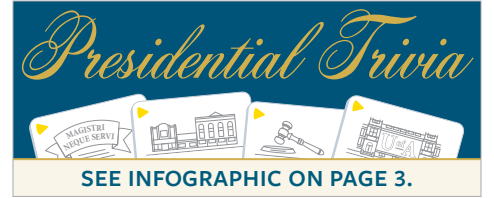


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# ATA NEWS

The Alberta Teachers' Association



November 21, 2017 | Volume 52, Number 7

News Publication of The Alberta Teachers' Association



The rising sun casts a warm glow over the snowy ground at Castle School on the Scotford Hutterite Colony near Fort Saskatchewan on Nov. 2. Submitted by teacher Jennifer Fredeen.

## Hitting a nerve

Teachers on board with new class size awareness campaign.

Read Jonathan Teghtmeyer's editorial on page 2.

## Welcome aboard

Association welcomes two new executives.

See stories on page 4.

## GSA bill passes

Privacy protections a victory for teachers and students — ATA president.

Read story on page 5.



## Professional growth

Practice standards coming for principals and superintendents.

Read Gordon Thomas's Q&A on page 2, story on page 5.

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### WHAT'S ONLINE?

Interpretation Bulletin No. 4: What is a reasonable work day?

Instructional and assignable time calculators

What is citizenship?

Read the latest issue of *The Learning Team*

100th anniversary journals available for online order



## Getting technical

ATA library adds more learning technology to its collection.

See story on page 6.

## Class size campaign strikes a nerve



### EDITORIAL

Jonathan Teghtmeyer  
ATA News Editor-in-Chief

In the last issue of the *ATA News*, I wrote an editorial to talk to you about the new My Class Size Is... campaign the Association launched to raise awareness of the issue of class size and complexity.

We are sending more than 10,000 advocacy cards to teachers and are asking them to deliver the completed cards to their MLAs. Your response to our initial rollout has been phenomenal. Clearly, the campaign has struck a nerve.

We are being inundated with requests for thousands of additional cards. On Facebook, our material is being seen by tens of thousands of Albertans each time we make a post. The most engaging post on Facebook generated more than 500 reactions, 222 shares and 122 comments.

One teacher said she had 34 students in a split Grade 5/6 class, while the teacher across the hall had 29 students in Grade 3. One respondent reported on a science class with 45 students in it.

And of course, teachers talked about complexity and composition factors that aggravate the challenges of large classes.

One teacher noted that her Grade 1 class may have only 21 students, but that includes two students with autism, four students with behaviour IPPs, three English-language learners and two that are well below grade level.

"What I would give to be able to spend 15 minutes a day with each student in my class," said another teacher. "Fifteen minutes just the two of us, to focus on struggles or to push their learnings further ahead."

Teachers are clearly upset by seeing students falling through the cracks, knowing that they could help more students succeed if only they had more one-on-one time with students.

Let's look again at how we got here.

Alberta identified a significant problem with class size back in 2003 when Alberta's Commission on Learning (ACOL) studied the issue thoroughly and said clearly that class sizes in Alberta should be reduced to averages of 17, 23, 25 and 27 for divisions I, II, III and IV respectively.

In September of 2003, the average K-3 class size was 21.7 students.

The government accepted the ACOL recommendations and introduced funding to reduce the number. Over the next three years, 2,300 additional teachers were to be hired. By 2004/05, class sizes were brought down to 19.3 and then to as low as 18.5 in 2009/10, but that was as good as it got.

Now, I know I am focusing on K-3 without addressing the issue at other grade levels. But the problem was always more acute in division I, and the data on averages is more obscure for higher grades where there are more optional and specialty classes that skew the averages downward.

That is also part of the story. You see, since 2009, the government started to roll back its targeted funding for class size reductions. It started with cuts at the higher grade levels and worked its way down. Currently, class size funding now exists only for K-3 classes and for high school CTS classes, like construction, where safety is a special consideration.

Other grants were also scaled back, and school boards felt a general funding crunch.

At the same time, Alberta has experienced a fertility and migration boom. Since 2009/10, the student population has grown by nearly 100,000 students. The hiring of teachers has simply not kept up.

While successive budgets have provided funding to cover the costs of enrolment growth, they have not adequately covered inflationary pressure, have introduced cuts elsewhere and have done nothing to further improve the class size situation.

Similarly, changes to how inclusion is funded mean teachers are seeing more complexity in their classrooms

*Since 2009/10, the student population has grown by nearly 100,000 students.*

*The hiring of teachers has simply not kept up.*

with less visible supports for unique student needs.

The class size average is now higher than it was in 2004/05, and getting closer and closer to the average in place in 2003 when ACOL said we needed to reduce class size. We estimate that around 2,000 to 3,000 teachers will need to be hired to meet the class size averages recommended by ACOL.

So, let your MLA know. Class size plus inclusion equals class complexity. And class complexity needs to be addressed in order to ensure students aren't falling through the cracks. ■

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

## What's this about new professional practice standards?



### Q & A

Gordon Thomas  
ATA Executive Secretary

**Question:** I see that the *School Act* will be amended. Are there implications for me?

**Answer:** There certainly are implications for our members. The amendments modernize the legislation and resolve some questions that have evolved over time. Provisions include revising the legislation relating to the establishment of separate school districts, modernizing the sections on bus transportation and education service agreements, requiring a trustee code of conduct, establishing a common age for school entrance and updating language relating to the Board of Reference.

The most significant impact for members is amendments to the *School Act* and the *Teaching Profession Act* to establish new certification structures and

new professional practice standards. The Alberta teaching certificate will continue to be a requirement to serve as a teacher in Alberta. To serve as a principal, a teacher must also possess a school leadership certificate. An education program will be established and successful completion will be required to be a principal. A superintendent of schools (including the chief deputy superintendent, if there is one named by the board) will require a superintendent leadership certificate in addition to a teaching certificate. An education program will be established for the superintendent leadership certificate and successful completion will be required to become a superintendent of schools.

At the present time, the Alberta Teachers' Association establishes and polices professional conduct standards for all of its active members and polices the Teaching Quality Standard — the professional practice standard for classroom teachers. The *Teaching Profession Act* is being amended to require the Association to monitor professional practice standards for those members

who possess a leadership certificate. We anticipate that this responsibility will require the Association to police the professional practice of all members who hold a leadership certificate, including principals and central office teachers. To do so, the Association will need to amend the Practice Review By-laws, which can be done by Provincial Executive Council, with approval by the minister of education.

We anticipate that the three new practice standards will be released shortly. We have worked closely with the minister in their development. The new Teaching Quality Standard will be an updated edition of the current standard. The Leadership Quality Standard, which will be applicable to school principals and central office teachers, will establish professional practice standards for leadership related to these roles, and the Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard will be applicable to the superintendent of schools and the chief deputy superintendent, and will establish professional

practice standards related to system leadership and governance.

The Association has also been involved in the development of education programs for the new standards. There is much work ahead on program development and implementation, and there will be grandfathering provisions, with implementation expected Sept. 1, 2019.

While these developments are a major step forward for our profession, the Association continues to believe that the profession itself, not the minister, should be able to establish standards and to police them for all members of the profession. We believe that all certificate holders should be members of the Association, in a unified profession, with the profession responsible for setting and policing professional conduct and professional practice standards for all certificate holders. ■

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



The Alberta Teachers' Association

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# Presidential Trivia

ATA EDITION

**MAGISTRI NEQUE SERVI**  
The ATA's motto, Magistri Neque Servi (Masters Not Servants) is credited to Hubert C. Newland, ATA president from 1920 to 1922.

