

NEW  
FEATURE



**This ...**  
from ATA President Greg Jeffery

See  
page  
**16**



Walking  
Together

Project making a difference. See p 3.

# ATA NEWS

The Alberta Teachers' Association



Learn from the past.  
Inspire the future.

January 16, 2018 | Volume 52, Number 9

News Publication of The Alberta Teachers' Association



CORY HARE

## Under renovation

Construction is continuing at Barnett House, where an eight-storey addition is being added to the main building and a third level is being added to the parkade. For an update on the construction project, read Gordon Thomas's Q&A on page 2. Additional photos are available for viewing on the Association's website and Facebook page.

### Hanging in the balance

Greater reading success depends on government budget choices.

Read Jonathan Teghtmeyer's editorial on page 2.



### In Focus

Association offers many programs for school administrators.

See story on page 4.



### Teachers' input needed

Provincewide survey of teachers to establish priorities for next round of bargaining.

See story on page 5.



### Making his mark

Former ATA president settling in as head of Canadian Teachers' Federation.

See page 5.

READY, SET,  
**GROW!**

Get caught up on teachers' conventions and specialist council conferences.

See pages 8 and 9.



### Stepping Stones

ATA series promotes reconciliation while supporting new teaching standard.

See story on page 10.

## We need the government to choose student success



### EDITORIAL

Jonathan Teghtmeyer  
ATA News Editor-in-Chief

"We would be the last people to make excuses — we want success for every kid."

These words from Edmonton Public Schools superintendent Darrel Robertson are likely indicative of the thoughts of teachers all across the province.

The quote comes from an *Edmonton Journal* story about the board's December meeting, during which Robertson presented the results of last year's teacher assessment of student reading levels. That report showed that one-quarter of elementary students in the district were not reading at grade level by the end of last school year.

Robertson does not blame teachers.

"I know that our staff are dumping their hearts and souls into achieving (success) for our students," he says.

So true.

The situation in Edmonton Public is common across the province. Teachers are doing whatever is in their power to support success for all students, but

unfortunately, they are too often left struggling to overcome circumstances beyond their control. They feel increasingly distressed as they witness too many students falling through the cracks.

Of course, it is the most disadvantaged students who are most vulnerable to being left behind. The data presented to the Edmonton public board showed that 27 per cent of students were reading below grade level, but the rate was 32 per cent for English-language learners, 50 per cent for self-identified Indigenous students and 60 per cent for students identified as needing specialized supports. In Edmonton Public, those students account for nearly half of the population.

Speaking of the circumstances beyond the control of teachers, I am referring to the state of learning conditions. As our recent #MyClassSizeIs campaign has highlighted, our classes are too large and too complex to ensure that teachers are able to adequately meet the learning needs of their students.

It is not that teachers cannot tell which students are behind in reading or other aspects of development. It is not that teachers do not have strategies they know will help students improve. It is that they simply do not have the time and support required to get students

*We can no longer wait — students have been waiting far too long already. Every year without improvement is another cohort of students hampered by inadequate conditions.*

the individualized attention they need.

I think this is precisely why the class size campaign gained so much traction so quickly. After an initial rollout of 15,000 cards, we have received requests for 25,000 additional cards through locals, schools and individual teachers. Our social media accounts have been kept buzzing with responses to posts related to the campaign.

The issue is clearly not isolated to Edmonton Public; it is provincewide. Alberta's classrooms, according to international surveys, are some of the largest and most complex in the world. Now we need the province to do something about it.

The government needs to fund adequately to ensure that school districts can reduce class sizes and improve in-class supports for special learning needs. We can no longer wait — students have been waiting far too long already. Every year without improvement is another cohort of students hampered by inadequate conditions.

The government simply needs to make a choice. Do we want success for every kid? Can we find the political will and resources needed to improve learning conditions, or are we satisfied with one in four students not succeeding? ■

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

## Barnett House renovation on track



### Q & A

Gordon Thomas  
ATA Executive Secretary

**Question:** How's the renovation project going at Barnett House?

**Answer:** The renovation project is going well. The Alberta Teachers' Association currently has no additional office space available, and most of our meeting rooms are leased to the Alberta Teachers' Retirement Fund (ATRF) to provide for its space needs. The Association has signed a 10-year lease with ATRF, which currently occupies floors five and six of Seymour Tower (the tall part of Barnett House).

Once the renovation is complete, the space leased by ATRF will increase dramatically, with the organization taking the new space on those floors and half of the current space on the fourth floor, releasing the meeting rooms they

are currently leasing on the second floor. Effectively, the equivalent of half of the newly constructed space will be taken by ATRF.

We will be relocating our Information Technology Services staff so the second floor of Seymour Tower will be devoted to meeting rooms, increasing our catering capacity. We anticipate relocating senior Association staff to the south end of the eighth floor, allowing for the relocation of other staff to vacant spaces on this floor, where we will also be consolidating our research staff, as well as staff working on professional regulatory matters.

An additional level is being added to the Barnett House parkade, and the work there is now largely done. The parkade is made up of precast concrete, so there's been a steady supply of trucks carrying large concrete pieces, and a crane has lifted these pieces into place. Upon completion, the parkade will be able to hold almost 500 vehicles.

The expansion project, with PCL as the general contractor, is scheduled for

completion in May 2018. The total cost of the expansion of Barnett House, the substantial work to the parkade and the remaining renovation to the existing floors of Barnett House is in the range of \$26 million. With the help of our capital fund and our growing membership base, we are able to handle these costs, but a mortgage will be required.

The entire project is overseen by the Committee on the Renovation and Expansion of Barnett House, which includes (among others) five members of Provincial Executive Council, and is chaired by district representative Paul Froese. ■

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

### FOR THE RECORD

“

We're not political operatives who are trying to encourage kids to all vote NDP in the next provincial election.

”

- Nicola Ramsey, curriculum review participant and social studies teacher

As reported by the *Edmonton Journal*





## Walking Together

Since the fall of 2016, led by six Indigenous education consultants, the Walking Together project has provided resources and workshops aimed at ensuring that teachers are ready to teach the foundational knowledge of First Nations, Métis and Inuit as outlined in Alberta Education's new draft Teaching Quality Standard.

Notes: The Blanket Exercise is a workshop in which participants experience more than 500 years of history by taking on the roles of Indigenous peoples in Canada. Figures are estimates from the program's inception through the end of October 2017.

2016/17  
by the numbers

1  
YEAR

6  
Indigenous  
education  
consultants

292  
sessions presented

116  
Blanket Exercises  
presented

10,571  
TOTAL PARTICIPANTS

## Reconciliation is a process that's impacting teachers



### VIEWPOINTS

Hali Heavy Shield  
Walking Together Consultant

This June will mark two years since the signing of the Joint Commitment to Action: an agreement between Alberta Education, the Alberta Teachers' Association, the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation and other provincial stakeholders with the vision of ensuring that all students will learn about the histories, cultures and world views of First Nations, Métis and Inuit people.

This historic signing led to the creation of the ATA's Walking Together: Education for Reconciliation project, which is being led by six consultants from across Alberta, all of whom are experienced classroom teachers with strong knowledge and expertise in Indigenous education. The Walking Together team acknowledges the traditional knowledge keepers, elders, residential school survivors and community leaders who have contributed to the positive changes we are seeing today, and who continue to guide and inspire this work.

There is a willingness from teachers to teach First Nations, Métis and Inuit foundational knowledge. However, at times, teachers have shared feelings of uncertainty for fear of "getting it wrong" or "offending others."

Those feelings are valid. The Walking Together team has been working closely with teachers and school jurisdictions to provide support and resources toward teacher professional growth. In part, it is about being open to learning Indigenous history, creating a safe space for dialogue, and dispelling myths and stereotypes of First Nations, Métis and Inuit people and their communities.

