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INCOMPLETE PICTURE
 See infographic on page 3.

ATA NEWS

The Alberta Teachers' Association
100 years
 Learn from the past. Inspire the future.


October 10, 2017 | Volume 52, Number 4 | News Publication of The Alberta Teachers' Association

POOR EXCUSE

Let's get real about poverty in Alberta.

- New campaign raises awareness of ongoing problem
- Community partnerships keep at-risk kids fed
- Province plans to double funding for school nutrition
- From the field: Teachers share their views

See pages 8 & 9.




Perspective shift

In education, too much emphasis is placed on the outputs.
 Read Jonathan Teghtmeyer's editorial on page 2.



In Focus

New series asks the question: Is Provincial Executive Council boring as dirt?
 See story on page 5.



From the Archives

Historic teachers rally marks 20th anniversary.
 See story on page 4.



In the beginning

Beginning Teachers' Conference draws hundreds.
 See page 16.



Orange Shirt Day

Growing campaign takes off all over North America.
 See page 7.

Let's focus on education inputs



EDITORIAL

Jonathan Teghtmeyer
ATA News Editor-in-Chief

The Fraser Institute's annual ranking of Alberta schools based on standardized testing results came out on Thanksgiving weekend, and while I do not want to waste any more time on them than they deserve (which is none), it spurs some thinking for me.

We spend a lot of time focused on data related to the outputs of education, whether that is focusing on the Fraser Institute report or the latest results from the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). But do we spend enough time looking at the inputs of education?

Research tells us that out-of-school factors account for 60 per cent of the variation in student achievement on standardized tests. So I wonder why so much time and energy are devoted to debating which instructional techniques are used in elementary mathematics, for example, as opposed to talking about what we can do to make sure students have their best chance to succeed in school.

Let us take a second and talk about the work of teaching.

Students are unique and diverse people, not simply empty boxes waiting to be filled with knowledge. They have

unique home lives and backgrounds that affect their learning.

Fifteen per cent of students have an identified special education need. One in six live in poverty, and 41 per cent of our classes include a significant number of students learning the language of instruction.

There is no such thing as a normal student. Each student comes into school with a different social, emotional and academic background. We have students of different races, religions, ethnicities, sexual orientations, gender identities, beliefs, ideologies and

Fifteen per cent of students have an identified special education need. One in six live in poverty, and 41 per cent of our classes include a significant number of students learning the language of instruction.

experiences. Their families and home lives are equally diverse: one-parent, two-parent, no-parent, same-sex parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles living at home, only-child, first-child, last-child, and some have children of their own.

We take them all — usually in groups of 25 or 30 — and try to impart to them the knowledge, skills and attitudes related to hundreds of prescribed learning outcomes.

Students are also real people living real lives. On any given day students might be facing issues related to food security, family breakup, domestic violence, sexual abuse, criminal activity, addictions, health, death and

loss. Among other things, fear, anxiety, worry, hunger, anger, sickness, sadness, joy, love, regret and/or remorse can all affect a student's ability to learn.

Teachers are not able to address all of the issues facing students; nonetheless, those issues still arrive in the classroom. Teachers do their best to take what they are given and to help all students learn the curriculum.

Society hopes that after 13 years of education, each student with their uniqueness and diversity will be able to move into the world as a successful adult and citizen.

Society expects a lot out of the school system. But I wonder if we need to expect more from society.

What can society do to make sure students have their best chances in school? My answer: focus on students' readiness to learn and teachers' conditions of practice.

How do we make sure that students come to school ready to learn? It starts with making sure that preschool children have the best opportunities to start school on an equal footing. Vulnerable students must have access to funded full-day kindergarten and junior kindergarten programs regardless of where they live. Universal, affordable, high-quality child care

will help address social and financial inequity. Look at continuing work on income inequality, income supports, tax fairness and affordable housing in order to alleviate systemic poverty.

Then we need to ensure that students are ready to learn day to day. Ensure every school has a trained teacher counsellor and that students have quick and easy access to other para-professional supports and wrap-around services. Universal school breakfast and lunch programs would prevent children from trying to learn on an empty stomach or worrying about where their next meal will come from.

Finally, society can help teachers do their best work for students by making sure they have the best conditions of practice. It's vital that all students have the supports they need. We need to have an adequate number of educational assistants, learning coaches and language learning specialists. Then we need to have small enough classes so that teachers can relate more and better with students individually to ensure that their learning and other needs are less likely to go unaddressed.

I don't know about you, but I am starting to get tired of this worthless debate over test results, "fixing" curriculum and so-called discovery math. If we want to get real about improving education outputs, let's focus on fixing the education inputs. ■

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

When in doubt, follow the code



Q & A

Gordon Thomas
ATA Executive Secretary

Question: What is the impact of the *Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblower Protection) Amendment Act* for me as a teacher and does it "trump" my obligations under sections 13 and 14 of the Code of Professional Conduct? Does this legislation change the obligations of my school board to me?

Answer: PIDA, as the act is known, is intended to encourage the reporting of wrongdoings within the public sector by better protecting the identity of whistleblowers and better protecting them from punishment or retaliation by their employer if they report a wrongdoing (the act uses the term "disclosure").

For example, PIDA amends the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIP) to provide that a right of access under the act does not extend to information that would reveal the identity of someone who has requested advice on making a disclosure, made a disclosure or submitted a complaint of reprisal, or whose complaint has been referred to the Labour Relations Board under PIDA.

Our advice to teachers on PIDA matters is to follow the Code of Professional Conduct.

Sections 13 and 14 of the ATA's Code of Professional Conduct require that teachers, when criticizing another teacher's competence, reputation or performance, must first inform the teacher who is the subject of the criticism. With respect to PIDA, it's important to note that its confidentiality provisions are made "subject to" other

regulations. There is a reasonable argument that the Code of Professional Conduct is a "regulation" for the purposes of PIDA and that the disclosure obligations in the code therefore "trump" the confidentiality provisions in PIDA. We advise our members to follow the requirements of the Code of Professional Conduct in these circumstances.

The PIDA requirement to protect individuals' identities still allows a teacher to abide by the obligations set out in the code, as PIDA does not require that the person making the disclosure keep their identity secret. As long as the teacher is willing to disclose his or her identity to the alleged wrongdoer, then the teacher is able to comply with both the code and PIDA.

School boards must follow procedural fairness in the investigation and adjudication of the disclosure and provide the alleged wrongdoer with notice of the allegations and sufficient details to allow the alleged wrongdoer to respond.

A school board policy or a school board's attempts to withhold information that a teacher is entitled to in accordance with procedural fairness and natural justice would be in contravention of not only procedural fairness but the direction of PIDA.

Some teachers have mentioned that employers intend to use "hushmail accounts" to which a teacher can report a wrongdoing anonymously. There is no indication that a person's identity/source email account is kept secret in such a process; the service appears to be aimed more at preventing the information contained in the email from being accessed or leaked.

In sum, our advice to teachers on PIDA matters is to follow the Code of Professional Conduct. ■

Questions for consideration in this column are welcome. Please address them to Gordon Thomas at Barnett House (gordon.thomas@ata.ab.ca).



INCOMPLETE PICTURE

Over the Thanksgiving long weekend, the Fraser Institute released its annual rankings of Alberta high schools, which are based on the results of Alberta diploma examinations.

The ATA **opposes** the use of standardized tests to compare and rank schools. A recent public opinion poll of 800 randomly selected Albertans shows support for this view.



Two of every three Albertans are opposed to the ranking of schools based on standardized test results.

YOUR VIEWS

ON TWITTER

World Teachers' Day (#WTD2017)

Justin Trudeau: @justintrudeau

Today, we honour the exceptional work teachers do to shape young minds and build communities.

William Shatner @williamshatner

Celebrating #WorldTeachersDay! Those tireless souls who prepare the next generation to deal with the problems we cause today.

UCP @UCPCaucus

United Conservatives celebrate Alberta teachers on World Teacher Day.

Greg Jeffery @ab_teacher

To all my @albertateachers colleagues and those worldwide. Thanks for all you do as we learn from the past and inspire the future

Kiersten Villadsen @MsVilladsen

Happy #WorldTeacherDay to all the teachers out there! Keep up the amazing work!