Harry Ainlay, who served as president of the Alberta Teachers' Alliance from 1928 to 1929, was elected mayor of Edmonton for three terms: 1945, 1946 and 1947.

Outgoing ATA presidents are gifted with a ceremonial gavel in recognition of their service.

M. E. LaZerte, ATA president from 1937 to 1939, served as the first dean of the newly established faculty of education at the University of Alberta from 1942 to 1950.

Leading up to its official 100th anniversary in June 2018, the Alberta Teachers' Association is celebrating its history through a number of initiatives, such as sharing various historic facts that are documented in its archives. This information has been compiled by ATA archivist Maggie Shane.

## YOUR VIEWS

### On ATA support for the GSA Bill 24

Sam Yam @samtheyam

I'm proud to be part of an organization that promotes and protects the rights of students.

Jacob Schwayduh

Thanks for making schools safe for all students.

Corey Lee

While I think I have good judgment, how in the good lord's name can I tell if the kid is living in an accepting and loving home or not? JK, you are right out to lunch on that one. There is not one teacher or administrator that can make that call accurately.

Sheilagh Stacy

No teacher I know wants the responsibility, or danger, of outing a child (this law makes it crystal clear they can't and won't).

### FACEBOOK FEEDBACK

#### On the topic of inclusivity, class size and the #MyClassSizels campaign

Michelle Stroud

One must not only consider the size but the composition of the students within the classroom that can also make a HUGE impact!

Heather Racz

What frustrates me the most is that the push for inclusion isn't coming with adequate funding or staffing. Students with special needs are not well supported with more teachers or EAs in classrooms.

Lindsay Jones

Truth! Unfortunately it seems like we have very little in terms of actual training for supporting and programming for those students with exceptional needs. I would love it if we did have more.

Chelsea DePape

Inclusion isn't a problem in a smaller class size, but I have a rough class with 34 students and there's at least half of them with learning needs and ELL and/or autism. Inclusion is effective and reasonable if the class size is reasonable.

### ON TWITTER

davidstawn @stupidtalk

One of challenges with the classroom improvement fund is everyone seems to have different idea about what will improve classrooms.

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.

## Protections in Bill 24 align with teachers' views



### VIEWPOINTS

Greg Jeffery  
ATA President

Bill 24, *An Act to Support Gay-Straight Alliances*, has passed third reading in the Alberta legislature and has generated a fair amount of discussion on the topic of gay-straight alliances (GSAs) and how schools are being maintained as safe and welcoming environments for sexual and gender minority students.

During these discussions, I received a lot of questions from teachers and members of the public about the Alberta Teachers' Association's position.

In order to fully explain the ATA's position, we must go back to 2015, when the then Progressive Conservative government passed its Bill 10 — *An Act to Amend the Alberta Bill of Rights to Protect Our Children* — with all-party support in the house. Given the bill's provisions concerning the creation of GSAs, the Association issued a news release calling for some regulatory clarity around this aspect. Then ATA president Mark Ramsankar noted that there were widely divergent views from government, school boards and others on what Bill 10 would mean in practice.

"The principals, teachers and students who will be involved need to know very clearly where they stand," he said.

The ATA responded to the emergent implementation questions by calling for ministerial orders that would provide clarity, support and protection for students and teachers. The ATA advocated for regulations that would allow students to determine the name of the GSA, confirm the rights of students and teacher advisors to determine the activities of GSAs, and protect principals and teachers who support the work of the GSA from any

employment repercussions. Our release also urged the government to legally prevent the disclosure of a student's membership in a GSA without the explicit prior consent of the student.

The solutions proposed by President Ramsankar in the winter of 2015 were affirmed by teachers at the 2015 Annual Representative Assembly and became official Association policy with the overwhelming support of delegates.

*Bill 24 allows teachers to point to the law and tell students and parents clearly — student privacy, safety and security come first.*

The Association believed that these solutions were essential to ensure that GSAs could effectively deliver on their stated purpose — ensuring that sexual and gender minority students feel safe and welcome at school.

That purpose is significantly eroded if students who can benefit from the support of a GSA find that barriers prevent their access. In some cases, those barriers are self-imposed and in some cases they may be unjustified, but for some students, just the risk of disclosure will prevent them from participating in a GSA and getting the in-school support that they require. Student privacy is an essential condition for the success of GSAs.

In the two years since Bill 10 passed, it has seemed like many of these issues were being effectively managed. Even the student privacy matter became essentially moot,

as provisions precluding parental disclosure exist in teachers' professional code of conduct and provincial privacy legislation. However, the issue did not die.

A campaign by Parents for Choice in Education called for mandatory notification and explicit parental permission on extracurricular activity and the use of materials or resources related to sexuality and gender identity.

The campaign gained traction amongst some, and we ended up in a situation in which the legal protections for student privacy were considered to be uncertain. And so, when the government introduced Bill 24 to bring in that certainty, we welcomed it.

Bill 24 speaks to changes that address essentially all of the concerns highlighted in Association policy. Legal clarity will be helpful for teachers and principals. Teachers should not have to worry about managing competing pressures and judging uncertain risks related to such a sensitive topic. Bill 24 allows teachers to point to the law and tell students and parents clearly — student privacy, safety and security come first.

I appreciate that, in its response to Bill 24, the United Conservative Party opposition has pointed to respect for the professional judgment of teachers as their reason for not supporting the bill. Of course, I also respect the professional judgment of teachers and generally support freedom for teachers to exercise their professional judgment. I look forward to talking to the UCP leader, education critic and other MLAs about enhanced support for teacher judgment, especially when it comes to curriculum, assessment and other areas of teacher practice.

But on this issue, the profession has already considered the questions, and teachers decided that they would prefer to have legal clarity through law. ■



# Alberta Teachers' Alliance wins Supreme Court challenge

## 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.

Monday morning of Oct. 27, 1930, dawned brisk and bright. At the beginning of another busy week, the usual work of the Alberta Teachers' Alliance bustled on in its offices in Edmonton's Imperial Bank building. Meetings were underway, letters were being typed, draft articles for the *ATA Magazine* were being scratched out on foolscap. But on this particular Monday morning a telegram arrived announcing an important and hard-won victory.



ATA ARCHIVES  
Oliver Mowat Biggar,  
solicitor

Solicitor Oliver Mowat Biggar had sent a wire from Ottawa to advise that the Alliance had succeeded before the Supreme Court of Canada. Biggar's arguments that former principal Thomas Richards had been denied his common law right to sue his employer for damages following his wrongful dismissal had prevailed. The stakes being the legal rights of teachers everywhere, the Alliance and its local solicitor George Van Allen had retained the venerable Biggar, a luminary in Alberta and Ontario law courts, to argue the case before the Supreme Court.

In August of 1928, school principal Thomas Richards returned from summer vacation to discover he had been dismissed without proper notice and replaced. Richards had not received severance and was without a position for some time. He was eventually compelled to accept a position at a greatly reduced salary.

The Alliance launched a lawsuit against the Athabasca School Board on Richards' behalf for damages arising from breach of contract. As general secretary-treasurer John Barnett later reported in the

*ATA Magazine*, over the next two years the case wound through two Alberta appeals courts. Those courts found that, although the board had violated the contract, the only remedy available to Richards was an appeal to the minister of education for reinstatement under section 196 of the *School Act*. Undaunted, the Alliance relentlessly pursued Richards' right to sue for damages under common law.