*We may be at different areas in our professional learning journey, but what is more important is that we are moving in the same direction, one that includes a path towards reconciliation.*

For Blackfoot people, storytelling has always been a powerful way of passing on knowledge and cultural teachings. Perhaps this is why I have gravitated towards telling personal narratives throughout this work. Teachers will sometimes respond, "Why didn't I know about this?" after learning about Alberta's history and legacy of residential schools. Sharing my own story and listening to the stories of teachers helps to connect *knowing with the mind to knowing with the heart.*

My mom attended St. Mary's Residential School, but I didn't learn about what a residential school was until I was an adult. Being a mom myself, I now recognize the intergenerational effects of the Indian residential school system, such as loss of language and connection to place. Establishing authentic relationships and having honest conversations with educators has provided me with a great sense of hope for our youth. I am confident that we will continue to move forward in this work in a good way, one that gives voice to Indigenous people.

How do we know the Walking Together project is having an impact on teachers' professional learning? The answer is in the stories that are shared during professional learning workshops and fieldwork. Teachers regularly share stories, whether great or small, that tell of their experience with the touchstones of reconciliation: truth telling, acknowledging, restoring and relating.

One example happened this past December, when five school boards in Treaty 7 — Kainai Board of Education, Holy Spirit School Division, Lethbridge School District No. 51, Livingstone Range School Division and Westwind School Division — all participated in the Blanket Exercise together. I believe this is a first in our province, and it shows how far we've come in terms of the willingness to learn and work together. Concluding the session, one elder expressed how proud he was of the participants, saying that he could never have imagined such a session happening even 10 years ago.

We may be at different areas in our professional learning journey, but what is more important is that we are moving in the same direction, one that includes a path towards reconciliation. As I am often reminded, *reconciliation is a process, not a destination.*

During convention season this spring, the Walking Together project will offer three new workshops: Indigenous Alberta; Indigenous Ways of Knowing; and Collective Memories: Braiding Our Stories Through History. Be sure to attend one of our workshops to engage in dialogue and professional learning for reconciliation. ■

Hali Heavy Shield is from the Blood Tribe of southern Alberta and has been an educator with the Kainai Board of Education for 12 years. She has been seconded as a Walking Together consultant for the Treaty 7 area and is currently a PhD student at the University of Lethbridge.

## YOUR VIEWS

### f ON FACEBOOK

We asked teachers what teaching-related resolutions they'd adopted for the new year.

Shannon Rae Dube

My teaching resolution for 2018 is to do 1.5 hours of professional reading each week. Already on my list are *A Knock on the Door: The Essential History of Residential Schools* and *The Global Fourth Way*.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Claims of support for Catholic education ring hollow

While the editor is free to ask Santa for whatever he wishes in his stocking this year (Editorial: "My Christmas gift list," Dec. 5, 2017), he appears to have a simplistic and superficial understanding of Catholic education.

Albertans have a constitutional right to minority religious schools, which in most of the province means Catholic. These were established because such parents recognized their faith to be the fundamental aspect of their identity and, in justice, wanted their tax dollars to assist in offering this formation to their children.

Religious beliefs provide comprehensive understandings of the human person and social relationships. In many ways these are shared by all people of good will; at times we find ourselves in conflict, even with those well intentioned.

In the face of such disagreement there is work to be done to find whatever best resolution is possible. Here Catholics look to their bishops as wise shepherds, with some of their authority delegated to our superintendents — hired by our *elected* officials to run our schools. Expecting us to turn tail and accept a less deep concern for *all* individuals is to betray the reason for which our schools were founded.

It is interesting that Tegtmeyer chose the metaphor of a barometer as something he wants Catholic leaders to have; after all barometers measure pressure. The whispers are becoming louder. When voices from the Association claim to support Catholic education, this Catholic father and teacher suspects Inigo Montoya had it right to state, "I do not think that word means what you think it means."

The Association is undermining Catholic support for the ATA; don't make us choose.

Wayne Ottenbreit

Guidance counsellor, St. Joseph and St. Michael schools, Calgary

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.



### Walking Together

For more information on the Walking Together initiative, visit [www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca) >For Members>Professional Development>Walking Together. You can also contact [WalkingTogether@ata.ab.ca](mailto:WalkingTogether@ata.ab.ca).

# On principal

## Association has many programs for school administrators

### IN FOCUS

Cory Hare  
ATA News Managing Editor

Welcome to *In Focus*, an ongoing series that shines a spotlight on the operation and programs of the Alberta Teachers' Association. This fourth instalment focuses on the ATA's supports for school administrators.

When he was new to the job of school principal, Joe Dumont knew he needed help.

So, like many others before him, he turned to Leadership Essentials for Administrators (LEA), a two-day professional development event hosted by the Alberta Teachers' Association.

"It was awesome," Dumont says now, several years later. "I left there with about 16 different ideas for the school. It just really filled my toolbox."

Held every fall for school administrators who are in the first five years of their leadership roles, the LEA conference is just one of many programs and services that the ATA provides specifically for school administrators.

"It's really important that those members of the ATA get served just as well as any of our other members and so we make a really good effort to do that," says Jeff Johnson, a staff officer in the Professional Development (PD) program area.

PD is a hub for the Association's administrator-focused programming as it offers dozens of workshops and



The Leadership Essentials for Administrators conference is one of many programs and services that the Alberta Teachers' Association provides for school administrators.

seminars to help administrators fulfil their leadership responsibilities and improve their schools. Among the available workshops are sessions focused on legal issues, Indigenous knowledge, establishing inclusive learning environments, fostering effective relationships and public relations, to name just a few examples.

A major PD offering is the five-day Educational Leadership Academy, a summer program for principals, assistant principals and others in leadership positions. Sponsored by the Association and its Council for School Leadership, the academy aims to improve the effectiveness of schools by enhancing the professional growth of educational leaders. The academy focuses on topics

such as instructional leadership, ethical leadership, effective communication, the agile leader and healthy working relationships.

The Member Services program area also delivers a major series of workshops — the Teacher Growth, Supervision, Evaluation and Practice Review Workshop. This two-day event focuses on the principal's role and duties related to teachers' professional growth and ongoing supervision, as outlined in the *School Act* and Alberta Education's Policy 2.1.5.

Also within the Member Services program area, the Association established the position of associate co-ordinator — administrator assistance several years ago. The idea was to provide

#### Workshops, presentations and PD opportunities

A list of workshops and presentations currently being offered can be found on the ATA website. Click on For Members>Programs and Services>Resources for...>School-Based Administrators.

For professional development opportunities that may be of interest to administrators, click on For Members>Professional Development>Conferences and Events.

administrators with an in-house administrative expert who could provide advice on procedural issues related to discipline, supervision and evaluation of teachers, transfers and terminations and help administrators resolve internal disputes with their school staff.

The associate co-ordinator works out of Barnett House in Edmonton and can be contacted there.

"The goal [of the position] is to help provide assistance to administrators, but that's not the only person that administrators can speak to," says Member Services co-ordinator Robert Mazzotta.

All Member Services executive staff officers, both in Barnett House and in the Southern Alberta Regional Office (SARO), can provide advice to individual administrators.

IN FOCUS continued on page 6

## Cartoonists deliver timely commentary on teaching

### 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 and documents from the Association's archives.

Words and pictures are yin and yang. Married, they produce a progeny more interesting than either parent.

— Dr. Seuss

For decades, the *ATA News* and *ATA Magazine* have been enriched by the keen observations of talented cartoon artists. In the long, storied history of politically and socially informed commentary, cartoons have captured, chronicled and commented on the events and *Zeitgeist* of the age.

