

#MyClassSizeIs

Class size on your mind? Share your story.

See
page 12.

LEADERS AT A GLANCE

See your guide
on pages 6 and 7.

ATA NEWS

The Alberta Teachers' Association



Learn from the past.
Inspire the future.

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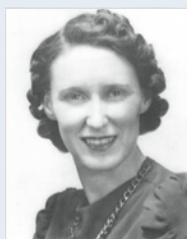
News Publication of The Alberta Teachers' Association

Remembering WAR EFFORTS

Alberta teachers make a difference

Teaching remembrance is challenging but critical

Read Viewpoints on page 3.



Plane crash
propels teacher
to heroism

Teachers do their part
– the impact of war on
the profession

See stories on page 4.



The Canadian Courcellette War Memorial in northern France commemorates the Battle of the Somme in 1916.

KAREN PORTERFIELD



ATA supports Catholic education

Superintendents' sex-ed document raises concern. Greg Jeffery responds.

Read story on page 5.

Send a message

MLAs need to hear about class size and complexity.

Read Jonathan Teghtmeyer's editorial on page 2.



CORTNEE CUNNINGHAM

Grade 1 student Kaleb Fox reads a book during Flashlight Friday on Oct. 13 at H.A. Kostash School in Smoky Lake. The reading event allows students to bring flashlights and blankets to school.

Zero tolerance

Teachers can and should report cases of sexual harassment.

Read Gordon Thomas's Q&A on page 2.

ATA president applauds new GSA bill

Minister moves to protect the privacy of students who join GSAs.

See story on page 5.

Send a message to your MLA about class size



EDITORIAL

Jonathan Teghtmeyer
ATA News Editor-in-Chief

Fort Vermilion, Horizon, Northland, Nord-Ouest Francophone and Prairie Land.

These are the five school divisions where the average K-3 class size is meeting the target adopted by the government nearly 15 years ago. Every other school division is exceeding the target.

And these are not exactly huge school divisions. Nord-Ouest is Alberta's smallest school division with just 450 students. Prairie Land has only 1,400 students. Collectively these school divisions teach a total of just over 11,000 students.

More than 98 per cent of students in Alberta are enrolled with a school division that is unable to meet the government-approved targets for average K-3 class size. That target, by the way, is 17 students.

Put up your hand if your class size is larger than 17 students.

Better yet, grab an index card, write down your class size in big, bold numbers and circle that number. Now give that card to your MLA and tell them that the time has come to reduce class size as promised years ago. (More on this later.)

When the Alberta Commission on Learning issued its recommendations in 2003 after almost a full year of extensive research and study, teachers said that the metric it recommended — jurisdictionwide averages — would not capture the reality of certain classes that far exceeded the averages. Nonetheless, we were happy to get a clear recommendation that class sizes needed to be reduced. And the government, facing public pressure on the issue, agreed to meet that flimsy target.

We never got there.

Large class sizes plus undersupported inclusion adds up to complex classrooms that allow too many students to fall through the cracks.

In 2004, class sizes boomed after the government chose not to fund arbitrary salary increases. Eventually the government did fund the salary increases and the class size initiative and, for a few years, class sizes went down.

Targets have been mostly met at higher grade levels, but teachers have always said that the class-size reductions were most important at the earliest grades, where students were building their foundations for literacy and numeracy.

Then the global recession of 2008 hit and things changed. Government revenues took a hit and class-size funding was gradually scaled back.

In the same time period we saw changes to inclusive education funding and we continued to see rapid student population growth — including many immigrant and refugee children who came to Alberta with very little knowledge of English or French.

Class complexity is an equally important part of this conversation.

Alberta's schools are some of the most complex schools in the world. According to the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS), our schools are twice as likely as those else-

where to include a significant number of students with special needs and a significant number of students who are learning the language of instruction.

Large class sizes plus undersupported inclusion adds up to complex classrooms that allow too many students to fall through the cracks.

We are not alone in our concerns. The Association has conducted public opinion polling that demonstrates broad public agreement on these issues.

More than half of Albertans agree that class sizes in Alberta are "too big," and 85 per cent agree that maximum class-size standards are needed.

On inclusion, three-quarters of residents are concerned about the levels of support for students with special needs and English language learners, while 84 per cent would support additional funding for better supports for those students.

So, if teachers are concerned and the public is concerned, what is the problem? Government finances and political will.

These can be affected. The government is making choices that ensure that its revenue remains insufficient to sustain adequate service levels. Adopting the tax regime of British Columbia would still leave us as the lowest-taxed jurisdiction in the country while bringing in nearly \$9 billion in added revenue.

So, really the problem is political will.

MLAs need to hear from teachers about this issue. The ATA's Provincial Executive Council has initiated a co-ordinated advocacy effort to help teachers inform MLAs about this issue. We've made it quick and easy. Get a #MyClassSizeIs advocacy card, describe your classroom and get that card to your MLA (see more on page 16).

Let's deliver the message to MLAs. ■

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

Being sexually harassed? Report it!



Q & A

Gordon Thomas
ATA Executive Secretary

Question: Recent news reports of sexual harassment in the workplace brought to light by the Harvey Weinstein case and the #MeToo movement on social media reminded me of my experience as a first-year teacher more than 40 years ago. I did not report my veteran male colleague because I believed that informing school or ATA officials without informing him first would violate the Code of Professional Conduct. My fear, isolation and inexperience prevented me from telling him of my plan to report him. I am now retired and, with so many cases of workplace harassment, I regret my silence so many years ago. Can you clarify the ATA's expectations in reporting sexual harassment, given the expectations of the Code of Professional Conduct?

Answer: Items 13 and 14 of the Code of Professional Conduct establish protocols for the proper handling of concerns about professional performance of a colleague. Quite simply, the general rule is that a teacher reports professional performance matters to proper officials after speaking with the colleague. However, there are clear exceptions to this expectation.

Allegations of sexual harassment can be very serious. Section 24(3) of the *Teaching Profession Act* requires that members "make a complaint forthwith to the executive secretary relating to that conduct." In other words, you don't have to tell your colleague that you are turning him in. You can freely report to the Association on the possible unprofessional conduct of another member without discussing the matter with the colleague.

An apparent violation of the Criminal Code can also lead to immediate action. If you are assaulted, you should call the police. You do not need to engage with the member.