Convinced that its theory of the case was correct, the Alliance expended significant resources to bring the case before the Supreme Court. Enter Biggar, who argued the case on Tuesday, Oct. 14, 1930. Biggar maintained that section 196 of the *School Act* only applied in cases of summary dismissal or suspension for "gross misconduct, neglect of duty or refusal to obey a lawful order of the Board."

The school board, Biggar asserted, had no such complaints against Richards. Therefore, the statute was moot and the court must safeguard Richards' right to sue for damages under common law.

Writing for the Court, Chief Justice Sir Lyman Poore Duff determined that Richards was "entitled to be placed in the same position (so far as that can reasonably be done by pecuniary reparation) as if the contract had been performed..."

The judgment was significant and applied to every teacher in the Dominion. "[The judgment] affirms definitely the teachers' ordinary common law right to sue for damages when wrongfully dismissed without change being necessary in the statute," Barnett wrote in 1930.

**Gone their separate ways**  
Van Allen was elected the Liberal Party's member of the legislative assembly for Edmonton in 1935. He died in office at the age of 46 on June 15, 1937.

Biggar had a varied and stellar legal career with connections to Edmonton, Alberta, Ontario and Europe. He was an original member of the Edmonton legal firm Woods, Sherry, Collins and Field, founded in 1915.

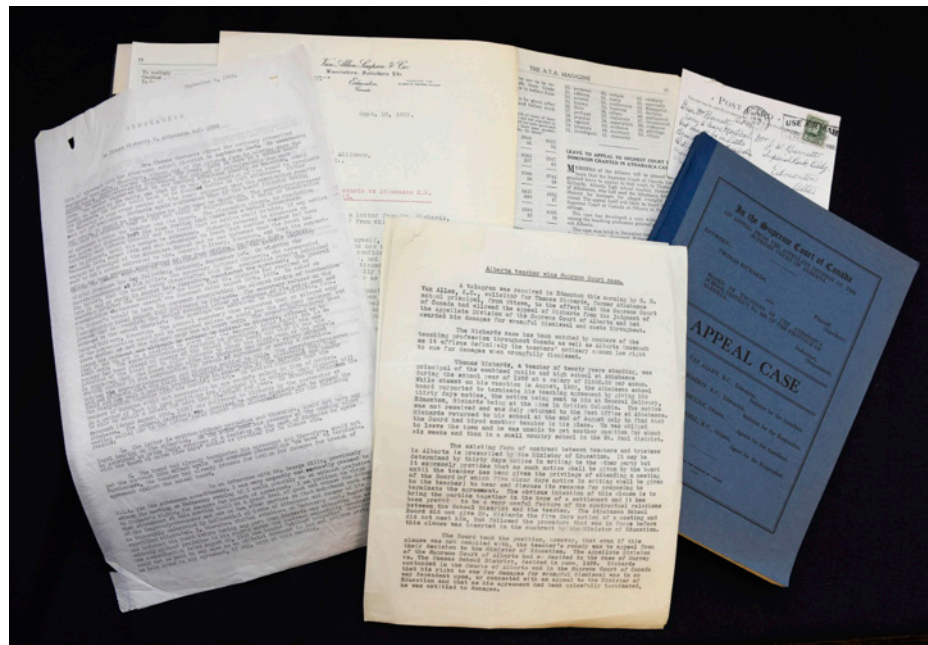
Having enlisted with the 101st Regiment upon the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, Biggar was

a full colonel and serving as Canada's second judge advocate general by 1919. He attended the peace conferences in Paris and Versailles at the conclusion of the war as chief legal adviser to the Canadian delegation under appointment by Prime Minister Sir Robert Borden. Biggar was thereafter appointed Canada's first chief electoral officer in 1920. He died in Ottawa in 1948 at the age of 71.

Today the law firm of Woods, Sherry, Collins and Field is known as Field Law. Its talented and dedicated attorneys (nicknamed "Fielders") have represented and advised the Association since the closing days of the Second World War. Field Law celebrated its centennial in 2015.

Thomas Richards left Alberta some time after the conclusion of the school year in 1930. He returned to his birthplace of Little Bras D'Or, N.S., although he maintained his Alberta Teachers' Alliance membership through to 1931. Richards retired from teaching in 1940 after a career of more than 40 years. He died at the age of 98 in Nelson, B.C. on Jan. 19, 1972. The ATA archives maintains Richards' original membership cards and a copy of his death registration.

The ATA archives also holds the original correspondence and notes related to the Richards case. They make for interesting reading and engender a deep appreciation for Van Allen's and Biggar's legal talent and acumen. Alas, the original telegram did not survive. ■



ATA ARCHIVES  
The ATA archives contains dozens of documents related to the Thomas Richards case, including letters, memoranda, postcards and legal summaries.

## ATA names new co-ordinator of Professional Development

Kim Dewar  
ATA News Staff

The next co-ordinator of the Professional Development program area will be Mark Swanson, a former dean of education and official with Alberta Education.

A former ATA local president, Swanson is the first external appointee to a senior leadership position with the Alberta Teachers' Association since 1968, when Bernie Keeler was named executive secretary.

"I look forward with great anticipation to taking up the role of co-ordinator," Swanson stated via email. "I am excited about joining the team at Barnett House, proud to be working for the teachers of Alberta and I am enthusiastic about making a difference in public education."



Mark Swanson

Born and raised in Claresholm, Alta., Swanson held positions as both teacher and administrator in the Catholic and public school systems where he taught grades 5 to 12. He also served as registrar, responsible for teacher certification for the minister of education, and as executive secretary to the Council on Alberta Teaching Standards.

Following this role, Swanson was dean of the faculty of education at Concordia University in Edmonton. Most recently, within Alberta Education, Swanson has been responsible for the accreditation of private schools.

Swanson holds two bachelor degrees — in education and arts — two master's degrees, in arts and education, and a doctorate in education. He is a two-time recipient of the Premier's Award of Excellence, winning in 2006 and 2010.

At its October meeting, Provincial Executive Council named Swanson as the replacement for the retiring Mark Yurick. Swanson assumes his new role Dec. 1. ■

## Longtime Association volunteer joins Teacher Welfare staff

Laura Harris  
ATA News Staff

James Gerun, a teacher with Edmonton Public Schools, will join the Teacher Welfare program area of the Alberta Teachers' Association as an executive staff officer starting Dec. 1.

Alongside a high school teaching career that has spanned more than 25 years, Gerun has built a significant scope of Association experience at the local and provincial levels. School representative, local Annual Representative Assembly delegate, negotiating subcommittee member and Economic Policy Committee chair are some of the roles he has undertaken and continues to fulfil at the local level.



James Gerun

"I'm really looking forward to taking what I've learned from my work with the Association and my experience as a teacher in the field and using it all to assist and support other teachers," Gerun said.

At the provincial level, Gerun has been a member of two Association discipline committees and served on its Teacher Welfare Services Committee. He has also represented the Association on departmental advisory committees on social studies curriculum and assessment. Over the last 10 years he was an economic consultant with the Association, a role that saw him assist ATA local economic policy committees with work related to collective bargaining.

Gerun has also been very involved in supporting extracurricular activities at his school.

Gerun's appointment by Provincial Executive Council came at its October meeting. ■



THE CANADIAN PRESS/JASON FRANSON

Education Minister David Eggen fields media questions after the passing of Bill 24 in the Alberta legislature on Nov. 15.

# ATA president applauds passing of GSA bill

Kim Dewar  
ATA News Staff

The passing of Bill 24 is a victory for Alberta teachers and students, said Alberta Teachers' Association president Greg Jeffery.