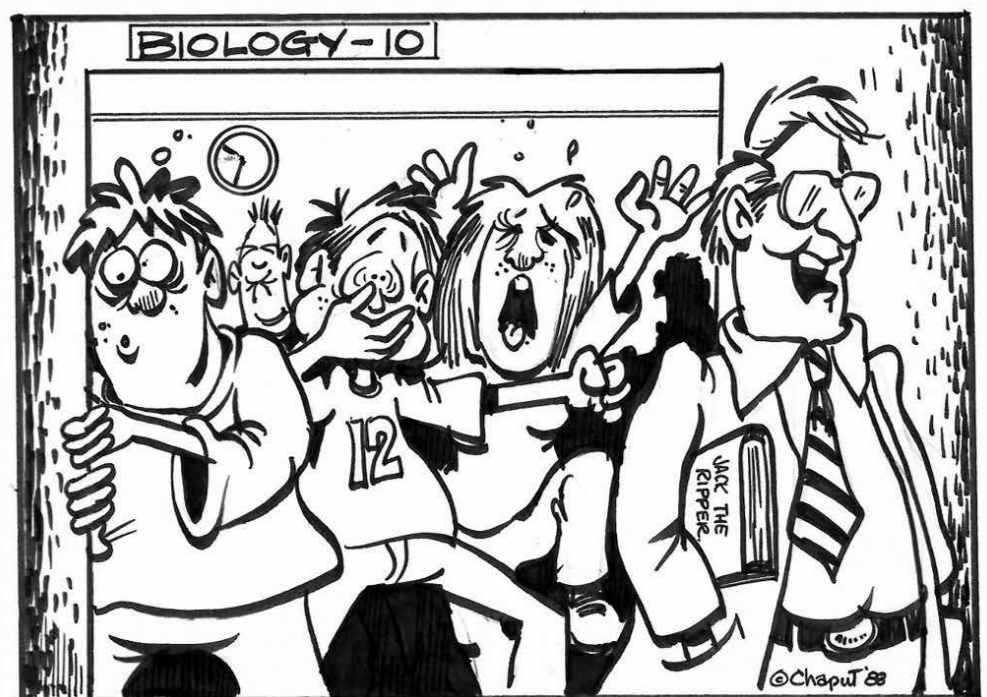
The cartoonist is a provocateur, diarist and critic in the best tradition of serving up food for thought. The classroom and the teaching profession have proved no less fertile ground for astute cartoonists than politics as they draw upon a common experience. After all, the vast majority of us have been students, and a lucky few have returned to schools as teachers. Over the years, the cartoons have been affectionate, ironic, hilarious, sardonic, savage or philosophical, but they have always been topical and timely.

Cartoonists work within a wide range of topics and within an even wider latitude. Teachers' struggles for better working conditions (and learning conditions), improved wages, reasonable class sizes and unfunded pension resolutions have been the raw material for the cartoonists' art. Classroom experiences and the glorious diversity and hilarity of the messy business of teaching have also proven to be a potent source of inspiration and content.

The ATA archives hold the published versions of all the cartoons that have

appeared in the magazine and newspaper, but also the artists' hand-drawn and inked originals. Jim Simpson's *Ms. Magister* was a staple of the *ATA Magazine* in the 1980s. Other contributions by the likes of Chaput, Glasbergen, Bacall and O'Malley encouraged us to think, smile and engage with the issues surrounding public education in Alberta.

Archives staff treasure these original drawings and often return to them whenever we are looking to promote understanding of the issues of the day. To choose an absolute favourite is impossible; nevertheless, the cartoon reproduced below by Chaput (first appearing in the *ATA News* on Jan. 16, 1989) comes close. ■



YUP! NOTHING LIKE A GOOD DISSECTION TO START OFF YOUR DAY!

# CTF president provides status update

*Mark Ramsankar shares his thoughts on public education, taking on a new role and life in the nation's capital*

Cory Hare

ATA News Managing Editor

**F**ormer ATA president Mark Ramsankar took over the presidency of the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) on July 14, which meant a move to Ottawa. While visiting Barnett House in December, Ramsankar sat down with ATA News managing editor Cory Hare to discuss his new role.

## How did your transition go?

The physical transfer was good. I'm still in an adjustment period to the type of work — it's a different position — so that's coming along, but I'm still coming to terms with the transition of being away from home. It's been a very difficult transition for my family.

## What challenges have you faced in making the switch from representing Alberta teachers to having a national mandate?

As a provincial president you're very much hands on. You're solving issues that need to be addressed that directly impact the classroom, so Alberta teachers would see the impact of their teachers' organization in their classroom.

You won't see CTF in your classroom because the work that I do now is more of a global nature. We work and lobby on issues that impact the classroom but that are not policy driven for your classroom. For example, we know the effects of poverty in Canadian classrooms, so we're working to get a youth commissioner. We do advocacy work on child poverty and family poverty, reminding MPs and senators about the effects of poverty on the family structure and how it interferes with a child's opportunity to learn.



CTF president Mark Ramsankar gets caught up on the ATA News during a visit to Barnett House just before Christmas.

## What else have you been working on since you took office?

Another example would be working on section 43 of Bill 206, the "spanking law." CTF is fundamentally opposed to corporal punishment — that's in our own policy — but section 43 protects teachers' rights to use physical contact to ensure the safety of students. If that section gets taken out, we are lobbying to make sure that the language that will replace it will be protecting teachers.

The copyright law is another one under review. If they change away from the fair dealings portion of the copyright law, that will directly impact our schools. I've had my very first senate meeting with the open

caucus of the general senate. I talked about poverty and support for youth in general and a call for a youth commissioner.

I've had an opportunity to do a very large round-table on youth employment. That was with the minister of labour and stakeholders in youth employment, getting the perspective of how part-time employment impacts high school students and junior high school students and their ability to pursue their academics.

I did a two-day seminar on the views of the profession and education as it relates to the cannabis laws. As Health Canada is putting together their health awareness program ... my group worked with the 10- to 13-year-old age group. Health Canada originally didn't have that as part of their plan, so we raised that as an issue and we were invited to work on it as part of the health awareness as they work through the law coming in.

Another big one is representing the profession at the Let's Talk Science Canada 2067 meeting. That was with all the deputy ministers from across the country, a very big event.

## When you were elected as CTF president, you said one of your priorities was to improve communication between CTF member organizations and between these organizations and CTF. What work have you done so far on this?

We are trying to address the feedback loop among the provinces and the CTF in general, and I'm still encouraging more communication among the provinces. It's been worthwhile to put the effort in, but we're not quite where we'd like to see us — there's still work that we'll continue to do. The feedback that I've received from some of the presidents from around the country has been quite positive.

## How do you see the role of CTF in public education in Canada?

I think CTF has a major role to play in terms of how public education is viewed. There is a big push coming from the private sector and industry with the concept of privatization of education and the push for charters.

I work with the same vigour that I had as ATA president in talking about the value of the profession and the value of public education, why it's important that we have a strong public education system. Because our country has haves and have-nots, the more we push for privatization and what we see coming from south of the border, we see that the privatization model isn't beneficial. Public education truly is a foundational pillar of a strong society.

*"We want to have children front and centre. We want to have the story of Canadian classrooms front and centre."*

—Mark Ramsankar, CTF president

## How does CTF work on that on a national stage?

That's part of my conversation in any of the forums I [attend], with any of the MPs or the senators that I've had an opportunity to talk to and lobby on the issues that I've outlined. They also get a dose of the value of a robust, healthy public education system.

The language that I use, quite simply, is that children in Canada aren't for sale, and the public education system shouldn't be viewed as a target for private interests to simply look at making dollars from.