You do have a duty to report the unprofessional conduct to the Association.

You can always call the Association to discuss the alleged unprofessional conduct and to obtain advice on how to proceed. You do have a duty to report the unprofessional conduct to the Association. The Association can assist with next steps to ensure that your rights (and the interests of the public and the profession) are respected. Sexual harassment should not be tolerated, period. Call Barnett House or SARO and ask to speak to the Member Services duty officer. ■

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

“
For some kids, that's all they have to look forward to, all week.
”

Ace Peace, a 17-year-old transgender boy from Calgary speaking about his school's weekly gay-straight alliance meeting.
As reported by Postmedia.





KAREN PORTERFIELD

The Vimy Ridge memorial in northern France is a striking reminder of how relevant war continues to be for the people of that part of the world and of the obligation to continually safeguard our freedoms and democracy.

Teaching remembrance is challenging but critical



VIEWPOINTS

Karen Porterfield
Special to the ATA News

As Remembrance Day approaches, teachers have the important task of conveying the significance of this day to our students. Often, we prepare a lesson or two surrounding the tragedy of wars, soldiers and the significance of the poppy. We organize a Remembrance Day assembly at our schools and observe a moment of silence. While I have always been very passionate about teaching my students about war and the importance of Remembrance Day, it is challenging to make it relevant and relatable to students year after year. This all changed for me, however, after I travelled to France and Belgium this past summer.

For two weeks in July, I travelled to Europe as part of the War and the Canadian Experience: Teachers PD Tour of France and Flanders. I'd always wanted to engage in intensive PD on world war history that involved overseas travel, in order to see first hand the places I'd read and taught about, so to be accepted on this tour fulfilled a lifelong dream. Organized through the Gregg Centre at the University of New Brunswick, the tour involved 24 teachers from across Canada travelling the countryside of France and Belgium, investigating the battlefields of the world wars and digging deeply into Canada's involvement in these momentous events.

One of the first things I realized while on the tour is that, for the people of France and Belgium, these wars are not a distant memory. Reminders and evidence are

everywhere — monuments, memorials and cemeteries are found in almost every village and town, dotting the countryside, honouring the fallen. These commemorations are not left in disrepair or decay. All are very well maintained, with townspeople and tourists alike visiting them daily.

One such active monument is the Menin Gate Memorial in Ypres, Belgium, where every night since 1928 townspeople and tourists have gathered at 8 p.m. to hear the "Last Post" and honour the fallen of the Great War. Looming large over the town, this spectacular monument bears the names of more than 54,000 Allied soldiers who have no known grave and stands as a reminder of the perils of war.

The evening that we attended the ceremony was rainy and cold, but more than 500 people attended. As I watched groups of youth lay wreaths at the cenotaph, I realized that the memory of the war lives on, not just in the older citizens of Belgium, but in youth everywhere, every day, and not just on Remembrance Day.

I also had no idea of the extent to which the French people continue to celebrate the contributions that Canadian soldiers made during wartime. For example, toward the end of our tour we visited Rocquancourt, a tiny village in Normandy that was occupied and decimated by German troops in the early days of the Allied invasion and liberated by Canadian soldiers in 1944.

Citizens of this village graciously hosted a reception for us. I was deeply moved when talking to

three women, now in their 90s, about the atrocities they suffered during wartime. Although decades have passed, these women remembered it like it was yesterday, telling me details of what they witnessed and endured, such as being blown off their bikes by nearby bombshells and having to hide with their families for months in the underground mines. It made me realize that, although these women are nearing the end of their days, their memories must live on, as must the memory of the valiant Canadians who died liberating them.

It is up to us to teach our students about how this relates to their own lives, and the connection it has to the rest of the world and the human experience. We can do this by researching and reaching out to these villages and townspeople, as well as by having our students create biographies of Canadian soldiers from the world wars, which is a project that I and many of my tour mates are doing with our students this year.

This tour made me realize just how current and relevant war continues to be for the people of France and Belgium. Active monuments such as Menin Gate and villages such as Roquancourt need to be discussed in our classrooms as examples of the ongoing connection and remembrance of war. Moving forward, I will teach about Remembrance Day with renewed passion and tenacity, as I ask my students to remember the sacrifices that young Canadians made and to not take our freedoms and democracy for granted. ■

Karen Porterfield is a Grade 7 learning and literacy teacher at McKenzie Highlands School in Calgary.

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

YOUR VIEWS

FACEBOOK FEEDBACK

On CTF's World Teachers' Day theme re: classroom violence against teachers

Dawn Walmsley Ronne

It's a sad reality that many teachers must spend more time managing behaviour than actually teaching. I am beyond fortunate to have the support staff and teachers I have in my building, but they need more support in all areas and from the community at large.

On Project Overseas

Selina M Kruchten

What a fabulous program. I participated 16 years ago, and the impact is still with me today. Thanks to everyone who makes this collaboration possible in Alberta and beyond.

ON TWITTER

Shannon Dube @ShannonDube6

My very first @albertateachers local presidents meeting was a great learning experience filled with great lessons & great people. Thank you

Troy Davies @troydavies72

Congrats 2 all @STARCatholic new teachers at @ATAlocal45 @albertateachers induction ceremony tonight! Thx for becoming a #Catholic educator!

St Albert Local 73 @stalbertlocal73

Congratulations to all of the @StAlbertPublic teachers being inducted into the ATA this evening!