The bill, entitled *An Act to Support Gay-Straight Alliances*, prohibits teachers from informing parents that their child has joined a gay-straight alliance (GSA) in school.



YUET CHAN

Greg Jeffery,  
ATA president

"This will make our schools safer places and give often marginalized kids a place to belong," Jeffery said after the bill passed third reading on Nov. 15.

The bill passed with support from 42 MLAs and opposition from 23 — all the members of the United Conservative Party (UCP) who were present in the house.

During the lead-up to debate on the bill, UCP leader Jason Kenney said that teachers, not politicians, should decide when it makes sense to involve parents.



JASONKENNEY.CA

Jason Kenney,  
UCP leader

"Highly trained educators are in a much better position than politicians to exercise their discretion on whether it is in the best interests of a child to engage parents," Kenney said in statement on Nov. 7.

UCP MLAs who spoke to the bill raised objections that it would remove parents' rights to learn from teachers about important changes in their child's mental state.

Calgary-West UCP MLA Mike Ellis introduced an amendment to the bill that he said would remedy the possibility that a GSA could be a cover for the teaching of a veiled sex education curriculum.

Ellis stated that the UCP "unequivocally support GSAs" but he thinks Bill 24 "deliberately or unwittingly erodes parental rights."

"Now is the time for the government to reassure Albertans that they have no intention of coming after their rights as parents," Ellis told the assembly.

Government MLAs responded to such criticism by saying the bill protects kids.

"It's deeply disappointing that the members opposite continue to peddle dangerous conspiracy theories instead of accepting the simple fact that this is about protecting kids," said Calgary-Hawkwood NDP MLA Michael Connolly in response to Ellis' proposed amendment.



WWW.ALBERTA.CA

Rachel Notley,  
premier

Premier Rachel Notley spoke in defence of the bill by suggesting that, by not supporting it, UCP members were failing to stand up for vulnerable youth and wanted to out gay kids.

"I suspect there are some members over on the other side of this room who are struggling with their conscience," she said, "and to those members I would suggest that what you should do is to stand on the right side of this issue because you know as well as I do that only one person and one person only has the right to out a gay kid — and you should not pretend otherwise — and that, of course, is the kid."

## WHO SAID WHAT

### Support Our Students

"#Bill24 is about protecting some of the most vulnerable students in our province!"

- via Twitter

### Kristopher Wells, Institute for Sexual Minority Studies and Services, University of Alberta

"As legislators, now is the time to reflect and ask yourselves, 'What kind of Alberta do you want to build?' An Alberta that is inclusive, welcoming, compassionate and open to diversity? Or an Alberta that would rather engage in fear and division where gay kids are reduced to harmful stereotypes and used as pawns to further political agendas?"

- as reported in the Edmonton Journal

### Jason Kenney, UCP leader

"The NDP is trying to do indirectly what cannot be done directly: teaching sensitive subjects that would normally require parental notification."

- as reported in the Calgary Sun

### Mike Ellis, UCP MLA for Calgary-West

"Now is the time for the government to reassure Albertans that they have no intention of coming after their rights as parents. Now is the time for the government to prove that it doesn't have anything up its sleeve."

- Alberta legislature

### David Eggen, education minister

"Jason Kenney suggested earlier this year that schools should be able to out LGBTQ students to their parents, and that, Mr. Speaker, is dangerous. We're trying to create a safe and caring environment and a safe sanctuary for students in a GSA and we can't compromise the integrity of that..."

- Alberta legislature ■

## Practice standards coming for principals and superintendents

School Act amendments introduced

Cory Hare

ATA News Managing Editor

Formal practice standards for principals and superintendents are coming to Alberta thanks to *School Act* amendments introduced Nov. 15 by the NDP government.

Included in Bill 28, the *School Amendment Act*, are new requirements that, in order to serve as principals or superintendents, teachers will have to hold leadership certificates that are specific to each of these roles. These certificates are to be prescribed by new regulations that will be developed to accompany the amended *School Act*. And under the proposed changes the minister would have the power to suspend or cancel the certificates.

"This will be an important step forward in ensuring that we have excellent teachers supported by excellent leaders in every school authority across Alberta," said Education Minister David Eggen during a Nov. 15 news conference.

Eggen said that more details on the practice standards will be forthcoming in the following months.

If the bill is passed, Alberta would become the first jurisdiction in Canada with standards for principals and superintendents.

ATA president Greg Jeffery spoke in favour of the changes.

"Our schools, classrooms and teaching practices have changed significantly over the past 20 years," he said. "Updated practice standards will ensure that teachers have clear, consistent and modern benchmarks to guide their practice and inform their professional growth. We eagerly await the approval of all three practice standards, which will serve to enhance public confidence in the quality of Alberta's schools."

Michael Hauptman, vice-president of Alberta's College of Alberta School Superintendents, agreed that the standards are a step forward.

"We've always said to our communities that our teachers are the best teachers out there in the world and we've had our teacher quality standards that represent that," he said, "but now having standards for principals and system leaders, we're all teachers at the end of the day, and it just provides that public assurance to people that we've got the best people doing the best job possible."

"We eagerly await the approval of all three practice standards, which will serve to enhance public confidence in the quality of Alberta's schools."

- Greg Jeffery, ATA president

## Notable amendments

Other significant changes in the act include

- establishing five years old as the common age of entry to kindergarten,
- empowering the education minister to require budgets and audited financial statements from private schools,
- empowering the minister to direct two or more school boards to co-operate with respect to student transportation,
- a requirement for school boards to develop and implement codes of conduct for trustees,
- authorizing the minister to establish standards for education service agreements between school boards and First Nations and
- revising the process for establishing a separate school district. ■

# Library beefs up technology offerings

Cory Hare

ATA News Managing Editor

Due to extremely high demand from Alberta teachers, the ATA library has added to its collection of maker technology that's available for borrowing.

Last year, after receiving a donation of \$2,500 worth of hands-on learning technology, the library had waiting lists of up to 18 months for some items. Now, thanks to another donation of items valued at \$2,500, the library has more maker technology kits to offer and is hoping for shorter waits.

"This year, hopefully, everybody gets it within the school year. That's our mission," said ATA librarian Sandra Anderson.

The kits are part of the maker movement that's been embraced by teachers worldwide and involves learning by creating hands-on projects, often by combining technology like robotics, circuits and coding with crafting supplies like paper, cardboard, glue and tape. The donations come from Alberta Technology Leaders in Education (ATLE), a non-profit group that encourages the use of technology in the K-12 sector.

Maker projects are great for engaging students in creative learning that taps into their math and science skills as well as verbal communication, teamwork, collaboration and troubleshooting, said ATLE member Nicole Lakusta, an educational technology facilitator with Parkland School Division.

Teachers can use the technology to tap into the curriculum in the elementary grades right into high school, she said.

"It just amazes them at how they can use it for storytelling, for looking at codes, for discussing numeracy basics,

## New technology kits available through the ATA library

- Ozobots Evo
- Bee-Bot
- Bitsbox Game On
- Circuit Scribe Ultimate Kit
- Dash and Dot Wonder Pack
- Sphero SPRK
- Lego WeDo 2.0 Construction Set and Software
- MakeBlock Starter Robot Kit V2
- Ohuhu Photo Video Studio
- 10- Foot Backdrop Stand
- Stikbot Mega Pack
- Bloxels Team Builder
- Button Maker

all the way up to a Physics 20-2 course where we're looking at variables."