Myrna Dembicki @MyrnaDembicki

I am honoured to work with people who work tirelessly to nurture dreams and foster hope.

Beginning Teachers Conference (#yegbtc)

Evan Wain @TeacherWain

Building student resiliency workshop was incredible. Lots of tools to use going forward.

Samantha Lefler @LeflerLearns

Thank you for such a great session, great presenter & so funny! I'm super pumped to get kids engaged!

Lena Truong @missltruong

Had a great weekend full of educational sessions with great company!

FACEBOOK FEEDBACK

Comments on a posting inviting teachers to wear their Get the Message scarves from the 1997 legislature rally.

Jan Smith

I remember that day well. We bused in from Grande Prairie.

Savi Houldin

Thanks for the reminder ... I'll dig mine out tonight.

Gary Marcellus

I remember this day, busing in from Ft. McMurray. What an incredible day standing with 15,000 colleagues.

Jennifer Fredeen

I will wear mine! I was a student at the rally. I can still find myself on the poster!

Let's build inclusive communities for students



VIEWPOINTS

Kris Wells
Institute for Sexual Minority Studies

This past summer saw record attendance at pride festivals across Canada, yet this was juxtaposed with more visible and vocal attacks against the LGBTQ community, with rainbow crosswalks vandalized and pride flags slashed and burned, including at a local high school in Edmonton.

While Canadian society is growing more inclusive, there is still much reluctance and resistance when it comes to supporting LGBTQ youth in schools. Trans students are still frequently denied access to bathrooms in accordance with their lived gender identity, and some parental extremist groups seek to "out" students without their permission.

Recent research indicates that the vast majority of Canadian teachers (85 per cent) now support LGBTQ-inclusive education yet may not have the training or knowledge to know how to effectively create safer schools for LGBTQ youth.

As we begin another school year, here are 10 proven strategies that all schools can engage in to help build inclusive communities for all students:

1. Help start, strengthen and sustain gay-straight alliances (GSAs) in your school. Alberta, Ontario and Manitoba all have government legislation supporting a student's right to create a GSA. The research is clear. GSAs can and do save lives. If you are a teacher, consider being a GSA advisor and display safe space stickers and posters to show you are an ally.
2. Staff can volunteer to serve as a "safe contact" in their school. Each month they can bring an update

on LGBTQ resources, activities and events to staff and/or school council meetings.

3. Update school forms, websites and communications to become gender inclusive. Recognize that gender exists on a spectrum, not a binary.

Recent research indicates that the vast majority of Canadian teachers (85 per cent) now support LGBTQ-inclusive education yet may not have the training or knowledge to know how to effectively create safer schools for LGBTQ youth.

4. Review your library and classroom resources and add age-appropriate LGBTQ books and films. Literature can be a lifeline for many youth. Students need to see themselves in the word and the world around them. Society has changed rapidly, yet schools often fail to reflect this diversity and remain very socially conservative spaces.

5. Encourage your school board to pass comprehensive sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression policies with detailed implementation plans. Policies set clear expectations and authorize all staff to meet their legal obligations and become proactive in creating respectful, welcoming, inclusive and safe working and learning environments.

6. Address homophobic and transphobic bullying and derogatory language whenever you see or hear it. Teachers and parents are very important role models. Remember, your silence signals consent and makes you complicit in the act of discrimination.

7. Make inclusion a priority. Engage in specific LGBTQ professional development for yourself and school staff. Education is the best answer to ignorance. Knowledge is the key to building inclusive human rights cultures in your school, classroom and community.

8. Create all-gender universal washrooms in your school. Washrooms can be dangerous spaces for many students, regardless of how they identify. Prioritize safety and inclusion over misinformation and fear.

9. Incorporate LGBTQ topics as part of your classroom discussions, curriculum and lesson plans. LGBTQ students need to see themselves in their textbooks and in the halls and walls of their school. Visibility helps to challenge stereotypes and tells LGBTQ youth they exist and are valued.


10. Celebrate diversity and disrupt heteronormativity by connecting with local LGBTQ communities and agencies. Invite LGBTQ guest speakers into your classroom. Celebrate important awareness days like National Coming Out Day, Pink Shirt Day, and International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia. Help show pride in your school and community. ■

Dr. Kristopher Wells is an assistant professor and faculty director with the Institute for Sexual Minority Studies and Services in the faculty of education at the University of Alberta.

This opinion column represents the views of the writer and does not necessarily reflect the position of the Alberta Teachers' Association.



CURATOLO
curatolocartoons.com



5th Oct 2017
World Teachers' Day

Susan Kotowich-Dubrulle, principal of Racette School, gets some good loft during a field goal kicking challenge that was part of the first World Teachers' Day event for the Greater St. Paul Local No. 25. The local hosted a fundraising barbecue for KidSport, and during halftime of a high school football game teachers took on local politicians in the kicking challenge (the politicians won 2-1). A rematch for next year is already being discussed.



SHALA ORBELL



SUPPLIED

Members of Calgary Local No. 38 are ready to hand out apples to members of the public at Heritage Park on Sunday, Oct. 1. The annual event is meant to raise awareness of teachers' work and encourages members of the public to acknowledge World Teachers' Day on Oct. 5. Pictured are (L-R) Kaitlin Sproxtton, Gillian Sealy, Janet Scott-Gattinger, Jessica Petillot and Kevan Hunter.

Teachers mount historic rally

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Maggie Shane
ATA Archivist

Leading up to its official 100th anniversary in June 2018, the Alberta Teachers' Association is celebrating its history through a number of initiatives, one of which is this column. Curated by archivist Maggie Shane and appearing in each issue of the ATA News this year, this column will feature significant moments and individuals in the Association's history as well as interesting artifacts or documents from the Association's archives.

Wednesday Oct. 4, 2017, marked the 20th anniversary of the 1997 teachers' rally that occupied the Alberta legislature grounds in the sunshine of that crisp autumn afternoon. On that day, thousands upon thousands of classroom teachers raised their collective voices in support of public education. It was a historic show of professional solidarity in support of students and against drastic cuts to education funding by the Progressive Conservative government of Premier Ralph Klein.

The next day (which was the fourth edition of UNESCO's World Teachers' Day), the headline on the front page of the *Edmonton Journal* read "Teachers slam funding cuts; 12,000 march on legislature to demand more cash for education."

The story described the scene: "Angry teachers jammed the legislature grounds Saturday in one of the largest demonstrations in Alberta history, to demand more spending on education. An estimated 12,000 chanting people covered the lawns on the south side of the legislature while speaker after speaker condemned provincial budget cuts."

ATA president Bauni Mackay, was inspired by the sight of colleagues wrapped in "Get the Message" scarves arriving from every corner of the province.

"This is absolutely overwhelming to see so many teachers — active teachers, retired teachers, student teachers — and other supporters, standing together," she said.

"We want Albertans to get the message that teachers can no longer hold together an excellent public education system under increasingly deteriorating conditions."



ATA ARCHIVES-MERLE PROSOFSKY

Oct. 4 marked the 20th anniversary of the historic rally that brought close to 20,000 teachers and other supporters of public education to the Alberta legislature.

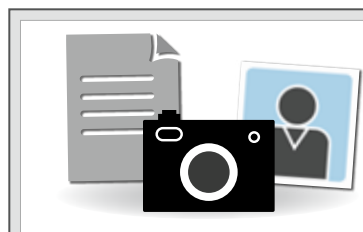
In an article published in the 1999 book *Contested Classrooms: Education, Globalization and Democracy in Alberta*, authors David Flower and Larry Booi described the mood of the day as a "combination of pride and frustration."

The impetus behind the rally was a desire to demand student learning conditions that were conducive to learning, a long-standing concern and priority for teachers of all previous generations. Still, in Alberta's history, mass demonstrations by teachers were all but unheard of; this was something new. If this extraordinary event was the result, what was the cause?

The answer to that question is complex. In short, by 1997 teachers had long been taking on far more than their professional duties. Classroom teachers were contending with the full range of social issues that impacted student learning. At the same time,

a narrative of "back to basics" and "failing schools" was brought to bear upon public education.