My challenge to industry at the [Let's Talk Science] meeting was, are you supporting schools and the relationship between teachers and students? Because the essence of learning is in that relationship.

The other part of my conversation always addresses the challenge of action. What are you prepared to do? Not what are you prepared to talk about, but what are you prepared to do?

## What are your top priorities for 2018?

Solidifying our action plan to push back against the copyright law. It's in second reading in the senate

CTF PRESIDENT continued on page 7

## Teachers: Watch for upcoming survey

*Responses will establish bargaining priorities; teachers urged to update contact information online*

ATA News Staff

**T**he Alberta Teachers' Association is preparing to launch a provincewide survey of teachers to begin establishing priorities for the next round of central table bargaining. Sometime in late January or early February a unique link will be emailed to all teachers inviting them to participate in the survey — but those links will be sent only to non-employer supplied email addresses.



*"We must hear from teachers about their professional conditions of practice and matters related to their compensation, work life and wellness."*

— Jason Schilling, ATA vice-president

priorities, Schilling said. He added that he's eager to receive input from all members — teachers, administrators, substitutes and central office teachers.

"A teacher is a teacher regardless of the position they hold, but we want to capture a broad sampling of views and opinions so we go into bargaining with a comprehensive snapshot of the issues that teachers face," Schilling said.

The Association has commissioned the firm Strategic Communications (Stratcom) to produce the survey and distribute it to members. The survey will take 15 to 30 minutes to complete and will include questions related to teacher compensation, benefits, leaves of absence, conditions of practice and other provisions contained in collective agreements. The survey will also ask specific questions about conditions of practice, including compensation for part-time and substitute teachers, and for administrators.

The members' only Bargainers' Blog will also be relaunched shortly in order to keep members informed of developments related to central table bargaining.

Schilling stressed the importance of teachers having a login for the ATA website and an up-to-date contact profile.

"We will use a variety of tools to communicate with members throughout the bargaining process, so it is essential that we have the best contact information. If we don't have your current personal email address then you won't get the survey," Schilling said.

Members are urged to update their contact information before Jan. 22 by visiting [profile.teachers.ab.ca](http://profile.teachers.ab.ca).



Update your contact information at [profile.teachers.ab.ca](http://profile.teachers.ab.ca)

## IN FOCUS

continued from page 4

“They can talk to any of the executive staff or whichever duty officer is on call,” Mazzotta says.

Each year, Member Services fields several hundred calls from administrators. Many of these calls come from administrators who are in the earlier stages of their leadership roles, Mazzotta said, and more calls come from remote areas where support networks aren’t as readily available as they are in larger urban areas.

“They’ll call us because they really need to bounce an idea off of somebody. They’ll call us for advice, which is, of course, what we’re here for,” he says.

### ‘A rough gig’

In the Teacher Welfare program area, staff officers are on call to field teachers’ questions about collective agreements and benefits. These officers routinely field such calls from administrators, who are covered by the same collective agreements that they must also implement at the direction of their employers.

“They’ll call us for advice, which is, of course, what we’re here for.”

— Robert Mazzotta,  
Member Services co-ordinator

Given the last central table agreement, Association staff have been providing a lot of advice to administrators on how to implement provisions related to assigned time and instructional time, says Teacher Welfare co-ordinator Sandra Johnston.

And with Teacher Welfare starting to prepare for the next round of central table bargaining, Johnston expects that making life better for administrators will be a priority.

“We know that principals’ and other administrators’ workload has increased and that’s probably going to be a big push in the next round of bargaining ... getting some workload relief for those people,” Johnston says.

“It’s a pretty rough gig, really, and I’m just thankful that such talented people continue to choose to do it.” ■

## Other services for administrators

### Leadership Update

*Leadership Update* is a newsletter the Association publishes several times a year to provide information on current issues and initiatives. It is distributed to principals via school mailing, and electronic versions are also available on the Association’s website: [teachers.ab.ca/News and Info/Publications/Leadership Update](http://teachers.ab.ca/News and Info/Publications/Leadership Update).

### Council for School Leadership

One of 21 specialist councils of the Alberta Teachers’ Association, the Council for School Leadership is available to principals, assistant principals, central office leaders and teacher leaders who aspire to leadership roles or have an interest in school leadership. The council is committed to the promotion and advancement of excellent practices in educational leadership.

The council is planning to publish a new research journal several times a year.

The council also hosts a renowned international conference, known as uLead, attracting 1,100 to 1,400 people from around the world to Banff each year.

### Library services

Administrators are encouraged to use the Association’s extensive professional library, which has materials in both English and French. Library staff will research topics, gather information and send library materials to members upon request.

### iTunes U

The Association has a site on Apple’s iTunes University that offers free course content to teachers. A variety of these courses focus on school leadership.



## Highlights from the legislature

### Fall session wraps up

Kim Dewar  
ATA News Staff

The fall session of Alberta’s legislative assembly, which officially began Oct. 30, wrapped up on Dec. 13. Below are highlights of education and labour issues raised from Dec. 4 until the end of the session.

#### School construction and modernization in northeast Edmonton

Dec. 4 - Heather Sweet (NDP—Edmonton-Manning) asked Minister of Education **David Eggen** about the government’s plans to build a new elementary school in the neighbourhood of Pilot Sound, as well as modernizing existing schools to increase capacity. Eggen answered that the government uses lists provided by school boards to prioritize funding for schools and noted that southwest Edmonton just received a much-needed high school. Sweet noted that the government has announced a new school for Pilot Sound, as well as funding for redevelopment of Ben Calf Robe Catholic school.

#### Half-day kindergarten school transportation fees

Dec. 5 - Mark Smith (UCP—Drayton Valley-Devon) asked Minister of Education **David Eggen** about the impact that Bill 1 (*An Act to Reduce School Fees*) has had on the transportation fees of school boards that offer half-day

kindergarten. Eggen answered that the government has provided more than \$54 million to school boards in order for them to reduce school fees and it is up to boards to disseminate kindergarten education. Smith added that multiple school boards have cited Bill 1 as a reason that they are no longer able to offer transportation services. Eggen said that all of the reductions to school fees were “backstopped” by the government funding to school boards, and if a board is suggesting that they are short on those funds, they did receive money from the government.

#### Education concerns

Dec. 6 - Rod Loyola (NDP—Edmonton-Ellerslie) asked Minister of Education **David Eggen** to explain the rationale for why the government has struck the word “specialized” from the *School Act* in section 16.2 (the section currently reads that a parent has the responsibility “to co-operate and collaborate with school staff to support the delivery of *specialized* supports and services to the student”). Eggen answered that removing the term will make the legislation clearer and does not in any way reduce or alter the supports that students receive. He added that school boards are obligated to respect the rights of parents when it comes to decisions around education and for programming, and that includes the ability of parents to choose school programming that they think best ensures their child’s success.

#### Public service pension plans

Dec. 7 - Bob Turner (NDP—Edmonton-Whitemud) asked Minister of Treasury Board and Finance **Joe Ceci** about the viability of public sector pension plans, noting that under the previous Conservative government there was a great deal of uncertainty. Ceci answered that excellent strides have been made toward full funding of public sector pension plans at 90 per cent funded, and the local authorities pension plan is 94 per cent funded. As a result, the pension contribution rates have been reduced for both of those pension plans, which saves the government and workers money.