Several teachers in her division have used a variety of robotic and coding tools to break ground with students who often struggle.

"They have students who have various learning difficulties really shine in this type of environment because they have an opportunity to give themselves a student's voice that they may never have tapped into before," Lakusta said.

"They're seeing these students really get excited about that learning, able to pick up on it and sometimes even be the leader of the group or the person who showcases some of the work."

## Library on the map

The great interest in technology has led to a spike in demand for the ATA library's other services, Anderson said.

"We've had huge positive spinoff that we were not expecting because people are borrowing way more books than they ever have. They're asking way more research questions." ■



CORY HARE

Librarian Sandra Anderson shows off Dash, a robot that is part of a new collection of hands-on learning materials that are now available for borrowing through the ATA library.

## How to borrow

Library material is loaned by mail with return postage prepaid. The loan period is one month.

The catalogue is available for viewing online at [library.teachers.ab.ca](http://library.teachers.ab.ca); reserving requires an online ATA account, which can be set up in a few minutes.

Library staff are available by phone at 780-447-9400, ext. 648 (in Edmonton) or 1-800-232-7208 (elsewhere in Alberta), or by email: [library@ata.ab.ca](mailto:library@ata.ab.ca).



# New teacher guides target specific cultural needs

## Colony schools a unique setting

Laura Harris

ATA News Staff

Vanda Ruffli was the lone teacher at her Hutterite colony school. She brought her own chalk and her own toilet paper. She didn't have a phone or a photocopier. She also didn't have a choice.

She was a first-year teacher, and positions were scarce. Her employing board wanted to keep her, and the colonyschool position was the only one available.

"Then, I loved it. Then, I stayed," said Ruffli, who has spent 26 years of her 29-year teaching career with colony schools and is a professional development facilitator with the Alberta Teachers' Association.

Ruffli is also one of five dedicated and

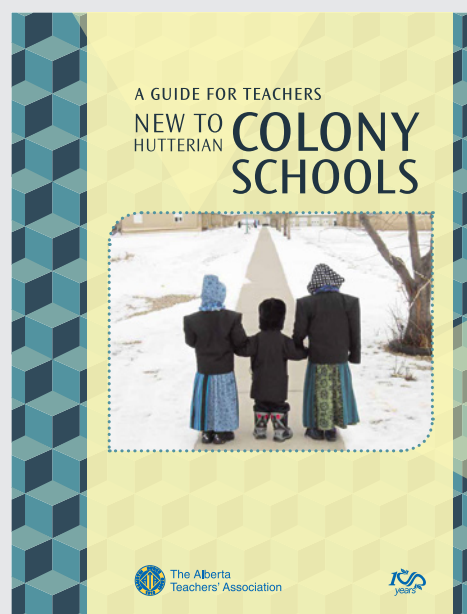
experienced Alberta colony teachers and principals who contributed time and expertise to the creation of a new resource geared to helping teachers new to the world of Hutterite colony schools.

Recently published by the Alberta Teachers' Association, *A Guide for Teachers New to Hutterian Colony Schools* specifically addresses the needs of teachers new to Hutterite colony teaching. Its intent is to assist colony teachers in their practice and help them make a seamless transition to teaching in what is a very unique setting.

The resource provides an understanding of the Hutterian culture and the distinct complexities of the colony teacher's role and responsibilities. It also shares advice gleaned from Ruffli and her colleagues, representing new and seasoned perspectives.

"The teaching experience is second to none," Ruffli said.

She noted that the lack of access to technology is a growing challenge, and then shared what she believed to be the best aspect of colony teaching.



## About Hutterite colony schools

- They are public schools supported by public school districts.
- 250 certificated teachers teach at 182 colony schools in Alberta.
- Schools are one-room facilities located on colony property.
- Students are English as a second language speakers (German is their first language) and range from kindergarten to Grade 10.
- Most colonies do not allow the use of technology in school.

"The personal relationships that you develop with the kids ... the ones that you have taught for a couple of years, four years or five years, whatever — you actually develop personal

relationships with those kids. You understand them much better and you're actually able to meet their needs better," she said. ■

# Teachers named to magazine's top-40 list

Cory Hare  
ATA News Managing Editor

Three teachers have been named to an annual list of achievers published by a prominent Edmonton magazine. *Avenue Edmonton* magazine's November issue includes its ninth annual Top 40 Under 40 list, which

includes entrepreneurs, doctors, professors, activists, altruists and artists, as well as teachers Brea Malacad, Andrew Parker and Cory MacTaggart.

Malacad, 34, is a psychologist with Elk Island School Division who was named to the list due to her passionate mental-health advocacy within her school division.

Parker, 34, is a teacher and coach at M.E. Lazerte High School who

is credited with nurturing and promoting his community through a variety of efforts, including a basketball tournament called Pride of the Northside, of which he is the director.

MacTaggart, 39, is the principal of Westglen School and is credited for demonstrating passion, dedication and a desire to make a difference in his students' lives.

## Brea Malacad



SUPPLIED

*Avenue's* summary of Malacad's accomplishments states that, during her nine years as a counsellor and a psychologist, she's "helped countless students recognize their strengths through direct consultations, research and systemic changes."

Malacad is credited with establishing a districtwide professional development program aimed at ensuring quicker reaction times to potentially violent incidents in the division's schools.

Malacad stated in an email that it feels surreal to be among the exceptional and accomplished people on the list.

"When I get past the disbelief, the overwhelming feeling I have is of gratitude," she wrote. "I am grateful for the amazing mentors and colleagues I have, including the person who initiated the nomination. I am grateful to have a career where I get to work on projects I care about, alongside people who share my passion."

## Andrew Parker



FILE

Parker is a former student at M.E. Lazerte and credits the school and former coach and mentor Thom Elniski with changing his life. It was Elniski's death in

2004 that motivated Parker to pursue an education degree and follow in Elniski's footsteps by being a positive influence and community builder, through coaching, motivational speaking and volunteering.

"I'm incredibly thankful for the opportunity to be recognized as one of *Avenue's* top 40 under 40," Parker stated via email. "Our public school board does incredible work and any recognition I receive is only a glimpse of what every teacher, administrator and staff member does on a daily basis. I am humbled and truly thankful for the award."

## Cory MacTaggart



SUPPLIED

According to the summary published in *Avenue*, one of MacTaggart's proudest accomplishments at Westglen is the creation of a sensory room that is particularly helpful to students with autism.

"I feel honoured to be recognized for my efforts."

– Cory MacTaggart

As a member of the Edmonton Public School Foundation's board of governors, MacTaggart has also been involved in fundraisers to help provide full-day kindergarten to students who are of lower socio-economic status and at risk academically.

"I feel honoured to be recognized for my efforts," MacTaggart stated in an email.

"I believe in the importance of inclusive education, ensuring all of our students have the necessary tools to be successful."



f CTF-FCE @CanTeachersFed www.ctf-fce.ca

## New resource targets language rights

Ottawa – A new high school resource available to teachers across Canada is focused on language rights in francophone minority settings.

*Knowing One's Community Through Language Rights: Proposed Learning Content* is a new resource produced by the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) and the Fédération des associations de juristes d'expression française de common law inc. (FAJEF).

The resource aims to help teachers integrate education about French-language rights in compulsory social studies and law courses so that all students who attend French-language schools in minority settings have a basic knowledge of their language rights by the time they finish high school.