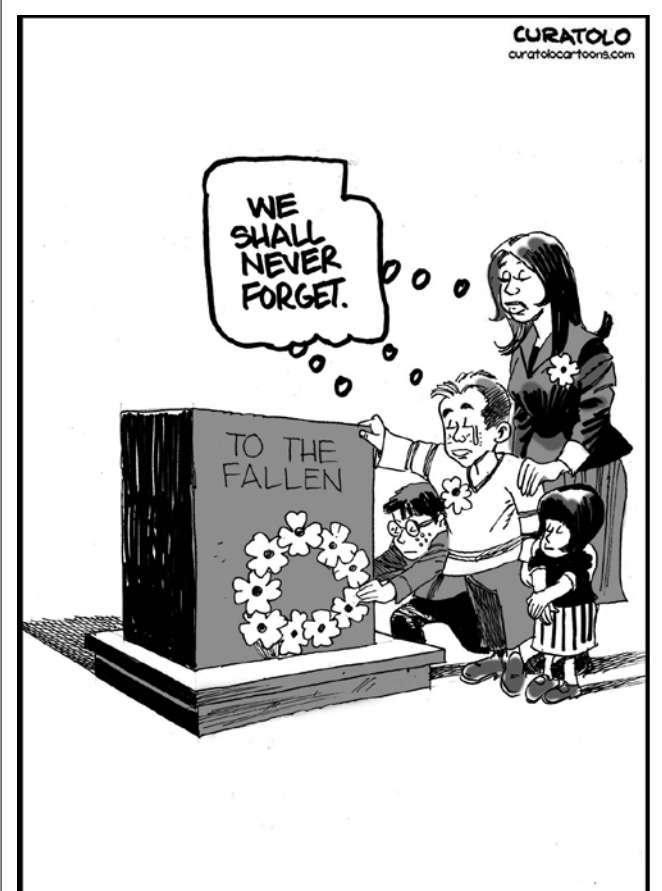
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Humour should be supported by evidence

I feel a bit like Grandpa Simpson, complaining about a cartoon, but the premise of the cartoon in the Oct. 24 issue of the ATA News — that eating sugar (candy) makes children "hyper" — is perhaps the most common misconception today. It is also completely false. There is overwhelming evidence that this is nonsense, and having taught chemistry for my whole career, I'd like the ATA News to more consciously support an evidence-based approach to life (even humour).

Dick Tompkins, retired

Letters to the editor: We welcome letters to the editor. Please limit your submission to 300 words. Only letters bearing a first and last name, address, and daytime telephone number will be considered for publication. Teachers are also asked to indicate where and what they teach. All letters are subject to editing for length, clarity, punctuation, spelling and grammar. Email managing editor Cory Hare: cory.hare@ata.ab.ca.



Remembering

WAR EFFORTS

Alberta teachers
make a difference
during world wars.

With military service calling away many of Alberta's young women and men, the first and second world wars created teacher shortages that threatened the stability and efficacy of public education.

During the Second World War, teachers who remained in their classrooms made a concerted effort to bolster active, democratic citizenship in students, and the Alberta Teachers' Association worked to safeguard the profession while supporting the democratic ideals for which Allied forces were fighting.



November 1940

On behalf of the Royal Canadian Air Force, the *ATA Magazine* publishes a plea for teachers to engage industrial arts students in helping to build 50,000 scale model planes for the benefit of training RCAF pilots.



September 1942

By this time, 415 Alberta teachers had left their classrooms to enlist in the Armed Forces. The *ATA Magazine* published those teachers' names and their school divisions in honour of their service.

Schoolyard plane crash propels teacher to heroism

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.

Nov. 10, 1941, started as a quiet Monday morning. That day, 29-year-old Frances Walsh was attending to students in her one-room schoolhouse — the tiny Big Hill Springs School north of Cochrane — likely preparing for the next day's Armistice Day observances. She could not have known that the calm would soon be shattered.



Frances Walsh

BOMBER COMMAND MUSEUM OF CANADA

It was wartime and Walsh and her students were used to flyovers by the pilots of the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan out of Calgary. But, that morning the far-off and familiar whirl and hum of a de Havilland 82C Tiger Moth aircraft became a near miss of the school and the roar of a plane exploding in the schoolyard.

Pilot Flying Officer James Robinson's plane had come down. On board were Robinson and 18-year-old Cadet Karl Gravel. Without hesitation, Walsh sprang into action. The events are reported by the Bomber Command Museum of Canada this way:

"Unaware that F/O Robinson had been instantly killed in the crash and despite the fact that he had been severely injured in the crash and his clothes were on fire, L.A.C. Karl Gravel, the eighteen year old student wireless-air gunner aboard the aircraft, attempted to pull his pilot from the burning wreckage.

"Frances Walsh, the teacher at the school, 'displaying great personal courage and coolness,' rushed from the

schoolhouse and into the fire, dragging L.A.C. Gravel from the burning aircraft, and rolling him on the ground to extinguish the flames which by this point had completely enveloped his clothing. She then attempted to remove F/O Robinson but the flames prevented her. After dispatching her oldest pupil, Lloyd Bowray, to bicycle to the nearest telephone, Mrs. Walsh and her students carried the injured airman to the schoolhouse and rendered first aid."

Walsh was herself injured in the ordeal, suffering burns to her hands, arms and face but insisted that her actions were simply what anyone would have done under such circumstances.

Gravel died four hours later at Calgary's Col. Belcher Hospital. He was posthumously awarded the George Cross for his heroic attempt to save his pilot.

Despite her modesty, Walsh herself was recognized for her extraordinary efforts with the George Medal, a civilian honour instituted by King George VI in 1940. On June 11, 1942, Walsh became the first woman awarded the George Medal by Alexander Cambridge, 1st Earl of Athlone, Governor General of Canada, at Rideau Hall in Ottawa. Today, Walsh's George Medal is on display at the Bomber Command Museum of Canada located in Nanton, Alta. ■

Teachers do their part

A retrospective on the impact of the world wars on the teaching profession

Maggie Shane
ATA Archivist

By Dominion Day 1918, Alberta's sons, fathers, brothers and sweethearts had been fighting and dying on far-flung, blood-soaked battlefields for four long years. Ours was a young nation and an even younger province, and it was a time of contradictions. As soldiers, nurses, pilots, infantry and naval personnel pursued their duty in theatres of war, life at home persisted, albeit to the weary rhythm of devastating destruction and loss.

Wartime news competed with mundane happenings for column inches in the daily newspapers like the *Edmonton Bulletin* and the *Morning Bulletin*. Reports on German advances on Petrograd (St. Petersburg) and the sinking by torpedo of the hospital ship HMHS *Llandovery Castle* appeared beside accounts of the "glorious weather" enjoyed at Dominion Day picnics. The war permeated every aspect of life and work while, in the closing months of the War to End All Wars, the Alberta Teachers' Alliance took up the work of establishing the teaching profession.

In a 1940 retrospective of 1917-18 published in the *ATA Magazine*, Alberta Teachers' Association general secretary-treasurer John Barnett wrote forcefully of the influence of the war

upon teachers' experience. Teaching conditions and salaries were deplorable, making it nearly impossible for teachers to cobble together a decent living. The educated and talented often considered teaching a byway on the road to better economic opportunities. Moreover, teachers were leaving their classrooms to enlist in the armed forces.