#### Viscount Bennett Centre

Dec. 11 - Karen McPherson (AP—Calgary-Mackay-Nose Hill) asked Minister of Advanced Education **Marlin Schmidt** about the government’s announcement that Chinook Learning Services’ operations at the Viscount Bennett Centre in Calgary will cease at the end of August 2018, and also about the plans announced by the Calgary Board of Education (CBE) to reduce its upgrading capacity by 500 students. Schmidt responded that the government has invested much more money in teachers, smaller class sizes and additional learning supports for students in Calgary. He added that the government has increased the funding to the CBE by more than \$63 million and they are concerned with reports from the CBE about budget deficits. McPherson noted that many teachers and staff are concerned about layoffs, and reducing the number of classes will likely mean an increase in the size of classes. Schmidt reiterated the investments made in the CBE and noted that cuts to the education budget would not do anybody any favours.

#### Educational curriculum redesign

Dec. 11 - Leela Aheer (UCP—Chestermere-Rocky View) asked the government house leader **Brian Mason** about the NDP’s byelection candidate’s

accusation that parents concerned about curriculum redesign are being melodramatic. Mason answered that some of the curriculum is over 30 years old and a more modern one will empower children with the skills needed to realize their dreams.

#### Social studies curriculum

Dec. 12 - Mark Smith (UCP—Drayton Valley-Devon) asked Minister of Education **David Eggen** about the historical knowledge and content included in the new curriculum and expressed concern that the government is asking children to become activists without providing them with the context and the knowledge to make their own decisions. Eggen answered that the work right now is foundational and the curriculum is not yet written. He added that 35,000 Albertans contributed to the first round of building the curriculum, and the government will continue in the spirit of “building with history, critical thinking, and a respect for tradition and culture.”

#### Education budget

Dec. 13 - Karen McPherson (AP—Calgary-Mackay-Nose Hill) asked Deputy Premier **Sarah Hoffman** about the education minister’s order to school districts and education organizations to reduce costs. She noted, “This is the second time this week that we’re learning about big cuts to critical programs from the media rather than from the government.” Hoffman answered that the government has been very focused on stopping the deep cuts that were coming from the now official opposition, and made sure that those funds went toward school districts. McPherson added that education professionals’ conference, travel and professional membership fees are on the block. Hoffman responded by noting that through the ATA agreement, a Classroom Improvement Fund was created and that the government is deeply committed to making sure Alberta has a very strong education system. ■



## STORIES AND PHOTOS WANTED

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



KIM DEWAR

Melissa Purcell is the ATA's newest executive staff officer. She joined the Professional Development program area on Jan. 1.

## Edmonton teacher joins ATA executive staff

ATA News Staff

Provincial Executive Council has appointed Melissa Purcell to the position of executive staff officer in the Professional Development program area.

Purcell has experience teaching in Alberta band, charter and public schools. At the district level with Edmonton Public Schools she held the positions of teacher consultant, program co-ordinator and supervisor of First Nations, Métis and Inuit education.

A graduate of Concordia University of Edmonton, Purcell has demonstrated commitment to supporting and building the capacity of her

fellow teachers in the areas of First Nations, Métis and Inuit language, culture and education. In addition to her valuable learned and lived experiences, Purcell brings to the Association proficiency in collaborating with education partners to develop culturally responsible resources and practices.

Purcell's appointment was effective Jan. 1.

The Professional Development program area helps teachers to establish and maintain high standards of individual and collective practice. It is responsible for the Teacher Qualifications Service, teachers' conventions and specialist councils. ■

### Professional Development

To find out more about the Association's Professional Development program area visit the ATA website > For Members > Professional Development.

# Calgary professor wins ATA award for math research

ATA News Staff

University of Calgary professor Dr. Jo Towers is the recipient of the 2017 Alberta Teachers' Association Educational Research Award.

Valued at \$5,000, the annual award is presented to a faculty of education member or sessional lecturer at an Alberta university or university college who has undertaken high quality research on classroom teaching and learning.



ADRIAN SHELLARD

Dr. Jo Towers is the recipient of the 2017 Alberta Teachers' Association Educational Research Award.

*“Dr. Towers compellingly and convincingly illustrates the importance of attending to children's emotional and imaginative understanding of mathematics.”*

— J-C Couture, ATA associate co-ordinator of research

Selected by a five-member panel over 10 other submissions, Towers' research involved the collection and analysis of “mathematical autobiographies” of K-9 students. The objectives of the project included gaining a deeper understanding of the experiences students have when learning math, and helping teachers understand their role in shaping students' mathematical identities.

Towers has given presentations on her research at Alberta schools and

through professional forums, including a symposium series she organized at the U of C. Articles on her study have also appeared in a number of publications, including the *Canadian Journal of Science* and the *Alberta Journal of Educational Research*.

“Dr. Towers compellingly and convincingly illustrates the importance of attending to children's emotional and imaginative understanding of mathematics,” said Dr. J-C Couture, the ATA's associate co-ordinator of research.

“Her research is not only timely, but generates ideas and considerations genuinely oriented to helping teachers develop a greater understanding of their students.” ■

## CTF PRESIDENT

continued from page 5

— it's been there for a while — but we want to be prepared if they move on that.

Our advocacy work around section 43 is a very big one because that directly impacts teachers and their ability to work with students. That's their legal protection to do the things that they do.

We'll still continue to advocate for a youth commissioner. That way we hope to have children as part of all the policy conversations. Right now I hear push-back from senators and MPs that they don't need a youth commission because children belong to us all so they're dealt with in many different areas. To me that's government-speak for they belong to all of us, but it's really easy not to have them on the radar.

We want to have children front and centre. We want to have the story of Canadian classrooms front and centre. The demographic changes across the country have been tremendous; class sizes are huge. We've got provinces and territories dealing with austerity budgets that are just starving the public system for resources, and that is causing

major complications across the country.

Many individuals with whom we talk about schools have no idea what the structure and the complexity of the school classroom across Canada is today. They really don't know what is going on in the classroom because they still have that mental view of what it was like when they were in school. The classroom today is very different from the classrooms from even five or 10 years ago.

Probably the biggest issue right now that we're faced with and [one that] we're working in co-ordination with the provinces and territories on is the concern over the rise in incidents of violence in the workplace and in the classroom. It's a very big concern. It's going to be about gathering the data and really showing what the realities of today's classrooms are. We have inclusion; we have oversized classes; we lack the human resources to deal with some of the issues that teachers face. These are common threads across the country.

### What is a typical day like for you?

There isn't anything that's typical. Some days, they're later mornings; some days are really early. Some days I wake up and I go to the Hill and I have a meeting with either a senator or an MP, then I go to the office. Other days I

go to the office. Doing the seminars and the roundtables, that takes me to other parts of Ontario ... so it's wherever the calendar takes me.

### What is it like living in Ottawa?

I love Ottawa as a city. It's a beautiful city; the people there are great.

I'm learning the city. I know where to drive. I am officially classed as a local because I actually drove to the airport to pick somebody up and take them to where they were going — that's my measuring stick.

The weather patterns there are something I've never seen before. The weather blows in and out of there like you wouldn't believe. I've never seen wind storms and rain storms that hit so hard and then are gone. The snow fell just before I left to come here the last time, and it is deep and it is wet — it's not like the snow here.

Where I'm located in the city, I'm 15 minutes from the parliament buildings, 15 minutes from Chinatown, 20 minutes from Little Italy — so I do a lot of walking — but you feel safe, you feel good. It's a great city to be in and around.

### What do you miss most about living in Alberta?

The hard part is going to work and coming home to an apartment and then not speaking until the next day unless I

can get a phone call home or FaceTime home. I absolutely miss the day to day of being home with my wife and kids. I do FaceTime and it's nice because you can see people when you're talking to them, but it's not the same as just sitting in a room and knowing that you're there.

I don't have colleagues and friends and family that I can go and just see right away, so that is one of the things that I miss.