Citing fiscal realities, the Klein government was engaged in drastic cuts to education, health and social services. Many teachers reported that they were experiencing the cuts first-hand as an assault on schools to the detriment of students and their communities. The cuts were drastic enough to bring teachers to their feet, then to their locals, and finally to buses and private cars on the highway to Edmonton. Teachers arrived by the thousands (ATA officials estimated the total was close to 20,000) determined to raise the alarm over the need to properly fund public education. And raise the alarm they did. Today, 20 years later, we have an extraordinary aerial photo from an extraordinary day to remind us of teachers' commitment to the students and families of Alberta. ■



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.

PEC: Boring as dirt, important as heck

Elected reps log long hours in the name of guiding the teaching profession

IN FOCUS

Cory Hare
ATA News Managing Editor

Welcome to *In Focus*, a new ongoing series that will shine a spotlight on the operation and programs of the Alberta Teachers' Association. This first instalment is focused on the workings of Provincial Executive Council, or PEC.

When word got out around Barnett House that I was going to observe a meeting of Provincial Executive Council (PEC), I started receiving words of pity as if I was planning to spend the day at a life insurance convention.

You see, the PEC meetings that occur at least eight times a year at Barnett House have a reputation for being a bit dull — actually, the phrase “boring as dirt” comes to mind. After all, each of these meetings is a solid two days of reports and discussions.

But I wasn't fazed. During several years as a reporter at a community newspaper, I'd survived dozens of meetings of school boards and municipal councils, so I wasn't afraid of enduring a little bit of PEC ennui for the sake of a story.

What the heck is PEC?

The setting for PEC meetings is typical of many council chambers. At the end of a hallway on the second floor of Barnett House is a set of double doors leading to a boardroom that contains a tasteful amount of wood panelling and abstract paintings, a pyramid-shaped skylight that draws the eye upward and a heavy oak table that's shaped like an enclosed arch. Along the table's perimeter are name signs and microphones. A gavel rests where the president sits.

The room is fringed with smaller tables for executive staff.

The council itself comprises 15 district representatives (DRs) — teachers who are elected by their colleagues in geographic regions throughout the province. Each of these individuals represents several ATA locals. Also sitting on Council are two vice-presidents and a president who are elected by all eligible ATA members. Rounding out the roster is the past president and the executive secretary, who is a non-voting member.

When the meeting begins, it's clear that Robert's Rules are strictly followed. There's a defined agenda, and members are addressed by formal title and last name.

“The process is formal and there's a solemnity to it because we want people to be acutely aware of the seriousness of the work,” explained ATA president Greg Jeffery in an interview. “We are the governing body of the Alberta Teachers' Association and that's a huge responsibility.”

PEC's role is much like that of any other board: to provide governance by making decisions affecting the budgets, policies and strategic direction of the ATA. Staff are there to provide their expertise when called upon so PEC members can make informed decisions.

While some boards run afoul of the line between governance and management, PEC and ATA staff have established a solid working relationship that, for the most part, respects each other's boundaries, said Executive Secretary Gordon Thomas.



BROMLEY CHAMBERLAIN

PEC chambers at Barnett House, viewed here from the chair of district representative Robert Twerdoclib, is the site of at least eight two-day meetings each year, during which the elected members make decisions about the ATA's budgets, policies and strategic direction.

“Governors, you want them to have nose in, hands off,” he said. “For me, the most important thing that happens in the council chamber is that [PEC] will give me and my staff colleagues political direction.”

The agenda for each PEC meeting includes reports to PEC from the ATA's various program areas, as well as any discipline reports that have arisen since the previous meeting. DRs each get a turn to report on the issues they're hearing about from the teachers they represent. Decisions that PEC members debate and vote on originate as recommendations from staff, usually the executive secretary, or as motions from PEC members themselves.

At the end of the two days everyone returns home exhausted. Meanwhile, on the next business day, Barnett House staff compile action sheets that break down each PEC decision into specific tasks for specific staff members.

Learning the ropes

PEC meetings involve hundreds of pages of reports and are a large part of the roles of district representatives, vice-presidents and the president, but these elected officials are also very busy in between these meetings.

We are the governing body of the Alberta Teachers' Association and that's a huge responsibility.

—Greg Jeffery, ATA president

The presidency is a full-time position with an office at Barnett House. The role involves being the official spokesperson for the Association and its chief representative in dealings with provincial and national education stakeholders such as the Alberta government and the Canadian Teachers' Federation. The president is the chair of PEC and the Teacher Salary Qualifications Board, and also provides ongoing support to district representatives.

The two vice-presidents alternate months as deputy president and serve on a number of committees, specifically chairing either the Association's finance or its resolutions committee.

District representatives serve on several committees and Association subgroups as well, while also attending various meetings of the locals in their districts. This typically translates into three or four local meetings per week.

“The biggest challenge has been just the sheer amount of travel,” says Peter MacKay, a new DR who represents the North West district, which has seven locals that are spread out from Grande Prairie to Fort Vermilion.

It takes several years for new DRs to catch on to the routine and the change in priorities that comes from moving from the local to the provincial level, says Central region DR Jere Geiger, the longest serving PEC member, with 21 years of service. Another adjustment is the fact that there's not much of a safety net for PEC.

“At the local level someone — the mother ship — is still looking over you and making sure that you're safe,” Geiger said. “Once you get to this level there's not a lot of others looking after you, so you better get it right the first time.”

As teacher-politicians, PEC members have been known to generate friction on occasion, which can also be an adjustment for new members.

“Some of the clashes of personalities I hadn't expected, but I've come to respect that the differing views of council members are often very helpful for us because it's representative of what's actually out there in the field,” said President Jeffery, referring to his election as a DR 14 years ago.

Like other governing bodies, PEC operates under the premise that once a decision is made, all PEC members are expected to support the decision, regardless of the views they expressed during the debate or how they voted.

“It's important that everyone's views be heard, whether they're conflicting or not, but council deals with that in council chambers,” Jeffery said. “When PEC makes a decision, we go out of the room with one voice, we carry the message of Provincial Executive Council.”

Political credibility

Except for the president, all elected PEC members are still active teachers, with DRs and VPs eligible for up to half-time release to fulfill their ATA duties.

“It's still a surprise to many teachers that district representatives actually teach half-time. Many teachers assume that we have an office in Edmonton,” Geiger said.

“Being in the school is an important part of your job [as DR],” he continued. “You have to have a feeling for what everybody else is going through.”

Having elected members who are in touch with the classroom is key to the ATA's political credibility. It means that when an education minister visits a PEC meeting, which occurs on occasion, the stories he hears are coming directly from Alberta classrooms.

“We will sometimes criticize senior administration in a school jurisdiction about being out of touch with the classroom because they haven't taught actively as a classroom teacher for X number of years,” Jeffery said. “We don't want to have our council considered in the same light.”

Fully engaged

Barnett House often rings with the lore of past PEC debates over the merits of butter versus margarine in the cafeteria or staff officers being rebuked for projects that missed the mark. As a newscaster looking for a story, I was hoping to witness such drama. Perhaps there would even be an overturned table or a thrown shoe. It didn't happen. It was all collegial discussion.

Quite frankly, much of the meeting was boring as dirt — to me, the layman reporter — but it was clearly not boring to the 20 teachers sitting around the big table. From my perch on the periphery, it was plainly evident that these individuals were fully engaged in their roles at the epicentre of decision-making for the teaching profession in Alberta.

It was also clear that the members were there to present the views and concerns of the teachers they represent. I left with a clear sense of the push-button issues from all around the province, issues like assignable time and the new Classroom Improvement Fund, to name just two of many.

And I also saw that PEC's actions were aligned with a succinct description that President Jeffery provided to me.

“Provincial Executive Council is acting in the best interests of all Alberta teachers.” ■

Teachers SEEK SCHOOL BOARD SEATS



Teachers and retired teachers who are running for school board positions in the Oct. 16 elections were invited to provide their names and photos for publication in the *ATA News*. Here are the teacher-candidates who responded to the invitation by the deadline.



Kevin O'Connor

Current status:
Unpaid leave,
Argyll Centre

Running in:
Edmonton Public
Schools, ward D



Steve Harvel

Current status:
Retired principal

Running in:
Grande Prairie Public
School District



Patricia Bolger (McIntyre)

Current status:
Former teacher with
Edmonton Public
Schools and Rocky
View School Division

Running in:
Calgary Board
of Education,
wards 6 and 7



Richard Hehr

Current status:
Retired

Running in:
Calgary Board
of Education,
wards 8 and 9

ATA president applauds further protection for LGBTQ youth

Cory Hare
ATA News Managing Editor

Alberta Teachers' Association president Greg Jeffery is applauding a government plan to make it illegal for educators at publicly funded schools to notify parents that their children have joined a gay-straight alliance (GSA) without the students' consent.