Faced with a dearth of available, qualified teachers, the Department of Education allowed almost anyone into classrooms despite a lack of training, certification or qualifications. The First World War shaped the state of the teaching profession from the outset.

"Immediately after the outbreak of War many school boards, even in cities, arbitrarily cut salaries with no negotiation whatever," Barnett wrote. "Teachers' contracts provided for term engagements only; these engagements could be broken on thirty days' notice before the expiration of the term with no appeal possible. In consequence, there was little continuity of service of teachers and little corporate spirit among them. If a teacher had the temerity to exercise any freedom of thought as a citizen he did so at his peril; if he had any opinions on professional matters he was brushed aside or ignored."

Even though conditions were ripe for teachers to demand respect for their important work, the notion of collective action took time to find purchase.

Two years of constant effort were necessary on the part of the fledgling Alberta Teachers' Alliance to persuade educators that it would take more than a few board-driven meetings a year to achieve professional status and improvements to teaching and learning conditions. Alliance leaders strove to bring their message to the public, the ratepayers, other professionals and, crucially, elected representatives. Their hard work was effective and, by 1919, half of Alberta's 4,000 teachers were members.

"When one considers that the majority of these were rural teachers located 'miles from nowhere' and that attending a meeting might mean walking or driving in a farmer's buggy team, 15 or more miles, the determination and enthusiasm of the rank and file of the membership may be understood," Barnett wrote. "Local organizations sprang up everywhere. The capacity of the teachers to organize astonished even the leaders themselves."

By June of 1920 the first issue of the *ATA Magazine* was in the hands of members and there were other signs of the Alliance's growing influence. Membership increased steadily as teachers found themselves well protected and advised by their professional organization. Public trust in the Alliance and its stewardship of education grew apace.

DOING THEIR PART continued on page 8

Association supports Catholic education and single curriculum

Cory Hare
ATA News Managing Editor

The Alberta Teachers' Association does not support the creation of a separate sex education curriculum for Catholic students but does support publicly funded Catholic education and the teaching of Catholic values alongside the program of studies.

That's how ATA president Greg Jeffery described the Association's position following recent news that a group of Catholic district superintendents had been planning to create a separate curriculum for sex education to be delivered in Catholic schools.

"Making a request for an alternate program of studies I think was somewhat beyond the bounds," Jeffery said. "I found it to be quite divisive and it's not how things work in Alberta."



"We believe in Catholic education. We feel it has served Alberta very well."

—Greg Jeffery, ATA president

A document obtained by Postmedia through a freedom of information request suggested that the Council of Catholic School Superintendents of Alberta (CCSSA) had identified several potential "problematic" areas in which anticipated changes to the health curriculum could clash with church doctrine.

"We would be unable to teach any outcome requiring the promotion of homosexual relationships and/or lifestyles that are contrary to Church teaching," the document says. "If the curriculum stipulates that we have to teach about 'gender' or 'gender identity' as disassociated from biological sex, then that would be problematic."

The health curriculum is currently being rewritten as part of a systemwide overhaul of the province's programs of studies.

In a release issued days after the news emerged, the CCSSA said it would focus on creating a resource that would complement the new curriculum rather than replace it.

"All potential human sexuality topics can be taught in Catholic schools, and authentically framed from the Catholic perspective. The CCSSA resource is intended to complement the prescribed Alberta Education wellness curriculum; it is not intended to replace the provincially mandated outcomes," the release states.

For Jeffery, that distinction could make for a workable situation.

"That's fair. Teaching the program of studies then teaching Catholic values beside it makes sense," he said.

He noted that, last spring, delegates at the ATA's Annual Representative Assembly passed two policies related to Catholic education. One policy urges Roman Catholic school boards to respect teachers' rights "to exercise their individual professional judgment with regard to religious instruction and permeation of religion in the planning and teaching of lessons, evaluation of students, the selection of learning resources, and professional development."

"In that sense, this resource should not be prescribed for Catholic teachers but it can certainly be offered as a resource to use in their classrooms," Jeffery said.

The other policy affirms "the importance of constitutionally established denominational education" and supports "the legitimacy of denominational education provided by Roman Catholic separate school boards."

"We believe in Catholic education," Jeffery said. "We feel it has served Alberta very well and the model should continue." ■

New UCP leader at odds with government on numerous fronts

Kim Dewar
ATA News Staff

Strengthening school choice and repealing curriculum changes are among the top educational priorities for Jason Kenney, the new leader of the United Conservative Party (UCP).



Jason Kenney
UCP leader

Kenney won the party's leadership on the first ballot on Oct. 28, capturing 61.1 per cent of eligible party members' votes. The party formed in July after a merger between the Kenney-led Progressive Conservative Party and the Wildrose Party led by Brian Jean, who finished second in the UCP leadership race.

Early in the leadership race, Kenney said he would not make policy announcements but would instead allow grassroots members of the party to decide its direction. However, he has since made available a collection of videos and posts at grassrootsguarantee.ca that outline his positions on a variety of issues, including school choice and the government's curriculum rewrite process.

"I'm deeply concerned about the NDP's ideological plan for our education system. I think there's already too much politics in our classrooms," the website states.

"We'll wait and see what the final outcome is, but my inclination would be to repeal the NDP curriculum changes, and do a review from square one to ensure that the education system is very focused on the transmission of critical knowledge and skills to equip young people for success in the future."

On school choice, Kenney supports "a plurality of choices."

"Then you can ensure that you can pick a program that responds to the unique aptitudes or interests of your child. That's one way to keep the whole system more accountable as well through a kind of positive internal competition of school choice, which has helped to lead Alberta to have some of the highest standardized test score outcomes in the developed world."

Kenney has criticized the fact that the names of educators undertaking the curriculum rewrite are not being released publicly and has repeatedly

flagged the draft social studies curricula as being "social engineering" on the part of government.

Vocal critic

Kenney is also at odds with the government on the subject of gay-straight alliances, stating that parents should, in some cases, be notified if their child joins a gay-straight alliance at school.

And Kenney was vocal in backing a plan by Catholic school superintendents to write an alternative sex education curriculum that reflects faith-based teaching, stating that Catholic jurisdictions have every right to teach students sex-ed in a manner consistent with the faith.