### Are you having any trouble maintaining your allegiances to Edmonton sports teams?

None. Zero. I'm a born-and-raised Edmonton fan. There was a time that I was thinking, for an eastern team, I might cheer for the Senators as opposed to the Lightning — my eastern team is the Tampa Bay Lightning; they're the only other team that I cheer for. The only jerseys I have at home are the Eskimos, Oilers and Golden Bears, because I'm a complete homer. ■

*Editor's note: Interview responses have been edited for length.*

## And the winners are ...

Last fall, participants in an online survey related to the distribution of the ATA News were entered into a draw for one of three gift cards valued at \$100 each. The winners of the gift cards are as follows:



Michelle LeRouge  
Grade 5/6,  
Rundle School,  
Calgary



Jason Renner  
Science and  
Biology, Lillian  
Osborne High  
School, Edmonton



Meagan Robertson  
Grade 1/2,  
Connaught  
School, Calgary

PHOTOS SUPPLIED

# READY, SET, GROW!



## Teachers' convention season just around the corner

### 2018 convention themes

- Responding to changes in the educational landscape
- Teaching in inclusive classrooms
- Educating for reconciliation
- Promoting holistic health and wellness
- Embracing the importance of play

### Also featuring

Sessions from the Walking Together: Education for Reconciliation program

- Indigenous Ways of Knowing
- Collective Memories: Braiding Our Stories Through History
- Indigenous Alberta: The Footsteps of Our Ancestors

Teachers' conventions are an annual winter tradition in Alberta. Attending convention gives teachers an opportunity to hear about new education research, consider innovative pedagogical practices and discuss issues of professional concern. Conventions are a core component of teachers' ongoing professional development.

Membership in a specialist council is another potentially integral component of a teacher's professional growth. Your Association has 21 specialist councils, and every active member is entitled to join one at no cost. Specialist councils organize annual conferences, produce publications, maintain websites and offer regional workshops and seminars, thus providing professional development opportunities and promoting teachers' expertise in curriculum and specialty areas.

While some council conferences have already taken place, a number of them are scheduled for the coming months.



# Teachers' Conventions

## North Central Teachers' Convention

Date: Feb. 8–9, 2018  
 Location: Shaw Conference Centre, Westin Hotel and offsite venues, Edmonton  
 Contact: Pam Arnason, president  
 Email: president@nctca.ab.ca  
 Website: www.mynctca.com

## Calgary City Teachers' Convention

Date: Feb. 15–16, 2018  
 Location: Telus Convention Centre, Hyatt Regency Hotel and offsite venues, Calgary  
 Contact: Steve Yanover, president  
 Email: cctcapresident@gmail.com  
 Website: www.cctca.com

## Northeast Teachers' Convention

Date: Feb. 15–16, 2018  
 Location: Doubletree by Hilton Hotel, Edmonton  
 Contact: Adrienne Sprecker, president  
 Email: peopless@ualberta.ca  
 Website: http://netca.teachers.ab.ca

## Central Alberta Teachers' Convention

Date: Feb. 22–23, 2018  
 Location: Red Deer College  
 Contact: David Martin, president  
 Email: teacher.david.martin@gmail.com  
 Website: www.mycatca.com

## Palliser District Teachers' Convention

Date: Feb. 22–23, 2018  
 Location: Telus Convention Centre and Hyatt Hotel, Calgary  
 Contact: Andrea Craigie, president  
 Email: president@pdtca.org  
 Website: www.pdtca.org

## South Western Alberta Teachers' Convention

Date: Feb. 22–23, 2018  
 Location: University of Lethbridge  
 Contact: Kim Yearous, president  
 Email: kim.yearous@gmail.com  
 Website: www.swatca.ca

## Southeastern Alberta Teachers' Convention

Date: Feb. 22–23, 2018  
 Location: Medicine Hat College  
 Contact: Tim Johnson, president  
 Email: tibon007@gmail.com  
 Website: www.seatca.ca

## Greater Edmonton Teachers' Convention

Date: March 1–2, 2018  
 Location: Shaw Conference Centre, Westin Hotel and offsite venues, Edmonton  
 Contact: Lloyd Bloomfield, president  
 Email: president@getca.com  
 Website: www.getca.com

## Mighty Peace Teachers' Convention

Date: March 8–9, 2018  
 Location: Grande Prairie Composite High School and Peace Wapiti Academy  
 Contact: Julie Gummesen, president  
 Email: edge@abnorth.com  
 Website: http://mptca.teachers.ab.ca

## Central East Alberta Teachers' Convention

Date: March 8–9, 2018  
 Location: Shaw Conference Centre, Edmonton  
 Contact: Jim Allan, president  
 Email: jyallan@telus.net  
 Website: www.ceatca.teachers.ab.ca

# Specialist Council Conferences

## Council for School Leadership

Date: April 15–18, 2018  
 Location: Banff Springs Hotel, Banff  
 Theme: uLead 2018  
 Contact: Jeff Johnson  
 Email: leadershipfor21c@me.com  
 Website: ulead.ca

## Educational Technology Council

Date: April 5, 2018  
 Location: Fantasyland Hotel, Edmonton  
 Theme: Shaping Our Classrooms of Tomorrow Event - Be It, See It, Print It: VR, Drones and 3D Technologies  
 Contact: Ryan Layton  
 Email: ryan.layton@eips.ca  
 Website: https://event-wizard.com/beitseeitprintit/0/welcome

## English Language Arts Council

Date: May 4–5, 2018  
 Location: Banff Park Lodge  
 Theme: Making Meaning  
 Contact: Tannis Niziol  
 Email: Tannis.Niziol@ecsd.net  
 Website: http://elacata.ca

## Health and Physical Education Council

Date: May 3–5, 2018  
 Location: Mount Royal University/Grey Eagle Resort, Calgary  
 Theme: Finding Balance  
 Contact: Sonia Sheehan  
 Phone: 403-259-3527  
 Email: sonia.sheehan@ffca-calgary.com  
 Website: http://hpec.ab.ca

## Middle Years Council

Date: April 26–28, 2018  
 Location: Banff Park Lodge, Banff  
 Theme: Teach Like a Pirate  
 Contact: Tom Stones  
 Email: tstones@cesd73.ca  
 Website: www.ata-myc.com

## Convention Questions

Visit the **ATA's website** for teachers' convention Frequently Asked Questions at [www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca)>For Members>Professional Development>Teachers' Conventions.

**General questions** regarding teachers' conventions should be directed to administrative officer Barb Bossert.

Telephone: 780-447-9461 (in Edmonton); 1-800-232-7208 (toll-free in Alberta); Email: [barb.bossert@ata.ab.ca](mailto:barb.bossert@ata.ab.ca)

**Questions regarding the teachers' convention that you attend should be directed to your convention association.**

## More Information

For more information about specialist councils, visit the ATA website at [www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca) > For Members > Professional Development > Specialist Councils.

# Stepping toward reconciliation

*ATA's Stepping Stones series helps pave the way to reconciliation while supporting a new teaching standard*

Laura Harris  
ATA News Staff

In 2008, then prime minister Stephen Harper issued a formal apology to residential school students and their families for the federal government's role in residential schools. It was a historic step toward "forging a new relationship between Aboriginal peoples and other Canadians." Since then, many individuals, groups and organizations have taken many steps in that same direction, including the Alberta Teachers' Association.

Stepping Stones is a series of concise and fact-filled summaries that take teachers on a learning journey of First Nations, Métis and Inuit foundational knowledge. Introduced by the Association in 2017, it covers everything from essential terminology to key historical events that have affected the past and current Indigenous populations living in Alberta. More than an interesting read, the information in the series is designed to help teachers meet new competency requirements expected in Alberta's new Teaching Quality Standard.