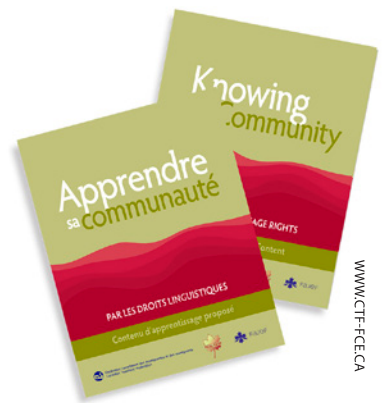
"The recognition of language rights has been at the crux, not just of the development of French-language schools, but also of the development of French-language services across the country," says CTF president Mark Ramsankar.

"In this context, it is essential for students to know their language rights and appreciate the importance of getting involved by asserting them and making use of expanded services in their language."

The resource is aimed at high school teachers of social science and law who work in minority language settings in Canada, but it is also suitable for other teachers who would like to know more about language rights. The resource is the latest addition to the *Knowing One's Community* series. This series suggests ways in which to reflect and build cultural identity in French-language schools, including through curriculum development.

### Available online

Teachers can access the resource on CTF's website at [www.ctf-fce.ca](http://www.ctf-fce.ca).



WWW.CTF-FCE.CA

## Insight into Pakistani culture

Cory Hare  
ATA News Managing Editor

If you're a classroom teacher or school administrator who's looking to better understand the culture and needs of Pakistani immigrant students in your school, the Alberta Teachers' Association has a new resource aimed at helping you.

Entitled *Teaching Pakistani Immigrant Students*, the Association's recent publication provides background information on the history, beliefs, customs and values of Pakistani people and provides suggestions on how teachers and administrators can have positive interactions with Pakistani families.

"They are a very popular, highly requested document," said executive staff officer Andrea Berg.

As secretary of the Association's Diversity, Equity and Human Rights Committee, Berg acted as co-editor of

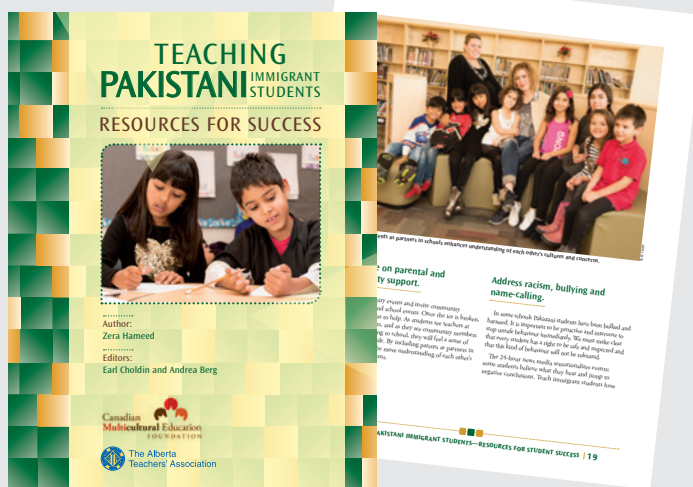
the book project, which was produced in partnership with the Canadian Multicultural Education Foundation.

The tips contained in the booklet come from teachers who either are of Pakistani descent or who have worked extensively with people from that culture.

Among the information provided in the book are sample forms, with Urdu translations, to help school officials prepare for an initial meeting with parents and establish healthy working relationships.

"That's really key and helpful for the teachers to have something that they can give to the parents," Berg said.

Each school in Alberta received one copy of the resource through the ATA's October school mailing.



Additional copies are available for free upon request.

The new resource is a response to the changing demographics occurring in Alberta schools and is part of a series that has already produced booklets focused on students of Somali, South Sudanese, Karen and Arab heritage. Due for release early in the new year are resources focused on Filipino students and those from central Africa.

## Want a copy?

Digital copies of these resources are available for free on the Association's website at [www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca) by clicking on For Members > Professional Development > Diversity, Equity & Human Rights > Resources.

Hard copies can be ordered by contacting Barb Bossert at [barb.bossert@ata.ab.ca](mailto:barb.bossert@ata.ab.ca) or by calling 1-800-232-7208.

## Workshop available

The Association also offers a workshop entitled Promoting the Success of Immigrant Students, which provides participants with the opportunity to strengthen their cultural awareness and competence, deepen their understanding of the challenges faced by immigrant families, and learn classroom and schoolwide strategies for working with immigrant students and their parents.

The workshop can be booked by contacting the ATA's Professional Development program area.

**Phone:** 780-447-9485 in Edmonton; 1-800-232-7208, ext. 485, elsewhere in Alberta  
**Email:** [pdworkshops@ata.ab.ca](mailto:pdworkshops@ata.ab.ca)

# Some educational apps falling short on privacy

ATA News Staff

A number of popular online applications used in Canadian classrooms are falling short of fully protecting the privacy of young users, according to a recent sweep by the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada.

A review of more than two dozen apps and platforms found that many service providers are, in fact, carefully considering the needs of younger users when it comes to privacy, but others are not.

"We were pleased to find that many of the apps we looked at are taking important steps to protect the privacy of children and youth, for example, by offering kid-friendly explanations about why personal information is being collected," said Privacy Commissioner Daniel Therrien in a news release.

"Unfortunately, we also found cases where educational apps need to do better. We were concerned to find cases where websites encouraged students to provide more personal information than was actually necessary."

The review involved "sweepers" that examined the apps' privacy policies, the personal information being collected,

and the controls in place to protect personal information.

Some of the key findings of the sweep:

- Most services made information about how they handle personal information available to users, but the quality varied and it was sometimes hard to find.
- More than a third of the services did not seek consent from students or parents, or provide teachers with resources for obtaining parental or student consent in other ways.
- Only a handful of services had different consent mechanisms for younger and older students.
- Some services had adopted good practices to minimize the collection and disclosure of students' personal information and provide controls for teachers and parents to set age-appropriate limits/supervision on collection and disclosure of students' personal information. However, there were cases where too much personal information was collected – for example, a blogging platform designed for use in schools that had fields to collect students' instant messaging handles, photos and bios.

- Many services failed to make it easy – or even possible – to delete personal information that was no longer needed.

The privacy sweep was the fifth annual by the Global Privacy Enforcement Network and involved 24 data protection regulators from around the world. This year the federal commissioner's office worked alongside the Ontario Information and Privacy Commissioner's Office to examine privacy issues related to educational applications targeted at children and youth from kindergarten to Grade 12.

The sweep was not an investigation, nor was it intended to conclusively identify compliance issues or possible violations of privacy legislation. Rather, sweepers sought to replicate the consumer experience by spending a short time on websites and apps to record certain privacy practices in relation to a common set of indicators.

The initiative is aimed at encouraging organizations to comply with privacy legislation and to enhance co-operation between privacy enforcement authorities. Concerns identified during the sweep will result in follow-up work such as targeted education, outreach to organizations and/or enforcement action. ■

# Teacher's criticism of coaching colleague deemed unprofessional



## 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 who was attending a community sports event to observe and support some of his students committed unprofessional conduct when he made critical comments about the conduct of another teacher/coach to a parent who was also in attendance at the sporting event. The teacher's critical statements impugned the reputation of his coaching colleague.

The hearing committee found the teacher guilty of failing to uphold section 13 of

the Code of Professional Conduct in that he criticized the professional competence and professional reputation of another teacher to a person who was not a proper official and did not inform the other teacher of the criticism in advance. The teacher also contravened section 23(1)(c) of the *Teaching Profession Act* in that his conduct was detrimental to the best interests of the teaching profession when he criticized another teacher while talking with a member of the sports community.