The *School Act* currently ensures that students have the right to establish GSAs but does not guarantee the privacy of individual members. Education Minister David Eggen is planning to introduce such protection with an amendment during the upcoming fall session of the legislature, a plan that Jeffery called "a really good move," noting that the Association called for this exact clarification when Bill 10 was passed in 2015.

"Students have a right to feel and to be safe in their own schools and this will certainly work towards that," he said.

The amendments would apply to all schools that receive public dollars, even private and charter schools. The

changes will also require all schools to adopt an anti-bullying policy that protects LGBTQ students against discrimination based on their sexual orientation or gender identity. Schools that fail to comply could risk funding cuts or lose accreditation, Eggen told CBC Radio.

"Students have a right to feel and to be safe in their own schools and this [amendment] will certainly work towards that."

—Greg Jeffery, ATA president

Eggen also said that the planned measures are a result of "dangerous rhetoric" from conservative politicians.

"We've had some dangerous rhetoric from Jason Kenney and other UCP MLAs, suggesting that they would out students who did participate in a GSA, so we would make that illegal," he said.

"We're talking about kids that require protection, that are often vulnerable, and we just don't want this kind of dangerous rhetoric around outing students that join GSAs. ... I think the time

has come for us to back that up with some legislation."

As reported by Postmedia, Kenney has said it should be up to school staff to decide whether or not to notify parents or guardians that their children have joined a gay-straight alliance.

"There are circumstances where it's totally inappropriate for parents to be informed and circumstances where it's entirely appropriate for them to help their kids when they're going through a challenging time," Kenney said in August.

Jeffery said that discussing gender and sexual issues is a very personal decision that should be left up to individual students. He said that students should be encouraged to talk with their parents if and when they feel ready to do so, but stressed that teachers shouldn't be informing parents about students' GSA involvement.

"We don't always have a complete picture of what a student's home life looks like, so there's a possibility that conveying this information could put the student at risk at home," Jeffery said, "and that's certainly not the position we want any of our teachers to be in." ■

Popular web portal evolves under ATA umbrella

Cory Hare
ATA News Managing Editor

It's been several months since the Alberta Teachers' Association decided to take over operation of the popular 2Learn.ca website. Since that time, a number of subtle changes have taken place, such as the addition of the ATA logo to the website and some rearranging to better highlight teacher and student sites. But the message from those involved in the site is that it's still the valued resource that it has been since 1997 and it will continue to evolve to meet teachers' needs.



Joni Turville,
Executive staff officer,
Professional Development

"Our job right now is just to ensure that everything is working and resources are still appropriate and still relevant for teachers," said Joni Turville, the executive staff officer who oversees the website.



Visit **2Learn.ca**

Educational resources for
teachers, students and parents

The website provides curated learning resources to teachers, students and parents. The resources are linked to grade, subject and individual outcomes as specified in Alberta curriculum. The site typically receives in the neighbourhood of three million hits a month.

Earlier this year, as the site's operators faced the possibility of having to shut it down due to a lack of funding, the Association agreed to fund the site's operation through the 2017/18 school year.

Since then, the Association has retained the services of digital librarian Theresa Paltzat, who is currently working from home on contract. Paltzat has been ensuring the material and links on the site are up to date and relevant to Alberta teachers. There's been some

culling of material that wasn't aligned with Association policy.

Paltzat also responds to teacher requests and encourages teachers to contact her with suggestions.

"With feedback from teachers ... we can make things better, we can change, we can adapt and put in what teachers want and what's working for them," she said.

The involvement of the ATA, with its significant social media following, has helped 2Learn reach more people.

"I can see that we're getting such a larger audience so that's really exciting to me," Paltzat said.

She and Turville are both eager to keep broadening that reach.

"The site is used heavily and we want it to be used more," Turville said. ■

Council pledges hurricane relief

PEC POINTS

Audrey Dutka
ATA News Staff

Association administrative guidelines provide for the attendance of observers at selected portions of Council meetings. Association members who are interested in observing selected portions of Council meetings at their own expense are advised to contact their district representative.

Highlights of the Provincial Executive Council meeting held Sept. 21–22, 2017, at Barnett House, in Edmonton

1. Approved the final form of one electoral ballot proposed by a local association and determined Council's position for distribution to the membership.

2. Approved, in some cases with amendments, recommendations on 145 expiring current directives for distribution to the membership.

3. Approved the creation of a continuing executive staff position in Teacher Welfare on the basis that a future executive staff vacancy not be filled.

4. To provide continued relief for project management, Council approved an overexpenditure for the Walking Together Project.

5. Approved the Association's 2017/18 capital budget.

6. Approved a statement of Association program emphases for 2017/18.

7. Authorized disbursement of the 2017/18 budget for international co-operation for 12 international goals, including the continuation of Project Overseas and the Change for Children PD Pilot for Alberta teachers.

8. Authorized disbursement of \$10,000 to the Education International Solidarity Fund through the Canadian Teachers' Federation in support of teachers and education workers, their families and their member organizations affected by recent hurricanes in the Caribbean.

9. Approved an overexpenditure to cover costs of the Substitute Teachers' Conference and requested that the substitute teacher information folder

be made available in PDF format on the provincial ATA website.

10. Approved the names of six teachers for addition to the Association Instructor name bank and one teacher for inclusion in the Economic Consultants name bank.

11. Named three members of Council to each of two staff selection committees, the first for the position of Professional Development co-ordinator and the second for the position of executive staff officer, Teacher Welfare.

12. Approved that the preparation and presentation of general collective bargaining objectives be deferred to the Provincial Executive Council meeting prior to the 2018 Teacher Welfare Area Conference.

PEC POINTS continued on page 10



St. Jean Brebeuf School, Calgary

SUPPLIED



Peter the Apostle Catholic High School, Spruce Grove

SUPPLIED

ORANGE SHIRT DAY

In remembrance of the experiences of former residential school students, educators and students all over Alberta celebrated Orange Shirt Day on Friday, Sept. 29.

In its second year, the campaign by the Society for Safe and Caring Schools and Communities had more than 500 orders for a total of 10,000 shirts, shipping to schools, organizations and individuals throughout Alberta and Canada as well as to Hawaii and Pennsylvania.

Residential school survivor Phyllis Webstad of Williams Lake, B.C., began the campaign. When she was six, Webstad had her special orange shirt taken away on her first day at residential school.



Edmonton Public Local No. 37

SUPPLIED



CECILE FAUSAK

At a ceremony held in conjunction with Orange Shirt Day, a new memorial was unveiled for students who died while attending the Red Deer Industrial School. Pictured are (L-R) Muriel Stanley-Venne, vice-president of the Remembering the Children Society, and Crystal Clark, a consultant in the ATA's Walking Together program.



SUPPLIED

Following the Orange Shirt Day ceremonies at St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Academy in Slave Lake, students and staff members made kites and flew them to represent hope, prayer, freedom, journey and each individual's commitment to reconciliation.

POOR EXCUSE

Let's get real about poverty in Alberta

During the 2017/18 school year, prompted by a recommendation from the Well-Being of Children and Youth Committee, the Alberta Teachers' Association has made it a priority to raise awareness of the issue of child poverty in the province and its impact on student learning.

The collection of material on these two pages is meant to be the start of a conversation. We welcome your stories about the effects of child poverty that you witness in your schools and classrooms, the solutions you see being implemented and your thoughts on what more can be done.

Jonathan Teghtmeyer

ATA News Editor-in-Chief
jonathan.teghtmeyer@ata.ab.ca

Cory Hare

ATA News Managing Editor
cory.hare@ata.ab.ca



New campaign raises awareness of ongoing problem

Bromley Chamberlain
ATA News Staff

Educating people about the widespread prevalence of poverty in Alberta is the goal of a new campaign called From Poverty to Progress, co-ordinated by Public Interest Alberta (PIA).

The Alberta Teachers' Association has partnered with PIA in this Alberta-wide initiative to educate the general population.