Andrea Berg,  
ATA executive  
staff officer

"It is anticipated the new provincial Teaching Quality Standard will require teachers to develop and apply foundational knowledge about First Nations, Métis and Inuit people to benefit students and support the process of reconciliation — Stepping Stones was developed with this requirement in mind," explained Andrea Berg, the executive staff officer who heads up the Association's Walking Together: Education for Reconciliation project, of which Stepping Stones is a part.

The Walking Together team consists of six consultants, all experienced classroom teachers with strong knowledge, experience in Indigenous education and backgrounds representing all three of Alberta's treaty areas and the Métis community. The team has engaged local Indigenous communities by establishing regional



*"The Association is extremely proud to be able to provide Alberta teachers with resources and workshops that give a truly authentic picture of the history, culture and experiences of this province's Indigenous people."*

— Greg Jeffery, ATA president

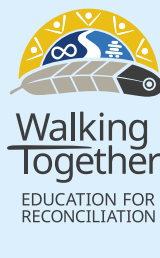
advisory committees that include representation from elders and local knowledge keepers. This approach ensures that Stepping Stones and the other professional development programs and resources developed include regionally specific content for teachers.

"The work our Walking Together team has produced is informative, insightful and fascinating," said ATA president Greg Jeffery. "The Association is extremely proud to be able to provide Alberta teachers with resources and workshops that give a truly authentic picture of the history, culture and experiences of this province's Indigenous people."

Downloadable PDF versions of the Stepping Stones summaries are available to teachers on the ATA website. French-language versions of each summary also are available or currently in the process of being translated.



## Stones steeped in history



The Stepping Stones series and the other ATA Walking Together programs and resources are tools to help teachers acquire the foundational knowledge they need to meet the new Teaching Quality Standard and strengthen relationships with Indigenous students and their families.

In the hands of Alberta teachers, they are also a continuation of history in Canada, a few more steps towards the goal of reconciliation.

Visit [www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca) and go to For Members> Professional Development>Walking Together to view and download Walking Together resources.



## History still in the making

**1883** — Federal government and churches run by Christian missionaries together begin operating residential schools in Canada to educate and convert Indigenous youth and to integrate them into Canadian society. Students were removed from their homes and parents, separated from some of their siblings and in some cases forbidden to speak their first language even in letters home to their parents. Many students were physically and sexually abused.<sup>1</sup>

**1980s & 90s** — Former residential school students launch legal campaigns to push the government and churches to recognize the abuses of the system, and to provide some compensation.<sup>1</sup>

**1996** — Last residential school in Canada, Gordon Residential School in Punnichy, Sask., closes.<sup>1</sup>

**1998** — Government of Canada issues Statement of Reconciliation acknowledging the abuses suffered by residential school students.<sup>1</sup>

**2003** — Alternative Dispute Resolution process established to provide an out-of-court mechanism for determining residential school student compensation and offering psychological support.<sup>1</sup>

**2007** — Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement recognizes the damage inflicted by the residential schools, creates a multi-billion-dollar fund to help former students in their recovery and establishes the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).<sup>1</sup>

**2008** — Prime Minister Stephen Harper, on behalf of the Government of Canada, issues to the students of

Canada's residential schools and their families a formal apology for the role it played in residential schools.<sup>1</sup>

Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) launched with the "intention to be a process that would guide Canadians through the difficult discovery of the facts behind the residential school system," and meant to lay the foundation for lasting reconciliation across Canada.<sup>1</sup>

**December 2015** — Final TRC report, *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future*, is released, documenting the tragic experiences of approximately 150,000 Canadian residential school students. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau commits to implementing all 94 of the recommendations made by the Commission.<sup>1</sup>

**June 2016** — Alberta Education, the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, the Alberta Teachers' Association and four other stakeholder organizations sign a Joint Commitment to Action to ensure all K-12 teachers receive additional training related to First Nations, Métis and Inuit history and culture within two to three years.

**September 2016** — To fulfil its obligation to the Joint Commitment to Action, the Association establishes its Walking Together: Education for Reconciliation project.

1. [www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca](http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca)  
2. Woodruff / Library and Archives Canada / PA-040715  
3. The Canadian Press / Fred Chartrand  
4. The Canadian Press / Adrian Wyld

# Massaging students not part of a teacher's role



## 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 was charged with failing to treat students with dignity and respect after complaints were received about the teacher massaging students on the back and neck. There was no concern in these situations that there was a sexual motivation on the part of the teacher; rather the teacher massaged students to relieve pain, stress or lack of concentration.

The teacher believed that students may be more focused and have better posture if he briefly massaged them when they were in pain, or when their attention or posture failed. The school principal directed the teacher to cease the behaviour, but the teacher persisted in the behaviour. The teacher did not obtain permission from the student or parents to massage students and some students were uncomfortable

with the massaging.

The committee rejected the teacher's position that his massaging was a matter of student safety, to protect them from poor posture or diminished concentration resulting in reduced learning. The committee noted that in the Alberta classroom context, matters of safety are generally confined to those that pose an immediate and significant threat to the physical, mental and emotional well-being of students.

The hearing committee ordered a letter of severe reprimand and noted that the teacher was in a position of authority and that his misuse of this authority showed a deliberate disregard for the circumstances of his students.

"The profession expects teachers to be considerate of students' circumstances at all times. The public and the profession expects that teachers will maintain physical boundaries that are appropriate to the teacher/student relationship," the letter stated.

In consideration of penalty, the committee heard that the teacher had faced substantial loss of reputation and employment as a direct result of these matters. ■

# New book garnering global attention

Jen Janzen  
ATA News Staff

An ATA-commissioned book that considers the merits and pitfalls of global education standards is earning international accolades.

*The Global Education Race: Taking the Measures of PISA and International Testing*, written by David Rutkowski, Sam Sellar and Greg Thompson, was released in 2017. It explores the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), which was developed by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), as well as other international testing.

The book was named one of the top 10 books of 2017 for teachers and school leaders by *Schools Week*, with features editor Cath Murray recommending it for the "discerning, data-savvy edu-nerd."

William Smith, a senior policy analyst with UNESCO's Global Education Monitoring Report, wrote an in-depth review that appeared in the December

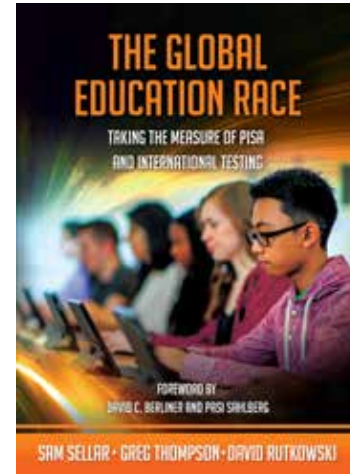
edition of *Education Review*, produced by Arizona State University. Smith noted that while PISA results are complex, with the OECD itself cautioning against focusing on league tables, national ranking is often the main result highlighted in the media.

Smith wrote that *The Global Education Race* helps media consumers evaluate the reality of PISA, providing the necessary insights to address key questions that should be asked when any set of rules are presented."

ATA president Greg Jeffery said the book is an important step in engaging a discussion around the growing influence of international testing.

"These endeavours carry a cost in both administrative time and downstream cost to schools in terms of

increased teacher workload and lost instructional time," Jeffery said. "The proliferation of 'big data' has shifted resources and attention away from the conversation about barriers to educational improvement." ■



# Council names members to attend UN women's conference

## 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 Nov. 30–Dec. 1, 2017, at Barnett House in Edmonton

1. Approved the 2018/19 program area budget recommendations and referred them to Finance Committee for costing.
2. Eliminated the process of Finance Committee reviewing the program area budget recommendations for consistency with the strategic plan, as this has already been completed by the program area budget subcommittees.
3. Amended an administrative guideline to clearly define the difference between a building addition and a building improvement.
4. Named Melissa Purcell, a supervisor of First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education with Edmonton Public Schools, to the position of executive staff officer, Professional Development, effective

Jan. 1, 2018 or at a mutually agreeable time.

