Foundation's Social Justice Learning Grants



DEADLINE:  
**OCTOBER 2**  
2018

Applications available to download online on the Aspen Foundation website [www.afle.ca](http://www.afle.ca)



### Understanding Conflict—A Communication Workshop

**August 23–24, 2018**

9 AM–3 PM

Barnett House, Edmonton, Alberta

Understanding Conflict is a communication and conflict-resolution workshop, offered by the Alberta Teachers' Association. The program is available to all active members and associate members. Workshop agenda topics include

1. Understanding and defining conflict
2. Core conflict and complicating factors
3. Positions to interests
4. Clarifying skills, active listening and paraphrasing
5. Reframing and overcoming opposition
6. Dealing with anger
7. Establishing a safe and positive environment for conflict resolution
8. From solution to action

Registration is free to active ATA members and includes all resource materials, breakfast and lunch. Participants are responsible for travel and accommodation costs. Register online at [www.tinyurl.com/HealthyInteractions](http://www.tinyurl.com/HealthyInteractions). Space is limited.

**Registration deadline:**  
**July 31, 2018**

For information, please contact **Dave Matson in Member Services** at 1-800-232-7208 or [ms@ata.ab.ca](mailto:ms@ata.ab.ca).

## Simple gesture provides priceless memento

### MOOT POINTS

Ray Suchow  
Special to the ATA News

Ah, June! There are few words that inspire teachers more, except perhaps hearing about fresh doughnuts in the staffroom, or that your class was a delight for the sub. Both are rare but always welcomed!

For me, June holds particular significance because it's the time of year that I make sure that all the little mementos that have come my way over the past 10 months are carefully gathered, taken home and placed in a special memory box. One day, upon my retirement, I will reminisce over three decades of collected memories and create a "career scrapbook" or an epic multimedia presentation. I've got some time yet to figure out which way will work best.



June holds particular significance because it's the time of year that I make sure that all the little mementos that have come my way over the past 10 months are carefully gathered, taken home and placed in a special memory box.

This year, I have a particularly rich set of memories to preserve: happy first-day colleague selfies, supportive notes from my teaching besties, a picture of my high school CTS students creating a working 3D-printed maglev train and images of my Grade 8s and 10s attending Skills Canada for the first time are definitely the highlights among them. However, it may be the penciled note I found on the side of my teacher computer that becomes the most enduring memory of this year.

I was away for a day, and upon entering my room the next morning I found

a yellow Post-It with a laboriously pencilled message from "that student" — you know, the one who often takes the most out of you, but yet you keep giving because our gift tells us that we can help make a difference. In basic block letters he wished me a very happy day, and included his name as well. In the years I've known him, I've never seen such a display of affection. My sub assured me that it was authentic, that he had asked if he could write it and place it there.

I was humbled. I've not touched it or removed it in the five months since I received it, and it has given me that

little boost we all need on many a day.

I will definitely remove that little yellow note with care and carefully place it in my memory box, along with all the rest of the treasures I've collected this year. Perhaps while time remains in this busy month, you'll have a chance to collect and store your special mementoes too, because soon we'll hear a word that sounds even better than June and fresh doughnuts — July! ■

Ray Suchow teaches computers, religious studies and information processing at Christ the King School in Leduc.

Moot Points is your chance to write about a funny incident, a lesson learned or a poignant experience related to teaching. Please email articles to managing editor Cory Hare: [cory.hare@ata.ab.ca](mailto:cory.hare@ata.ab.ca).

## Why wait until September?

### Six reasons to get or update your online ATA account now

An online ATA account allows members of the Alberta Teachers' Association to access important tools, services and information housed in the Members Only area of the Association website.

Before turning out those lights in your classroom for the summer, update your online ATA account or — if you don't yet have one — get one now. Here are six reasons why you should.

#### 1. Get collective bargaining updates.

When the bargaining of collective agreements is imminent or underway, regular updates and other information critical to keeping you informed of developments will be posted in the Members Only section of the Association website. All collective agreements between ATA bargaining units and their respective school jurisdictions expire Aug. 31, 2018. Bargaining for new agreements is underway.

#### 2. Vote on central table collective agreements.

Ratification votes by teachers on central table collective agreements negotiated between the Alberta Teachers' Association and the Teachers' Employer Bargaining Association are conducted exclusively online. An online ATA account is required to vote. The current central table agreement expires on Aug. 31, 2018.

#### 3. 2019 is a PEC election year.

Provincial Executive Council (PEC) conducts the business of the Alberta Teachers' Association. It is made up of 20 members, 18 of whom are elected by you. PEC represents teachers across the province and brings their voices to the table when determining Association strategies and actions. PEC elections for all positions are held every two years and are conducted exclusively online, as are byelections, which take place as necessary. An online

ATA account is required to vote. Updated account information is needed to ensure you are assigned the correct ballot.

#### 4. Use ATA library online resources and databases.

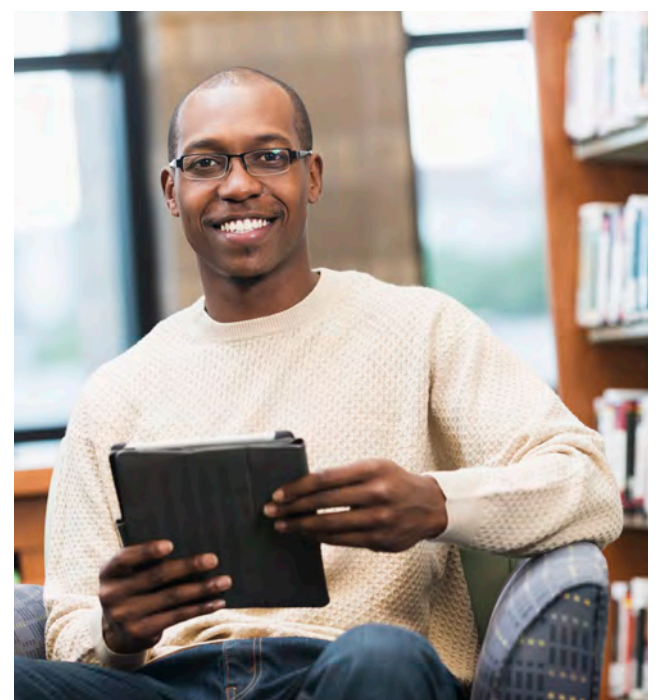
The ATA library has an extensive collection of books, periodicals, videos and other materials focusing on educational research and professional development for teachers. Library services and materials are available in both French and English. Get your online ATA account and log into the ATA library catalogue to reserve books or videos.

#### 5. Get no-cost ATA specialist council memberships.

As a benefit of ATA membership, active members are entitled to join one specialist council of their choice each year at no cost. Specialist councils promote the development of specialized professional expertise. Each of the 21 councils is operated by a team of volunteer teacher members who contribute their time, talent and enthusiasm to developing materials and organizing events that assist in gathering ideas, sharing information and building capacities among ATA members. Active members must have an online ATA account to select and join the specialist council of their choice.

#### 6. Print your own ATA membership card.

The Association launched online self-serve membership card distribution in 2016. With an online ATA account, you have the convenience of printing your own ATA member card from the Association website when you need it. ATA member cards are useful when your identification as a teacher or member of an association is needed to attend events, receive discounts or be eligible for other offers from retailers and service providers. ■



Before turning out those lights in your classroom for the summer, update your online ATA account or — if you don't yet have one — get one now.