At the root of the campaign is a statistic that has remained virtually unchanged for 25 years: one in six Alberta children currently lives in poverty.

The executive director of PIA, Joel French, says being raised in poverty leaves lasting impressions, and preventing child poverty is the way to eradicate it.

"People need to understand there is a problem," said French.

While poverty is prevalent across the province, vulnerable groups such as single parents and minimum wage earners are the most susceptible, French said. The result is generation after generation of people who lack access to early education, health care, adequate housing and proper nutrition. Children are overrepresented among the province's poor and are especially vulnerable.

"Poverty leads to the underdevelopment of children's brains and it reduces their capacity to learn in school," French said. "When a child

starts out in a house in impoverished conditions, they have poor health and growth, and they're less likely to graduate high school."

With its campaign, PIA is advocating for greater access to affordable, quality child care; better supports in the form of living wage policies, language and employment training, and social assistance; and more action on affordable housing.

The organization credits the provincial NDP government for taking some positive steps, such as increasing funding to Family and Community Support Services and to women's shelters, pledging to increase the minimum wage to \$15 an hour by 2018, creating the Status of Women ministry, funding 22 early learning centres and implementing an Alberta child benefit.

However, PIA is still calling for the provincial government to complete a poverty-reduction strategy to prevent, reduce and eliminate poverty in Alberta. Such a strategy should align with local poverty-reduction initiatives that are happening in municipalities across the province and should include a number of measures designed to help children.

"Building a child care and early learning system that's accessible to everybody who needs it is absolutely critical to ensuring that we develop the full potential of every child," French said.

Online petition

The From Poverty to Progress campaign includes an online petition calling on the provincial government to "immediately begin creating a poverty-reduction strategy to prevent, reduce, and ultimately eliminate child poverty."

The petition is available under the Campaigns tab at www.pialberta.org.

Growing up in poverty can have significant long-term effects that persist into adulthood, leading to difficulty finding well-paying, long-term employment and trouble with relationships.

Measuring poverty is complex. The Edmonton Social Planning Council partners with the Alberta College of Social Workers every year to conduct research and produce statistical reports using the after-tax low-income measure.

"It depends on what part of the province they live in, so it's not as easy as just saying there's a dollar amount that the parent or parents need to earn," French said.

Poverty isn't a short-term problem. It's an issue that has to be continually brought forward to create awareness and solutions to solve it. ■

Public Interest Alberta is a provincewide, non-profit, non-partisan organization focused on education and advocacy on public interest issues. The Alberta Teachers' Association is among its numerous member organizations.

From the field

On our Facebook page, we asked teachers to comment on the impacts of poverty they see, the initiatives that are occurring at their schools and what more should be done.

Patricia Dianne

Hungry kids and issues of food security at home as well as unstable home environments.

Kim MacLaren

Kids who come in with poor quality food or the very bare minimum to get them through the day. Other kids won't always finish their school-provided snacks because they want to take them home to share with family at home. Kids who come to school not able to learn because their basic needs are not being met at home. Parents who come with shame on their faces asking the school for extra food or a break in fees.

Patricia Gagnon

Parents often have no transportation to/from school to pick children up in the event of an emergency or illness. Some are "couch surfing" with their children, and the children are then vulnerable to abuse, especially sexual abuse.

Megan Gibson

Hungry/malnourished or poorly nourished students. Fast/processed food is cheaper than healthy food, so students often have low energy, get sick more often and have poor attendance. All schools should have a healthy breakfast/snack food option.

Rebecca Robins

Instability at home as different adults move in and out of the home.

Kristen Louise

Hungry kids who come to school wearing the same clothes everyday, in part because they don't own other clothes.

Andrew John

High school kids often end up pushed to take jobs early either to help pay the rent or to be able to help on a family farm.

AT Slattery

Hungry kids with no supplies who come to school when they're sick because no one can afford to stay home and take care of them ... or they have to stay home until someone gets off night shift to bring them to school.

Deb Rennie

Many students in my classes have used the Jacket Racket program so they have warm, well-fitting clothes for the winter. I still keep a box of hats, mitts, vests and hoodies to supplement those who need them.

Coralee Forster

Glendon School runs a breakfast program that is funded primarily through grants, donations and volunteers. It has made a world of difference in the learning of our students and provides an opportunity for positive social interactions as they gather around the breakfast tables.

Lindsay Brown

Routhier School in Falher has a lunch program. Each day a healthy lunch is dropped off in students' lockers.

Lyndsey Angela

My school has the following initiatives that make a HUGE impact on poverty in the classroom:

- Breakfast and snack program
- Free Footie Soccer, a free soccer program for grades 3 to 6
- Full-day kindergarten funded by the Edmonton Public Schools Foundation
- Our parent council heavily subsidizes our field trips so our parents do not have to pay the full cost
- Free family barbecues and events
- Free clothing, shoes and school supplies. ■

Province plans to double funding for school nutrition

Combating the effects of poverty an ongoing challenge for government

Cory Hare
ATA News Managing Editor

A \$10 million school nutrition program that's rolling out provincewide this fall will double next year, said Education Minister David Eggen.

In an interview with the *ATA News* about the issue of child poverty, Eggen said the nutrition program, which started last year as a \$3.5 million pilot in 14 school jurisdictions, has been successful so far.

"We're monitoring it closely and we've seen demonstrable, positive change just from the first round of pilots last year," Eggen said, adding that participating schools have reported an increase in student attendance.

This year the government has expanded the program to all 61 school jurisdictions and has provided \$10 million.

"I believe we are doubling the program again next year," Eggen said. "That still won't be enough for every school, but we try to aim for areas of most need."

The program enables jurisdictions to target schools within their districts. The idea is to partner with existing programs and community initiatives.

"It will continue to grow over the next year again and I think that it's a nice way to address our academic ambitions but also our role as community builders and physical and mental health stewards for our kids," Eggen said.

Alberta Teachers' Association president Greg Jeffery was pleased to hear of plans to expand the nutrition program.

"More is certainly better," he said. "If we can take care of some of those hunger issues in the school I think that's a positive thing."

School fees reduced

Speaking more broadly on child poverty, Eggen said the issue is growing in Alberta despite signs that the economy is turning around.

"It's real. We see a growth in poverty amongst families," he said.

He noted that schools are often the first point of contact for families that require social assistance and that students coming from lower socio-economic conditions have unique challenges.

"We are always very conscious that we want a strong public education for all students regardless of where they come from and their economic circumstances. That is an ongoing challenge that we seek to meet," he said.

In the spring session of the legislature, in an effort to help families, Eggen's NDP government introduced a bill to reduce mandatory school fees by a total of \$54 million.

“

When a child comes to school tired or hungry, their ability to learn is affected.

”

—Greg Jeffery, ATA president

As the program has been rolling out this fall, some boards in the province have complained that Eggen has limited their ability to recover transportation costs for which the government isn't providing funding.

Jeffery said there have also been some issues around the reporting of planned field trips, but these have been mostly alleviated. He expects that further wrinkles will surface as the year progresses but feels the effort to reduce fees is a positive step.

Oct. 17 is the
United Nations'
International Day
for the Eradication
of Poverty.

"We have to treat this like a pilot program because it is the first year of its existence," he said. "We have to find out where the pressure points are and deal with them as they come along."

Jeffery also acknowledged the government's pledge to raise the minimum wage to \$15 an hour as a progressive move.

"You need to be able to support your family by working a full-time job in this province, not having to have three," he said.

Despite his support of various government efforts, Jeffery is still wanting to see a comprehensive strategy to reduce poverty.

"It's clearly an issue that teachers want to see addressed," he said. "When a child comes to school tired or hungry, their ability to learn is affected. That's the difficulty that teachers are having in terms of this poverty issue."

Jeffery doesn't buy the argument that's common in some circles that public dollars shouldn't go into feeding kids in school or other efforts to mitigate the effects of poverty.

"We've heard for years the statement 'It takes a village to raise a child,'" he said. "Maybe it takes a province to raise a child." ■

Community partnerships keep at-risk kids fed



CORY HARE

Edmonton's Amiskwiciy Academy maintains relationships with several community groups and businesses in order to provide free breakfast and lunch every day.