The committee ordered a penalty of a letter of reprimand. In the decision, the committee noted the unprofessional conduct had the potential to negatively impact the maligned teacher's reputation. The committee believed the letter would serve as a deterrent and promote confidence in the profession. ■

## Get 2Know 2Learn.ca

Educational resources for teachers | [www.2Learn.ca](http://www.2Learn.ca)

### Today's feature topic: Create 2Learn.ca

Create 2Learn.ca is a searchable site that allows teachers to find digital tools for encouraging student creativity in projects and assignments. You'll find web-based tools, browser extensions and apps.

- **Browse** through many different activities: digital storytelling, image editing, presentations, e-portfolios, comic creation and more.
- **Choose** the required platform to see a list of options recommended by other teachers.
- **Look** for the "Teacher Support" button for each type of tool; you will find a selection of pedagogies and practices that can help you use these creative technologies with your students.

The Create 2Learn.ca site also has resources about creative approaches to teaching, such as gamification, game-based learning and Minecraft, as well as lesson ideas, shopping lists and ideas for creating or using a makerspace.

To visit Create 2Learn.ca, find the link at [www.2Learn.ca](http://www.2Learn.ca) or visit <http://2learn.ca/create/>.



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Corinne Eckert Child & Adolescent Psychology  
T. 780-454-4634 E. [office@eckertchildpsych.ca](mailto:office@eckertchildpsych.ca)

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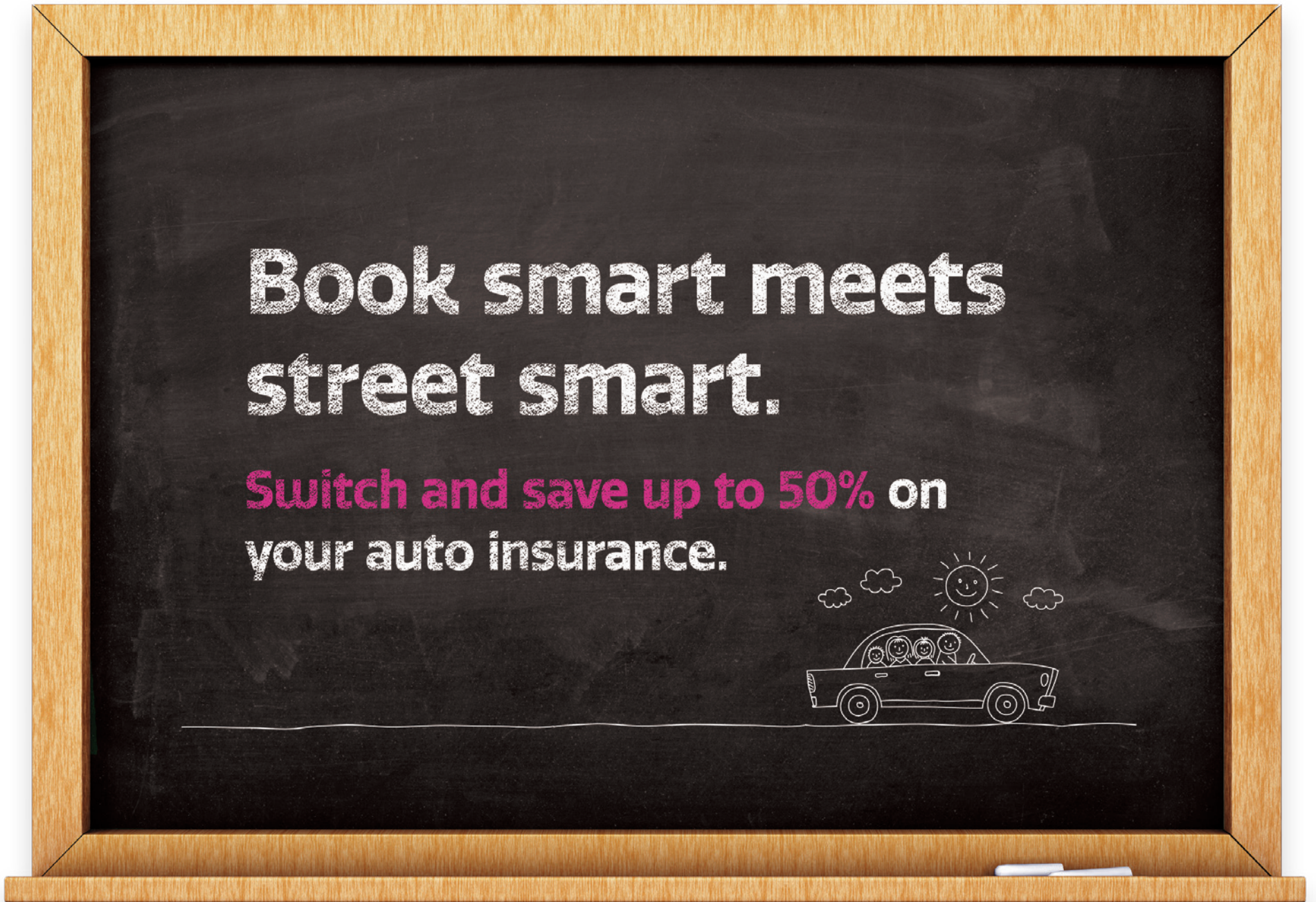
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Tanis & Joshua Lovestone



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Caitlin Britton



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**For advertising information,**  
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This workshop focuses on the principal's critical role  
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To register and for more information go to  
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Deadline for registration is **January 19, 2018**.

MS-95-6 2017 10

## EVERY ONE COUNTS

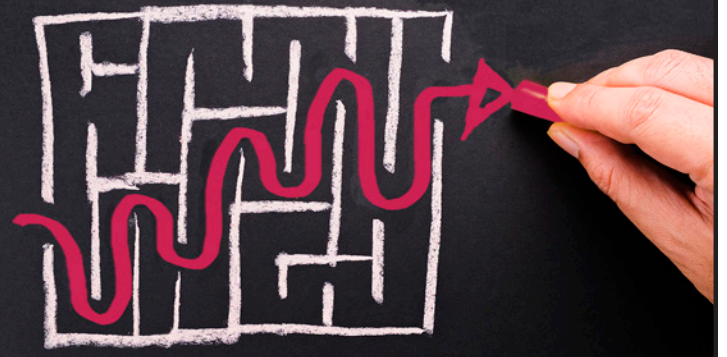
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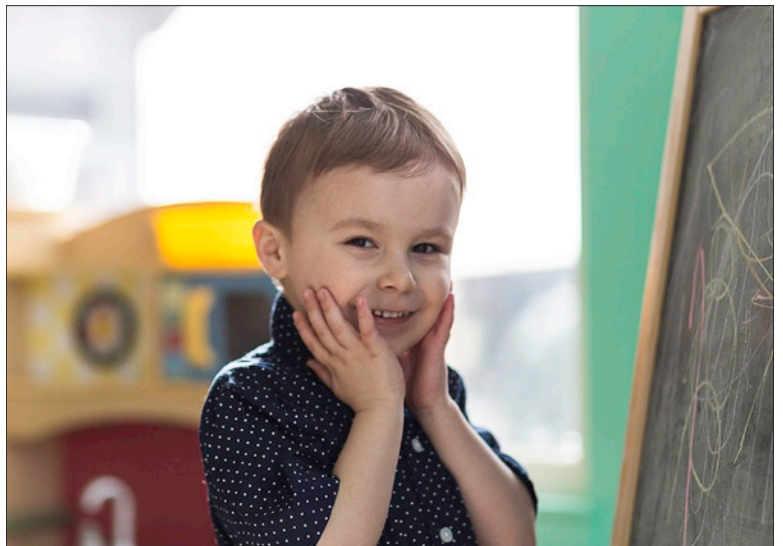
We have pension answers.