Kenney has also suggested that a way to balance the Alberta budget is to reduce per capita spending by as much as 20 per cent, which would bring Alberta in line with spending levels seen in BC. He feels that a budgetary reduction of this magnitude could see Alberta's \$10 billion dollar deficit erased within three years.

Trevor Tombe, an associate professor of economics at the University of Calgary, told the ATA News that it's difficult to foresee how Kenney's budget ideas would affect education.

"It's tough to say since it's a high-level goal without much meat on the bones. How that trickles down into individual program areas is an open question," Tombe said.

Kenney, a former federal cabinet minister under Stephen Harper, does not hold a seat in the legislature but is in charge of the 27-member official opposition. On Oct. 29 he announced that he will run in a provincial byelection in the riding of Calgary-Lougheed, where longtime MLA Dave Rodney has announced his retirement.

On day two of the fall legislature sitting, which began on Oct. 30, Kenney announced his critic portfolio lineup. The education critic is now Drayton Valley-Devon MLA Mark Smith, a former teacher of 30 years who had a previous stint as the Wildrose education critic. In that role, Smith had been critical of the government's instruction to school boards not to notify parents about children joining a gay-straight alliance. The most recent education critic, Chestermere-Rocky View MLA Leela Aheer, is now the deputy leader and the critic of the Children's Services and Status of Women ministries. ■

ATA president applauds new GSA bill

ATA News Staff

ATA president Greg Jeffery is applauding the introduction of a new bill aimed at protecting the privacy of students who join gay-straight alliances (GSAs).

Education Minister David Eggen introduced *An Act to Protect Gay-Straight Alliances* on Nov. 2. Among other measures, the bill would amend the *School Act* by explicitly protecting the privacy of students who attend GSAs. If the bill is passed, informing parents about student participation in gay-straight alliances will be left up to the students themselves.

"Our top priority is for all schools across Alberta to be safe and welcoming for all students, regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression," said Eggen in his government's news release.

"These amendments are intended to provide clarity and consistency to support students, families and school authorities."

Jeffery called for all-party support for the bill, which he feels will help students feel safe.

"Some students who are even nervous that their participation in GSA activities might be disclosed simply will not go — and the support they need disappears," Jeffery said. "Making it clear that the support is confidential removes some big barriers to access."

In 2015, when Bill 10 — *An Act to Amend the Alberta Bill of Rights to Protect Our Children* — was introduced, the Association called for regulations to protect student privacy, but since then a number of groups have characterized such privacy protections as "secretive" and suggested that schools are "excluding" parents. The issue has become a hot topic in provincial politics.

Jeffery says the whole issue has unfortunately become politicized and unnecessarily divisive.

The ATA's Code of Conduct and provincial privacy law would likely preclude disclosure of GSA participation without student consent, but the recent public attention and political discussion has challenged those obligations.

"Students and teachers will benefit from legal clarity," said Jeffery. "If this bill is passed, teachers will no longer have to worry about managing competing pressures on such a sensitive topic."

"Teachers will be able to point to the law and tell students and parents clearly — student privacy, safety and security comes first."

Other *School Act* amendments introduced in the bill would require all publicly funded schools — including accredited private schools — to create inclusive policies related to sexual and

gender minority students and would add powers for the minister to enforce the law. They would also ensure principals support the timely creation of GSAs when students request them. ■

CORRECTION

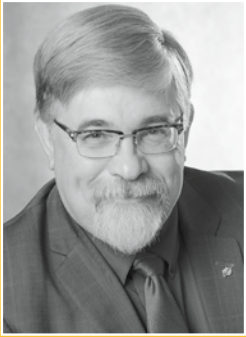
The Oct. 10 issue of the ATA News incorrectly identified Edmonton Catholic No. 54 as one of six local bargaining units that have reached an agreement through local bargaining. The list should have instead included Edmonton Public Local No. 37.

Also, a photo caption related to Project Overseas incorrectly stated that Guyana is in Africa whereas it is in South America.