Cory Hare
ATA News Managing Editor

Kids don't learn when they're hungry. That's why Fred Hines started a school breakfast and lunch program when he took over as principal of Edmonton's Amiskwiciy Academy eight years ago.

The site near downtown Edmonton is an alternative school for at-risk kids who come from all over western Canada. Many don't live with their parents and it's tough for some of these families to afford lunch for the students.

"We just felt, if that's a barrier, let's reduce that barrier," Hines said.

Now the school provides free breakfast of eggs, toast, cereal and fruit as well as a simple but nutritious hot lunch to all students, which number about 250.

"Students really appreciate the fact that we have a chef here who really takes pride in the meals and cooks meals that are right up their alley," Hines said.

Hines said the result has been improved discipline and demeanour, few expulsions (just one during his time) and a reduction in suspensions. Students are also more polite, take greater pride in their school and form relationships with staff, who also partake in the meals.

"I've done breakfast and lunch extensively in my past career and it just goes to show that having something healthy for breakfast and for lunch really improves learning and overall mental awareness," Hines said. "I just know that it's a significant tool that works."

The program operates thanks to partnerships that Hines has established with a number of businesses and community groups, such as the Edmonton Food Bank, Cobs Bread, Breakfast Canada and the Métis Child and Family Services Society.

Except for the salary of the chef, who is on staff, Hines is able to keep the nutrition program going without tapping into his regular budget. He gives back to benefactors by inviting them to the feasts that are held regularly at the school or by providing meeting space or other help as needed.

"If the food bank needs a place for a staff meeting, they call me, they got a spot for a meeting, no charge, they're in the building," he said.

"If they [have] an event downtown and they need 500 potatoes cooked and some burgers cooked up ... we'll do it lickety-split. So we really give back in that way and help out. It's a real working relationship." ■

PEC POINTS

continued from page 6

13. Established and appointed members to the Committee on 2018 CTF AGM Planning to act on behalf of the Association in hosting the CTF annual general meeting taking place July 2018 in Edmonton. Council further approved an overexpenditure to fund Alberta's host obligations.

14. Consistent with section 31(2) of the *Teaching Profession Act*, extended the deadline for the commencement of a hearing of the Professional Conduct Committee.

15. Appealed to the Professional Conduct Appeal Committee the order of a hearing committee on the grounds of inadequate penalty. The hearing committee found a teacher guilty of four charges of unprofessional conduct for criticizing the professional reputation of another teacher; making statements and/or encouraging others to do the same, thereby creating a divisiveness between staff members; taking actions that failed to provide opportunities for staff members to express their opinions and bring forth suggestions regarding the administration of the school; and sending inappropriate text messages to another teacher. The hearing committee imposed a penalty of a single letter of severe reprimand addressing all four charges, along with fines of \$500 for charge one, \$800 for charge two, \$300 for charge three and \$500 for charge four, which must be paid within 90 days of the teacher's receipt of the decision. Failure to pay the fines would result in the suspension of the teacher's membership in the Association.

16. Received the report of a hearing committee, which found a teacher guilty of four charges of unprofessional conduct for massaging students on the neck and/or back and/or shoulders and/or feet, thus failing to treat a student or students with dignity and respect; speaking with students about the teacher's personal relationship breakup and/or giving students the impression that the teacher was considering suicide, thus failing to treat students with dignity and respect; making comments regarding the race of students, thus failing to maintain the honour and dignity of the profession; and making comments to and/or about students that were denigrating in nature, thus failing to treat a student or students with dignity and respect. The hearing committee imposed a penalty of a letter of severe reprimand.

17. Received the report of a hearing committee, which found a teacher guilty of three charges of unprofessional conduct for abusing the teacher's position, given the power differential, in a relationship with a subordinate, namely a teacher, thereby failing to maintain the honour and dignity of the

profession; abusing the teacher's position, given the power differential, in a relationship with a subordinate, namely a teacher, thereby failing to maintain the honour and dignity of the profession; and making a sexual advance to a colleague, a teacher, thereby failing to maintain the honour and dignity of the profession. The hearing committee imposed a penalty of a single letter of severe reprimand to address all three charges, a declaration of ineligibility for membership in the Association for a period of two years and a recommendation to the minister of education to suspend the teacher's teaching certificate for a period of two years.

18. Received the report of a hearing committee, which found a teacher guilty of six charges of unprofessional conduct for, in the presence of other students, refusing to accept a female student's response to the teacher's question as to whether she was a boy or a girl, and then asking her if she was transgender, thus failing to treat the student with dignity and respect; holding a vote among a group of students to determine whether a Grade 6 student was a boy or a girl, thus failing to treat the student with dignity and respect; asking a Grade 7 student if her father was black, outside of any prior related conversation, thus failing to treat the student with dignity and respect; making comments to female Hutterite students about how they were poor candidates to be married, thereby failing to treat students with dignity and respect; belittling a student by telling other students to take a shovel and hit her on the head if she was annoying, then to dig a hole and bury her in the hole, thereby failing to treat a student with dignity and respect; and, on at least one occasion, humiliating a female student by obligating her to skip rope and/or hula hoop in front of them, thereby failing to treat the student with dignity and respect. The hearing committee imposed a penalty of a severe reprimand to address charges one to six inclusively, a declaration that the teacher is permanently ineligible for membership in the Association and a recommendation to the minister of education to cancel the teacher's teaching certificate.

19. Received the report of a hearing committee, which found a teacher guilty of one charge of unprofessional conduct for criticizing the professional reputation of another teacher to school-based and district-based administrators, without first informing the teacher of the criticism. The hearing committee imposed a penalty of a letter of severe reprimand.

20. Received the report of a hearing committee, which found a teacher guilty of one charge of unprofessional conduct for submitting false claims to a benefit plan provider, for the purpose of receiving financial benefit, thus failing

to maintain the honour and dignity of the profession. The hearing committee imposed a penalty of a letter of reprimand and a fine of \$1,000 to be paid within 90 days of receipt of the written decision of the hearing committee. Failure to pay the fine in full within the specified time would result in the teacher being declared ineligible for membership in the Association.

21. Received the report of a hearing committee, which found a teacher guilty of one charge of unprofessional conduct for submitting false claims to a benefit plan provider, for the purpose of receiving financial benefit, thus failing to maintain the honour and dignity of the profession. The hearing committee imposed a penalty of a severe letter of reprimand and a fine of

\$2,000 to be paid within 90 days of receipt of the written decision. Failure to pay in full within the specified time period would result in the teacher being declared ineligible for membership in the Association.

22. Named field members to serve on Association committees and fill vacancies on Association and other external committees. ■



The Alberta Teachers' Association

The Alberta Teachers' Association invites applications for the positions of

COORDINATOR, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Competition: ESO4/17

Location: Edmonton

Commencement: December 1, 2017

The coordinator directs the work of 14 staff members in the Professional Development (PD) program area who have major responsibilities in the areas of curriculum; student evaluation, teacher education and certification; teachers' conventions; specialist councils; and the development of a variety of workshops, seminars and courses. In addition, this person oversees the operation of cross-program area initiatives as assigned. The responsibilities of the successful applicant will include providing leadership; assigning and coordinating the work of staff; strategic planning; preparing and controlling a budget; acting as Association expert on inservice education, staff development and professional learning communities; developing and implementing new programs; acting on committees; and conducting field service. General information regarding the Professional Development program area and the services it provides is available in the Programs and Services section of the ATA website.

A proven commitment to public education; excellent skills in leadership, human relations, project management, strategic thinking and planning, and change management; facility in oral and written communication; expertise in budgeting and financial planning; and good health and stamina are all essential requirements of this position. In addition, travel and evening and weekend work will be necessary at certain times of the year. A minimum of five years of successful teaching experience in public education is also required. A demonstrated commitment to the Alberta Teachers' Association (or other Canadian teachers' organization) will be considered an asset, as will the ability to work in the French language.

The total compensation for this position includes a starting salary of \$153,207, pensionable service under the Teachers' Pension Plan of the Alberta Teachers' Retirement Fund Board, and employer-paid benefits as stipulated in a collective agreement. The initial location will be in Edmonton, but future assignments may be to any present or future Association office. Duties will commence on December 1, 2017.