Personal pension interviews and seminars will  
be held at **teachers' conventions** and other  
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To book your personal interviews online,  
visit [www.atrf.com](http://www.atrf.com) and click on Meet With Us.

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ISTOCK

## Treasure those lightbulb moments

### MOOT POINTS

Ray Suchow

Special to the ATA News

There are many joys in teaching. I believe some of the best and most enduring come from those “lightbulb moments” when you see that “I get it!” flash on a student’s face. Suddenly your heart is warmed, and the rest of your day is energized too!

One of my best lightbulb moments occurred several years ago when I was teaching junior high social studies. “Peter” could be a bit of a rascal but he always meant well. However, on this particular day he was not paying full attention to my lesson on the explorers of northern Alberta and the subarctic. To him, it was just a map with lines of latitude and longitude that some people had walked through a long time ago.

So I tried a different tack.

At the time, *North of 60* was a popular TV show, as it showcased the lands and cultures where many of my students — Peter included — had visited relatives during the summer. As I began talking about the show and how some of the explorers we’d discussed had mapped

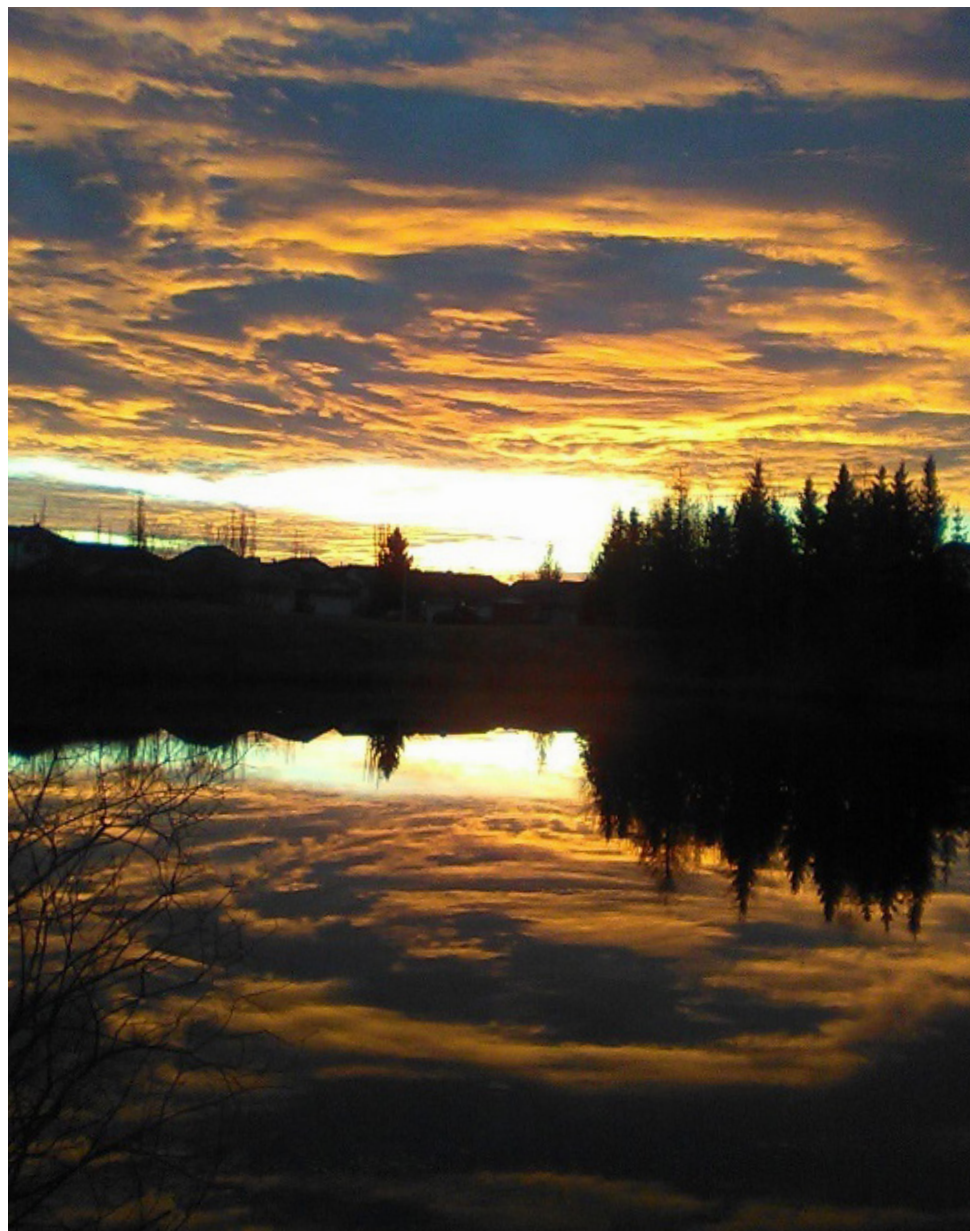
those very areas, Peter perked up a bit, but was not yet fully engaged. That changed when I mentioned how they’d derived the program’s name: *North of 60* means north of the 60th parallel of latitude. I pointed to the line, traced it and then motioned upwards.

At that moment Peter stiffened, his eyes grew wide, and he rocked back in his chair and shouted, “I get it! That’s why they call it *North of 60!*” Suddenly, it wasn’t just a map anymore. In that magical moment, it all clicked. A social studies concept suddenly had a place, a TV show with characters he cared about became even more relevant, and the places he’d visited in the summer all fit wonderfully together.

Peter bounced through the rest of the day, and so did I. Of all the lightbulb moments I’ve been privileged to witness, that remains one of the best. For in those moments lie the tangible reward of what we do — as we teach, inspire and illuminate the remarkable young lives around us. I treasure each of those moments and can’t wait until the next lightbulb goes off! ■

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

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



Sunrise at Castlewood Pond in Edmonton on Oct. 28. Submitted by retired teacher Irene Gagne.

### 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.

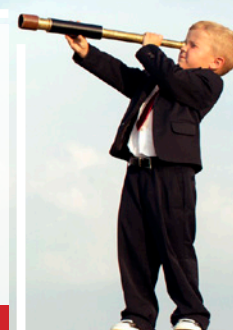
[www.surveymonkey.com/r/CCR-Members](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CCR-Members)



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



## ATA INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION PROGRAM Teaching Opportunities



The Alberta Teachers’ Association



### 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](mailto:zeeke78@hotmail.com).

**For an application form**, visit the ATA website ([www.teachers.ab.ca](http://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.

### ATA – CHANGE FOR CHILDREN

2018 Teaching Tour | Guatemala | July 6–20, 2018

Spend two weeks in Guatemala assisting with the professional development of fellow teachers in the areas of green technologies, permaculture and nutrition.

Collaboration on action plans and incentive strategies to promote school attendance are other components of this teaching tour, with the overall goal being to enhance the quality of education offered to the marginalized Mayan Mam indigenous population of Guatemala’s western highlands.

Travel and living expenses are covered by the ATA. To apply, visit [teachers.ab.ca](http://teachers.ab.ca)>For Members>Programs and Services>International Cooperation>Change for Children 2018.

For more information, email [lorena@changeforchildren.org](mailto:lorena@changeforchildren.org).

Application Deadline: Dec. 1, 2017

Application Deadline: Dec. 15, 2017