The ATA News apologizes for the errors. ■

Who's who—Provincial Executive Council members and local presidents 2017/18

PRESIDENTS AND VICE-PRESIDENTS



GREG JEFFERY
ATA President



JENNY REGAL
ATA Vice-President



JASON SCHILLING
ATA Vice-President



MARK RAMSANKAR
ATA Past President

NORTH WEST



PETER MacKAY
District Rep



MYRNA McLEAN
Fort Vermilion Local No. 77



RHONDA KELLY
Grande Prairie and District Catholic Teachers Local No. 42



MICHAEL ALDRIDGE
Greater Peace Local No. 13



LINDSAY BROWN
High Prairie Local No. 62



NICOLE FRENCH-GILLIES
Northern Spirit Local No. 6



MARK BURKE
Northland Local No. 69



RAY BUZIAK
Trumpeter Local No. 26

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District Rep



STEPHANIE CUMBLETON
Aspen View Local No. 7



KARIN BRUSSÉ-PATERSON
Battle River Local No. 32



CONNIE LANDSIEDEL
Greater St. Paul Local No. 25



COLIN DESNOYERS
Lakeland Catholic Separate Local No. 30



DAVID RIPKENS
Northern Lights Local No. 15



CHRISTOPHER TUCKEY
Park Plains East Local No. 31

CENTRAL NORTH



ROBERT TWERDOCHLIĆ
District Rep



BRETT WATT
Evergreen Local No. 11



VANESSA AMYOTTE
Evergreen Catholic Local No. 44



KATRINA ZACK
Northern Gateway Local No. 43



RICK KREMP
Parkland Teachers' Local No. 10



MICHELLE SAVOIE
Pembina Hills Local No. 22



NICOLE FELICITAS
Woodland Rivers Local No. 40

SOUTH EAST



HEATHER McCAIG
District Rep



ERIN NORRISH
Grasslands Local No. 34



NATALIE OLIPHANT
Medicine Hat Local No. 1



BERNIE KINCH
Medicine Hat Catholic Teachers Local No. 39



DOUG LERKE
Prairie Land Local No. 36



STUART SHIGEHIRO
Prairie Rose Local No. 2



TOM JANZEN
Three Drums of Wheat Local No. 20

SOUTH WEST



KATHERINE PRITCHARD
District Rep



MARK NIXON
Holy Spirit Catholic Local No. 5



WALTER PLUMTREE
Horizon Local No. 4



DEREK RESLER
Lethbridge Public School Local No. 41



SAVI HOULDIN
Livingstone Range Local No. 14



NATALIE TOWNSHEND
Palliser Local No. 19



STEPHEN GIBBINGS
Westwind Local No. 12

EDMONTON DISTRICT



PAUL FROESE
District Rep



DENEEN ZIELKE
Elk Island Local No. 28



RHONDA BOROWSKI
Elk Island Catholic Teachers' Local No. 21



CARRYL BENNETT-BROWN
Greater St. Albert Catholic Local No. 23



ELLEN SNAITH
St. Albert Public Teachers' Local No. 73



COREY CONROY
Sturgeon Local No. 27

EDMONTON MCMURRAY



DARRIN BAUER
District Rep



MARKIANA CYNCAR-HRYSCHUK
District Rep



NANCY BALL
District Rep



GREG CARABINE
Edmonton Catholic Teachers Local No. 54

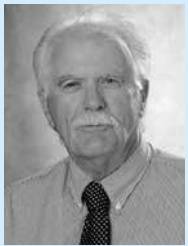


HEATHER QUINN
Edmonton Public Teachers Local No. 37



SHANNON DUBE
Fort McMurray Local No. 48

CENTRAL



JERE GEIGER
District Rep



KIM MASON
Black Gold Teachers' Local No. 8



JEAN PORTER
St. Thomas Aquinas Teachers' Local No. 45



BRENTON BAUM
Timberline Local No. 9



ERIC CLOUTIER
Unité locale francophone No. 24



AL BLACKER
Wetaskiwin Local No. 18

CENTRAL SOUTH



DON BROOKWELL
District Rep



TREVOR SANCHE
Chinook's Edge Local No. 17



COREY VAN ZANDBERGEN
Clearview Teachers Local No. 33



BRICE UNLAND
Red Deer Catholic Local No. 80



KELLY ALEMAN
Red Deer City Local No. 60



MICHAEL DOLL
Wolf Creek Local No. 3

STUDENT LOCALS

SARAH BINGHAM
University of Alberta ESA, Student Local No. 1

CARSON REVEEN
University of Calgary ESA, Student Local No. 2

TBA
Red Deer College EUS, Student Local No. 3

ALANA MILLARD
University of Lethbridge EUS, Student Local No. 4

MELISSA BENSON
Medicine Hat College EUS, Student Local No. 5

CURTIS GORUK
Concordia University ESA, Student Local No. 6

SARAH DICKSON
Association des étudiants en éducation de la Campus Saint-Jean Local No. 7 EUS