EXECUTIVE STAFF OFFICER, TEACHER WELFARE

Competition: ESO5/17

Location: Edmonton

Commencement: December 1, 2017

This position will assist in the work of the Teacher Welfare (TW) program area with duties that may include being responsible for the organization and execution of field service in TW; advising individual members on collective agreement entitlements; acting as a representative of the bargaining agent in collective agreement negotiations; handling collective agreement grievances; acting on committees and participating in the organization and conduct of TW area conferences; serving as Association resource person in specific areas of expertise (eg, provincial or jurisdictional education finance, employee benefits, pensions, employment insurance or equity issues); and working on special or continuing assignments in other areas of Association operation. General information regarding the Teacher Welfare program area and the services it provides is available in the Programs and Services section of the ATA website.

A proven commitment to public education, excellent skills in leadership and human relations, facility in oral and written communication, and good health and stamina are all essential requirements of this position. In addition, travel and evening and weekend work will be necessary at certain times of the year. A minimum of five years of successful teaching experience in public education is also required. Demonstrated commitment to the Alberta Teachers' Association (or other Canadian teachers' organization) will be considered an asset, as well as the ability to work in the French language.

Total compensation for this position includes a starting salary of \$132,851, pensionable service under the Teachers' Pension Plan of the Alberta Teachers' Retirement Fund Board and employer-paid benefits as stipulated in a collective agreement. The initial location will be in Edmonton, but future assignments may be to any present or future Association office. Duties will commence on December 1, 2017.

Applicants should quote position **ESO4/17** or **ESO5/17** and include the names, phone numbers and email addresses of at least two referees who are not Association employees or elected officials of its provincial executive. Applications must be received by **5:00 PM on Friday, October 13, 2017**, and should be addressed to

Ms Denise Wladyka, Human Resources Director
The Alberta Teachers' Association
11010 142 Street NW, Edmonton T5N 2R1
Email: hr@ata.ab.ca

For more information, please see our website at www.teachers.ab.ca.

Teachers: Think before sending email



PITFALLS AND PRECAUTIONS

Gaylene Schreiber
Secretary to ATA Professional Conduct Committee

Pitfalls and Precautions is a series that aims to educate teachers on professional conduct issues by highlighting situations addressed by the ATA Professional Conduct Committee. The purpose of the series is purely educational, so some non-essential information from the actual case may be omitted or changed.

A teacher, unhappy with decisions regarding programming and staffing at his school, decided to respond to schoolwide email communications on the topic with a few thoughts of his own. In his emails, the teacher made highly critical comments about the decisions and the capacity of the central office staff making the decisions. The teacher

vented his frustrations in several emails over a period of a few months, and he sent these emails to the entire staff of his school as well as others. As a result, the teacher was found guilty of violating both article 13 and article 14 of the Code of Professional Conduct:

(13) The teacher criticizes the professional competence or professional reputation of another teacher only in confidence to proper officials and after the other teacher has been informed of the criticism, subject only to section 24 of the *Teaching Profession Act*.

(14) The teacher, when making a report on the professional performance of another teacher, does so in good faith and, prior to submitting the report,

provides the teacher with a copy of the report, subject only to section 24 of the *Teaching Profession Act*.

In his multiple, widely broadcast emails, which reached more than 70 recipients, the teacher included disparaging language that impugned two central office staff members' competence, intelligence, care and concern for students' learning and safety, and overall decision-making skills. Over the course of the emails, the tone and language shifted until it was acrimonious, aggressive and threatening.

The hearing committee found the teacher guilty on four counts of unprofessional conduct, and ordered a penalty of two severe letters of

reprimand to address the charges, plus a fine of \$2,500 to be paid within 90 days of receipt of the decision. Failure to pay the fine would result in the suspension of the teacher's membership in the Association and the corresponding inability to work as a teacher in any public, separate or francophone school in Alberta until reinstated.

In contemplating the penalty, the committee determined that the penalty should be a significant one to reflect the egregiously unprofessional behaviour and to deter the member from repeating his behaviour. The profession will not tolerate unrestrained and blanketed criticism to persons who are not proper officials. ■



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NOTICES AND EVENTS

Project subsidies available

Subsidies of \$300 are available to classrooms and school clubs that seek to tackle social justice issues through school-community projects.

The funding is available through Imagineaction, a social justice program of the Canadian Teachers' Federation. Ideas are available on the program's website at www.imagine-action.ca, which also enables teachers to create a project and apply for funding.

Projects must be completed by June 30, 2018.

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Volunteer for Project Overseas WITH CTF IN THE SUMMER OF 2018

CTF needs English- and French-speaking Canadian teachers at the primary, elementary and secondary levels who are interested in volunteering to offer services in a wide range of subjects in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean. Each year, about 50 Canadian teachers are chosen to volunteer on CTF's Project Overseas. Based on requests from CTF's partners overseas, teams of Canadian teachers are formed in January and inservice projects take place in July and August.

CTF follows strict guidelines pertaining to Project Overseas' participant safety and project location.

For more information and to apply, visit the ATA website (www.teachers.ab.ca) under For Members > Programs and Services > International Cooperation.

If you have questions, contact **Robert Mazzotta**.

Telephone: (780) 447-9445 in Edmonton and area or 1-800-232-7208 (ext. 445) from elsewhere in Alberta

E-mail: robert.mazzotta@ata.ab.ca.

**Application deadline:
November 1, 2017.**



SKETCHNOTING WORKSHOP

with Sylvia Duckworth

Sketchnotes are visual notes that incorporate words, lines, shapes, colour, and simple drawings. They tap into the needs of today's visual learners and provide a powerful way to connect ideas to thinking. In this workshop you will discover how learners of all ages can learn to take meaningful notes using analog and digital drawings as a way to visualize their learning and creatively organize and document their thinking, reading and listening. Sylvia will share a range of tools, techniques and ideas to equip you to learn the fundamental skills needed for bringing sketchnoting to life in your classroom.

Saturday, November 25, 2017
Barnett House, 11010 142 Street, Edmonton
 Free to ATA members (Lunch provided)

Register at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/sketchnoting>
 (Space is limited to the first 30 registrants)

For more information, contact Nancy Luyckfassel at nancy.luyckfassel@ata.ab.ca



HIGH SCHOOL MATH AND SCIENCE TEACHER WANTED.

Starting on January 16th Qilu Sino-Canadian International School in Dongying is looking for a Sr. High Math/ Science Teacher. Duties will include teaching Math 10 and Physics 20 for the second semester. The teacher may choose between a six month or a 1.5 year contract.

The pay grid for teacher's starts at \$51,000 CAD and includes flights to and from China, bonus pay, medical insurance, and on campus housing. Dongying has a very low cost of living and these wages are considered extremely competitive for our area of the world.

Native English speakers are preferred and as we are an accredited Alberta International School, applicants must have or be qualified to get a teaching certificate from Alberta Education. (minimum — Bachelor of Education required).

Please forward your resume to hr.qscis@gmail.com and hr@cscdfsd.org to apply and visit www.qisalberta.org for more information.



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The Alberta Teachers' Association



Head of Christian Alliance International School, Hong Kong

The Christian Alliance International School (CAIS) seeks a distinguishable educational leader with rich experience to become the Head of the School starting from August 2018 or earlier.

Founded by the Kowloon Tong Church of the Chinese Christian and Missionary Alliance (KTAC), CAIS is a new school in 2017 which is committed to the ongoing development of a student-centred learning community. The School will utilize the internationally acclaimed curriculum of Alberta Education which has earned the accolades of universities throughout the world. The School currently has over 1,200 students and is continuously enlarging the offering of service to 1,800 students in the years to come with the upcoming Phase II expansion project.

Responsibilities

The Head of the School will be responsible for leading the school community to develop and commit to the educational vision of KTAC, managing the School as a place of excellent learning and teaching for the students and staff, and overseeing the operation of the School including managing the operational plan, budget, staffing, policy implementation and administrative activities of the School. The Head is also expected to develop a leadership team for the entire School.

Preferred Skills and Experience

- A proven track record in educational leadership, including substantial experience as a School Head or a programme administrator in implementing Alberta Education Curriculum is preferred.
- Minimum qualification of Master of Education or the equivalent.
- Excellent interpersonal skills and a broad international outlook.
- Strong ability to manage a culturally diversified school community and lead the School to strive for excellence in students' well-rounded development.
- Demonstrated profound corporate management skills such as planning, finance and people management, and ability to build productive relationships with various stakeholders.
- Experience with the administration of the International Baccalaureate Programme is preferred.