ELISE MUMERT
Grande Prairie Regional College ESA, Student Local No. 8

CHELSI RYAN
Keyano College ESA, Student Local No. 9

AARON HORNE
Mount Royal University EUS, Student Local No. 10

TBA
MacEwan University EUS, Student Local No. 11

CYDNEY WALLACE
Ambrose University College ESA, Student Local No. 12

TBA
King's University College ESA, Student Local No. 13

TBA
St. Mary's University College Local No. 14

SPECIAL LOCALS

JUANITA KNIGHT
Alberta Retired Teachers' Association Special Local No. 1

CALGARY DISTRICT



MICHELLE GLAVINE
District Rep



SHANE NIZINKEVICH
Canadian Rockies Local No. 59



DAVID TAIT
Christ the Redeemer (formerly Chinook) Local No. 29



WADE WESTWORTH
Foothills Local No. 16



ANDREA MCLEOD
Rocky View Local No. 35

CALGARY CITY



HEIDE DOPPMEIER
District Rep



KATHY HOEHN
District Rep



KENT KINSMAN
District Rep

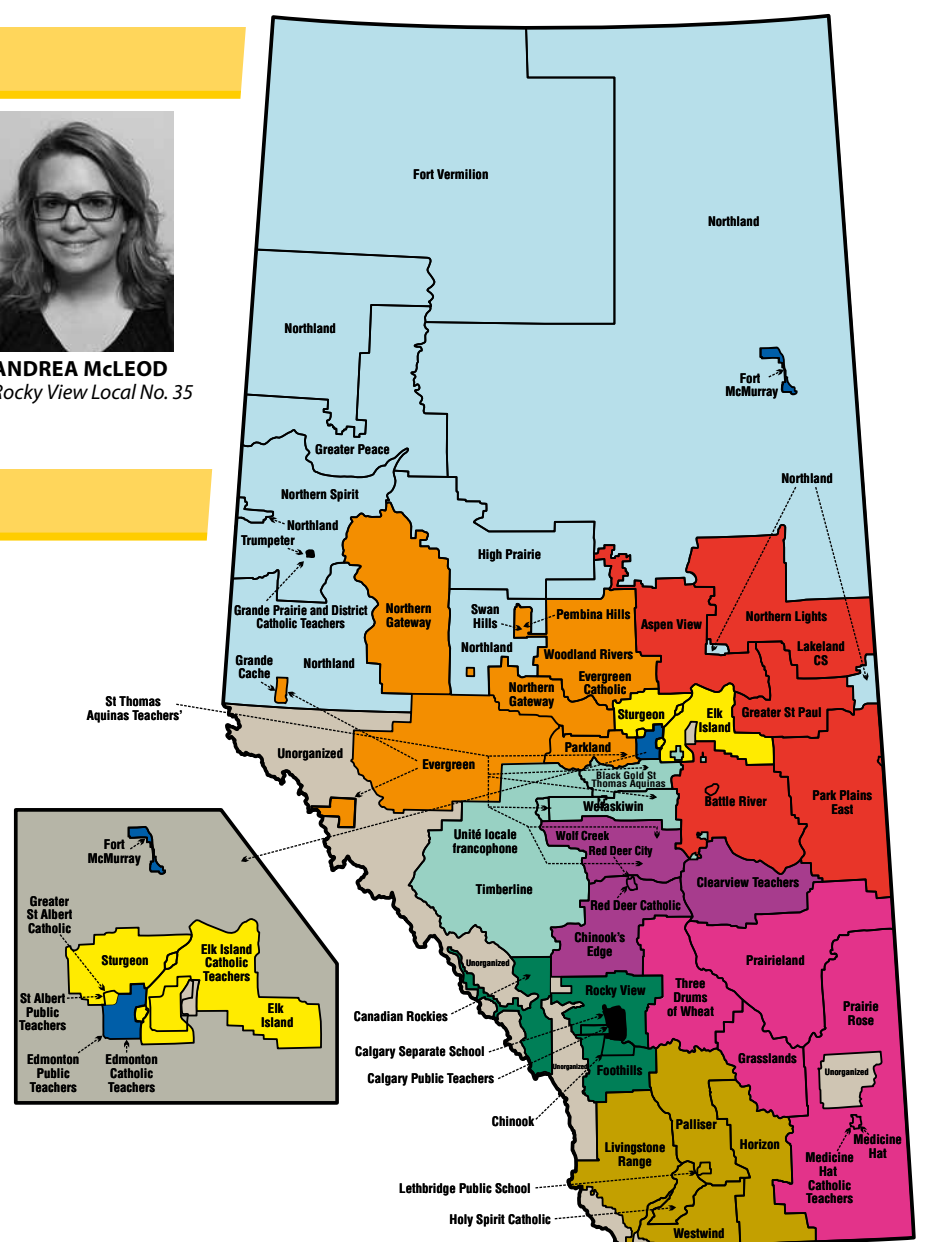


KEVIN KEMPT
Calgary Public Teachers Local No. 38



RICHARD CAMPBELL
Calgary Separate School Local No. 55

- Calgary City
- Calgary District
- Central
- Central East
- Central North
- Central South
- Edmonton McMurray
- Edmonton District
- North West
- South East
- South West



DOING THEIR PART

continued from page 4

The First World War was behind Albertans. The armistice had famously taken effect at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month 1918 (followed by the Treaty of Versailles in 1919). Albertans looked forward to a future of peace, prosperity and recovery. It was not to be. Within nine years Albertans were suffering in the grip of the Great Depression, and within two decades they were once again at war.

In 1939, war again called young men and women to military service and a teacher shortage threatened the stability and efficacy of public education.

Just as it had in 1914–1918, the Department of Education once again responded to the teacher shortage but this time did not attempt to fill teacher vacancies with untrained or unqualified individuals. A new teaching certificate, the junior certificate for high schools, was instituted that required post-secondary training and licensed the certificate holder to teach grades 7 to 11 for an initial period of three years.

While the rush to war was familiar, much had changed in Alberta in the 21 years between 1918 and 1939. No longer were teachers without a collective voice. Now, the ATA worked to safeguard the profession's hard-won prerogatives while supporting those democratic ideals for which Allied forces were fighting.

Throughout the province, teachers worked to bolster active, democratic citizenship in students. Teachers' efforts were seen as vital, not only to the war effort, but to the longed-for period of recovery to follow.

Of course, a great many classroom teachers pursued active military service, but now a balance had to be struck between maintaining continuity of education at home and supporting teachers seeking active military duty.

In response, the ATA encouraged employing boards to "top up" teachers' military pay while on active duty and to ensure that their jobs would be secure during that service. By December 1940, the *ATA Magazine* was regularly printing a monthly roll of newly enlisted teachers by name and employing school board. The role of the teacher was considered important enough to incline the National War Services Board to make it possible for teachers to complete military training during the off-term summer months.

As the war ground on, a 1941 *ATA Magazine* article by Social Credit premier and minister of education William Aberhart exhorted Alberta teachers to continue their efforts to resist the "hideous doctrines of totalitarianism."

The stakes could not have been higher. Teachers answered the call to service in their classrooms, on the battlefields, in the Red Cross and in every benevolent organization dedicated to the relief of human suffering borne of the war. Teachers found their common ground, put aside differences of politics or philosophy and united in the face of great calamity for their profession and, most important, for their students.

Teachers approached the war effort with determination for themselves but with dread that the ravages of war would soon be visited upon the youth of the nation.

"All thinking people know that we stand on the threshold of a year which may well prove to be the most critical in human history," Aberhart wrote.

"Let us then go forward together into 1941 with that spirit of undaunted triumph, and with the knowledge that, beneath and around all the show of worldly power and pomp, there are those finer spiritual and humane qualities which must ultimately prevail." ■

Anniversary journals a hit; more on the way

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 Oct. 26–27, 2017, at Barnett House in Edmonton

1. Approved in principle and referred to Finance Committee for review and costing, a proposed list of programs on which the Association should focus in 2018/19.
2. Approved a co-ordinated MLA engagement activity,

initiated through local associations, advocating for class size reductions and improved supports for inclusion and complexity.

3. Named three members of Council to a staff selection committee for the position of executive staff officer, Professional Development (Indigenous education).

4. Approved an overexpenditure to purchase a further 1,500 ATA 100th anniversary journals, which are available for purchase at the ATA store on the Association's website.

5. Received a 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 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.

6. Authorized an overexpenditure to allow for up to three members of Council to attend the Well-Being of Children and Youth Conference.

7. Authorized the purchase of six tickets to the Parkland Institute Annual Fall Conference, "Collapse: Neoliberalism in Crisis," scheduled for Nov. 17–19, 2017, in Edmonton.

8. Approved the name of one teacher for addition to the Association instructor name bank, which is used as a source of appointments to the Association instructor corps as the need arises.

9. Approved the Central Table Bargaining Committee frame of reference and approved amendments to the Teacher Welfare Services Committee frame of reference. ■



The Alberta Teachers' Association

The Alberta Teachers' Association invites applications for the position of

EXECUTIVE STAFF OFFICER, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (INDIGENOUS EDUCATION)

Competition: ESO3/18

Location: Edmonton

Commencement: January 1, 2018

A major focus of this executive staff position in the Professional Development program area will be to provide leadership for the profession in Indigenous education. Responsibilities may also include working in the areas of teacher education, curriculum and student assessment and technology in education; working with specialist councils; assisting local PD chairs; training and supervising Association instructors and Association administrator instructors; preparing policy and position papers; assisting with programs for beginning teachers; assisting in the development and revision of workshops; liaising with universities and other institutions; handling field service requests; serving as Association resource person in specific areas of expertise; and special or continuing assignments in other areas of Association operation. 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 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 are to commence on or about January 1, 2018.

Applicants should quote position **ESO3/18** 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 November 17, 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.



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Masulita, Uganda
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Application Deadline: Dec. 1, 2017

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.