Application Procedures

Please apply by submitting the following materials to the Search Committee for the Head of the New KTAC International School, Kowloon Tong Church of the Chinese Christian and Missionary School Alliance, 134 Waterloo Road, Kowloon, HONG KONG. Application submission by email is also accepted via rmc@caisbv.edu.hk. The application deadline is **15 November 2017**.

1. A letter of application no longer than two pages, explaining personal educational beliefs, leadership strengths and professional interests.
2. A curriculum vitae.
3. A list of three references with current telephone numbers and email addresses.



CHRISTIAN ALLIANCE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
 宣道國際學校



Autos for sale

For more information, contact Tracy Pohl at tracy.pohl@ata.ab.ca or by telephone: 780-447-9482 or 1-800-232-7208 (toll-free), ext. 482. The Alberta Teachers' Association reserves the right to refuse the highest bid if it is deemed to be inadequate.

2015 Volkswagen Golf GTI

Features: Leather seats, navigation system with touch screen, sunroof and much more. Winter tires with rims included.

Colour: Carbon Steel Metallic
Engine: 2.0 TSI, gasoline
Transmission: 6 speed – Manual
Kilometres: 34,800

This is a sealed bid auction. Please mail your bid letter in a **sealed envelope marked "Car Bid – VW Golf."**

2013 GMC Terrain

Features: Leather, heated front seats, 8-way power driver's seat, backup camera, sunroof, power lift gate and much more. Winter tires and rims included.

Colour: Carbon Black Metallic
Engine: 3.6L V6
Transmission: 6 Speed – Automatic (AWD)
Kilometres: 155,900

This is a sealed bid auction. Please mail your bid letter in a **sealed envelope, marked "Car Bid – GMC Terrain."**

All bids should be marked attention Tracy Pohl, Accountant,
Alberta Teachers' Association, 11010 142 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T5N 2R1.
Bids will be accepted until 5 p.m., **Oct. 16, 2017.**

 Sign up for email to receive Members' Updates: <http://bit.ly/1uJm122>



MASULITA, UGANDA
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT



The Alberta Teachers' Association

ATA INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION PROGRAM

Volunteer for the 2018 ATA–Masulita, Uganda Professional Development Project. It's a professional opportunity for Alberta teachers to co-teach with Ugandan educators in a government primary/secondary school in Masulita or within the Street Children's Project. Open to teachers who have completed three years of full-time teaching in Alberta before the overseas assignment commences.

For information, email Jodi Rosvold at zeeke78@hotmail.com.

For an application form, visit the ATA website (www.teachers.ab.ca) and click on For Members > Programs and Services > International Cooperation > ATA-Masulita, Uganda Professional Development Project.

Travel and living expenses of participants are covered by the ATA.

Application Deadline: Dec. 1, 2017

ENTER TO WIN \$100!!!

The Alberta Teachers' Association is reviewing the distribution of the ATA News and would like feedback from teachers.

Please take a few moments to complete a short online survey to help us improve our practices and to serve you best.

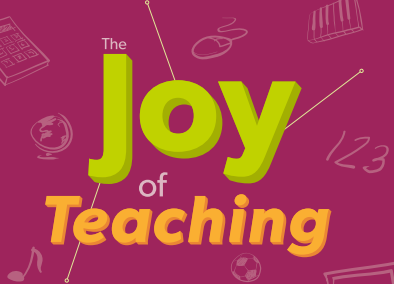
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By completing the survey, you could win one of three \$100 restaurant gift cards!



Substitute Teachers' Conference 2017

October 20 (eve)–21, 2017



Register online at <https://event-wizard.com/events/2017STC/>

Registration deadline October 16, 2017



Ag for Life
PRESENTS

AGRICULTURE EDUCATION TEACHERS' SYMPOSIUM



NOVEMBER 24

LOCATION:

Cochrane RancheHouse
101 RancheHouse Rd.
Cochrane, AB

KEYNOTE:

Dr. Frank Robinson from the University of Alberta

LEARN ABOUT THE LATEST TOPICS IN AGRICULTURE EDUCATION WITH A FULL DAY OF EXCITING PRESENTATIONS.

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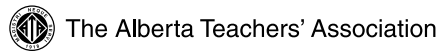


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SCIENCE COUNCIL
of the Alberta Teachers' Association



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Making Space for Science

November 16–18, 2017 | Banff, AB

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Jim Sparks
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Band plenary



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TALENT

October 10, 2017 | Volume 52, Number 4

IN THE BEGINNING



Delegates at the Beginning Teachers' Conference share the routines they created during a workshop on creative movement for the elementary classroom.

PHOTOS: CORY HARE



Teachers from throughout northern Alberta gathered for the Beginning Teachers' Conference in Edmonton from Sept. 28 to 30. About 500 teachers attended workshops on a variety of topics, including mental health, professional growth, student resilience and creativity. There were also information sessions on ATA support and services. The event shifts to Calgary on Oct. 12 to 14.



What **three words** would you use to describe your teaching experience so far?



“
*Educational
Fulfilling
Unexpected*

Stephanie Grice
Grades 3-9, English and math,
École Citadelle, Legal



“
*Hectic
Fun
This is it!*

Émilie Laroche
Grades 7-9, science, math
and outdoor education, École
Michaëlle-Jean, Edmonton



“
*Fantastic
Fun
Lovely*

Ibrahim Ibrahim
Kindergarten and Grade 1,
Evansdale School, Edmonton



“
*Unpredictable
Chaotic
Fun*

Erin Barkwell
Grade 1 and music,
St. Anne School, Edmonton



“
*Challenging
Exhausting
Rewarding*

Sabrina Olivieri
Grade 2,
St. Anne School, Edmonton



“
*Good
Welcoming
Collegial*

Andre Bourassa
Grades 5-9, science and math,
Killam School



LEARNED FROM EXPERIENCE



VIA THE ATA FACEBOOK PAGE, VETERAN TEACHERS SHARE THEIR HELPFUL TIPS FOR BEGINNING TEACHERS

KAREN NAKASKA

► Establish a healthy work-life balance. Flight attendants advise you to put on your own oxygen mask before attending to those who may need your help. You offer your best to others when you're taking care of yourself.

SUZANNE LESSARD

► Write everything down! It takes forever the first year, but makes all the following years easy peasy.

KATHERINE MELNYK

► You are going to catch a lot of viruses the first year, so take the time to keep yourself healthy, get a flu shot, and try to have generic sick day plans ready. However, you will have an amazing immune system after the first year or so!

CHRISTINE CAMPBELL-MARTENS

► Relationship building is the key to learning. It is amazing what can be accomplished when a child feels loved.

KELLY CASHION

► Don't be afraid to ask other teachers for help! From how to make a seating plan, how

to deal with behaviour issues, or even just outright borrowing an entire project they've done with their own classes. There's no need to reinvent the wheel!

DEANNA ROWLEY

► It's better to get a good night's sleep than to stay up until 2 a.m. prepping. One good day winging it is better than an epically bad day due to exhaustion.

MAJ-BRITT BIGOTTI

► Take a break and eat lunch in the staff room. You need adult interactions!

COURTNEY FOOTE

► Learn to enjoy the discomfort and the unknown. It's where most of the growth happens.

JESSICA KOWBEL

► Focus on purposeful and meaningful learning experiences. Don't settle for giving the students busy work.

ANDREA LYNN

► Start a journal and write down quotes and anecdotes of the funny things kids

say and do. So many of us veterans are often caught saying, "I could fill a book if I had started early ..." Your notes will make you smile, during hard times or rough days, for years to come.

RACHEL ELLIOTT

► Don't try to make sweeping changes to your teaching practice. Choose one thing and work on that until it's well incorporated into your routine and then choose your next thing.

CAROLYN DYCK PAWELKO

► If you have to choose between marking and preparing, do the prep. If you have to choose between prepping and sleeping, choose sleep.

DAN GRASSICK

► Embrace your inner geek! Sharing your interests and eccentricities with your students gives them permission to share who they are with you.

DONNA ROSS

► You will never forget your first year. Enjoy it! Be creative! Love your students!