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

Open to teachers who have completed 3 years of full-time teaching in Alberta before the overseas assignment begins.

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



Ag for Life
PRESENTS

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KEYNOTE:

Dr. Frank Robinson from the University of Alberta

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January 25–26, 2018
<https://event-wizard.com/events/TGSE0118/>

NOTICES AND EVENTS

Amazing Race Canada seeks everyday heroes

Casting is underway for season six of *The Amazing Race Canada*, whose theme will be heroes.

Producers are seeking courageous Canadians such as teachers, first responders, parents, community leaders, mentors, athletes and other everyday heroes with a story to tell to be a part of an adventure that could change their lives forever.

Anyone who's interested in applying can submit a three-minute video/webcam recording with both team members introducing themselves and stating why they want to win. The deadline is Nov. 29.

Further information is available at ctv.ca/theamazingracecanada/casting.

Registration open for western Canada's largest autism conference

Registrations are being accepted for the 10th annual conference of Children's Autism Services of Edmonton. This three-day conference is the largest event on autism in western Canada, attracting the latest research and science and providing an opportunity for educators, parents, industry leaders and health professionals to learn and share.

The three-day conference will showcase best-selling author of *The Leader in Me*, Sean Covey. Other guest speakers will include Amy Laurent, Michael John Carley and Dr. Pat Mirenda.

When: Jan. 24–26, 2018

Where: Rogers Place and Edmonton Marriot River Cree

More information, including registration and cost, can be found at www.childrensautism.ca.

To Advertise

For advertising information, contact the advertising manager: 780-447-9417 direct
 1-800-232-7208 toll free
 e-mail: advertising@ata.ab.ca.

Next Deadline
 Friday, Nov 10, 2017, 4 PM
 (publication date Nov 21, 2017)

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

Cost
Classified ads: \$1 per word plus GST (\$15 minimum)
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 Prepayment is required. We accept VISA, Mastercard, cash or cheque.

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ADLC

Alberta Distance Learning Centre

New campaign takes on class size and complexity

Teachers urged to share their stories

Cory Hare
ATA News Managing Editor

Class size and complexity is still a very real issue in Alberta, and provincial politicians need to hear teachers' stories.

That's the message behind a new postcard campaign being rolled out by the Alberta Teachers' Association. The campaign encourages teachers to fill in a postcard with their class size and other details and share it with their local MLA.

"If you believe your class sizes are unreasonable, then we need to have that story shared," said ATA president Greg Jeffery.

The idea for the campaign emerged from reports from numerous ATA district representatives that large class sizes continue to be a problem. Some high school teachers are reporting class sizes in excess of 40 students for core subjects like math and English, Jeffery said.

The Association would like to see the government take action that moves class sizes toward the targets that were set by Alberta's Commission on Learning in 2003, Jeffery said. He added that the timing of the campaign is important, as the provincial budget cycle is just beginning.

"If it doesn't come out now, we would miss the budget cycle and this would be put on hold for another entire year," he said.

The postcards are available through the Association and its locals. Local presidents were introduced to the initiative during a meeting in Edmonton on Oct. 28.

"It's a great idea, simple, straightforward, gets the point across," said Tom Janzen, president of Three Drums of Wheat Local No. 20.

He said that, like many teachers, he spends a lot of his time on a small number of students who need more attention.



Chris Tuckey, president of Park Plains East Local No. 31, holds up his completed postcard for a campaign aimed at raising awareness of the class-size issue in Alberta.

"I'm always focusing on a few kids in a class that big. There's a lot of kids that aren't getting the attention they could use," Janzen said.

"Every student can benefit from that one-on-one time with their teacher but when you're focused on five kids with codes and the students that don't speak English, you're getting pulled in lots of different directions."

Prairie Rose local president Stuart Shigehiro agreed.

"The larger it gets, the more distract-ed students become and that impacts

the one-on-one time," he said. "We need funding from government."

Chris Tuckey, president of Park Plains East Local No. 31, said he's got 36 students in his Grade 8 class, including 14 who require special accommodations. In a 40-minute period, this translates to barely a minute per student.

"Over and above the size of the class it's the complexity of the class that's the issue," he said. "It's not fair. It's not fair to the students." ■

#MyClassSizeIs

WHERE CAN I GET A CARD?

- From your ATA local.
- In the ATA school mailing Nov. 21–22.
- More on demand. Contact distribution@ata.ab.ca.

WHAT DO I DO WITH IT?

- Fill in your class size.
- Circle the applicable ACOL number.
- Write a general description of complexity factors.
- Stick to the facts — don't criticize your school or board admin.
- Get it to your MLA.

HOW DO I GET IT TO MY MLA?

- Call the constituency office and set up a meeting.
- Drop it off with the office staff.
- Collect a bunch from your staff and have one person drop it off.
- Take a photo and send it via email.
- Take a photo and share it on social media (only if you feel comfortable doing so).

TIPS

- Keep it factual.
- You don't need to include your name or school name.
- Be mindful of professional conduct responsibilities — don't criticize colleagues or your employer.
- Respect student privacy — avoid any information that could identify individual students.

Get 2Know 2Learn.ca

Educational resources for teachers

Feature topic: Open-use images and music

Looking for images or music to use in presentations, newsletters, student work or other projects?

The image database at 2Learn.ca contains more than 3,000 images that are available freely for educational use. Many of these images were submitted by Alberta teachers and are Alberta-specific, making them perfect for student projects. For example, Grade 3 social studies teachers may be interested in a collection of images of Tunisia submitted by an Alberta teacher who visited the country.

2Learn.ca also has a list of other open-use multimedia collections that have high-resolution images and music that students and teachers can use.

Sources of these multimedia collections include:

- the New York Public Library
- the Museum of Modern Art
- NASA

To find the image database, visit 2Learn.ca and click on the Image Gallery under Student Sites & Teaching Resources. Other multimedia material is available by clicking on Your Digital Presence and then Open Use Multimedia Collections.

COMMITTEE ON CONVENTION REVIEW FALL MEMBERS' SURVEY

Provide feedback and advice to the Committee on Convention Review by completing the following survey by December 31, 2017.

www.surveymonkey.com/r/CCR-Members

Printed and PDF versions of the survey are available on request. Contact Dan Grassick, executive staff officer, Professional Development, at dan.grassick@ata.ab.ca.

The Alberta Teachers' Association