5. To commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Alberta Teachers' Association, approved the creation and installation at Barnett House of a full-size, four-metre bronze statue entitled *On Her Shoulders*, costs of which are included in the project budget.

6. Submitted the names of three Council members as Alberta nominees to represent the Canadian Teachers' Federation at the 62nd session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, taking place in New York City from March 12 to 16.

7. Approved that a meeting with Catholic local presidents be convened around the Local Presidents' Meeting, scheduled for Feb. 9 and 10.

8. Received a report of a hearing committee, which found a teacher guilty of three charges of unprofessional conduct for posting or liking images on the teacher's Facebook page that depicted sex paraphernalia, that had a statement of what someone could do with their opinion and that depicted the teacher's employer's logo on the same page, thereby failing to act in a way that maintained the honour and dignity of the profession; and for, on two occasions, showing two female students an image on the teacher's cellphone where it appeared the teacher was kissing the left breast of a woman depicted on a poster, thereby failing to treat the pupils with dignity and respect and to be considerate of their circumstances. The hearing committee imposed a

penalty of a letter of severe reprimand to address all three charges and a fine of \$500, payable within 90 days of the teacher's receipt of the written decision. Failure to pay within the allotted period would declare the teacher ineligible for, or suspended from, membership in the Association until the fine is paid in full.

9. Received a report of a hearing committee, which found a teacher guilty of three charges of unprofessional conduct for ridiculing a student by making references to the student's penis size, thus failing to treat the student with dignity and respect; for making inappropriate comments to students including a veiled reference to jiggling breasts, and/or questioning students about dating, and/or referring to a student's cold sore as herpes, thus failing to treat students with dignity and respect and be considerate of their circumstances and failing to maintain the honour and dignity of the profession; and for criticizing the teacher's principal by posting comments on Facebook, in which the teacher referred to the principal in a derogatory way, thus failing to maintain the honour and dignity of the profession. The committee imposed the penalty of letters of severe reprimand for all three charges and, for charge one, a declaration of ineligibility for membership in the Association for a period of one year and a recommendation to the minister of education that the teacher's teaching certificate be suspended for a period of one year. The committee directed that all three severe reprimands be incorporated into one letter.

10. Received a report of a hearing committee, which found a teacher guilty of four charges of unprofessional conduct for inaccurately coding students for special needs funding, thus failing to maintain the honour and dignity of the profession; for inaccurately coding students for special needs funding with no assessments to document the students' needs, thus failing to treat pupils with dignity and respect and to be considerate of their circumstances; for failing to provide due consideration to the health impacts that housing animals in the school would have on students and staff, thus failing to treat students and staff with dignity and respect; and for bringing another adult into the school for the purpose of a sexual encounter, thus failing to maintain the honour and dignity of the profession. The committee imposed the penalty of a letter of severe reprimand to address charges one to four inclusively, a declaration that the teacher is permanently ineligible for membership in the Association and a recommendation to the minister of education to cancel the teacher's teaching certificate.

11. Named field members to fill vacancies on the Curriculum Committee, Substitute Teachers Committee and Edmonton Area Field Experiences Committee.

12. Amended the frames of reference of the Committee on ATA 100th Anniversary Planning and the Calgary Area Field Experiences Committee. ■

**Get 2Know 2Learn.ca**  
Educational resources for teachers

**Feature topic: New Special Edition — Trauma Awareness**



2Learn.ca's newest special edition, launched in December 2017, is *Trauma Awareness: Resources for Teachers*. This curated collection of resources was created in response to school and classroom needs and has received excellent feedback. In addition

to resources to help educators understand trauma and its effect on children, the special edition includes

- multimedia and research,
- guides related to recognizing and supporting students' experience with trauma, and
- information about trauma-informed practice.

*Trauma Awareness: Resources for Teachers* can be found at <http://www.2learn.ca/specialedition/trauma>.

**Alberta Advisory Committee for Educational Studies**

**Descriptive or Experimental Studies APPLICATION FOR GRANTS**

Deadline: May 11, 2018, 4:30 P.M.  
Applications will be accepted by email; however, they must be received as a single attachment to the email.

The Alberta Advisory Committee for Educational Studies (AACES) invites applications for grants to support descriptive or experimental studies in education.

Grants in excess of \$6,000 are awarded only rarely because of limited available resources. Grants cannot be given for travel unrelated to the proposed research project.

Note: The application to the Ethics Review Committee must be initiated and a copy of the submission to that committee must be included with the proposal.

Online applications and the guidelines for grant applications are available at [www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca)>For Members>Professional Development>Resources.

Application forms may be emailed to [mssaro@ata.ab.ca](mailto:mssaro@ata.ab.ca) OR submitted to

Secretary, Alberta Advisory Committee for Educational Studies  
c/o The Alberta Teachers' Association  
3016 5 Avenue NE Suite 100, Calgary, AB T2A 6K4  
Telephone 403-265-2672 or 1-800-332-1280

Completed applications received by May 11, 2018, will be considered at the spring meeting of AACES.

**Teacher Growth, Supervision, Evaluation and Practice Review Workshop for Administrators**

January 25–26, 2018

To register and for more information go to <https://event-wizard.com/events/TGSE0118/>.  
Deadline for registration is **January 19, 2018**.



**Apply now**  
for an ATA Fellowship or Scholarship

*Applications are now being accepted for the following:*

**ATA Doctoral Fellowships in Education**

- Two awards of \$15,000
- For members entering or in first year of a doctoral program in education

**Nadene M Thomas Graduate Research Bursary**

- One award of \$5,000
- For a member enrolled in a graduate program in education
- A research focus on teacher health issues and/or teachers' working conditions

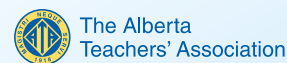
**John Mazurek Memorial—Morgex Insurance Scholarship**

- One award of \$2,500
- For members who pursue relevant professional development

**For more information and to apply**

- Visit [www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca)>For Members> Grants, Awards and Scholarships
- Contact Barb Bossert, [barb.bossert@ata.ab.ca](mailto:barb.bossert@ata.ab.ca), 780-447-9461 (Edmonton area) or toll free 1-800-232-7208

**Application deadline**  
Wednesday, February 28, 2018



**Short-Term Exchanges**

for Educators and Administrators

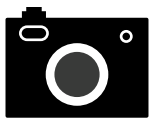
**AUSTRALIA  
GERMANY  
SPAIN**

Host a teacher or school leader from Australia, Spain or Germany for two weeks and give them a glimpse of our education system. Then your guest becomes your host – travel to your guest's country for a bird's-eye view of their system.

Exchange dates and duration vary by country. Please visit [www.ieep.ca](http://www.ieep.ca).

Contact [admin@ieep.ca](mailto:admin@ieep.ca) or 780-392-6901.

Applications at [www.ieep.ca](http://www.ieep.ca)



**SHOOT US A SHOT!**

Have an education-related photo you want to share?  
Send it in!

If we use it as the main photo on our front page, we'll send you \$50!


Email managing editor Cory Hare at [cory.hare@ata.ab.ca](mailto:cory.hare@ata.ab.ca).

PUBLIC INTEREST ALBERTA'S 12<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL ADVOCACY CONFERENCE

**ALBERTA AT THE CROSSROADS**

**FORWARD NOT BACK**

**APRIL 5-6, 2018 AT CHATEAU LOUIS, EDMONTON**



**KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY ALEX HIMELFARB**  
former Clerk of the Privy Council and editor of *Tax is Not a Four-Letter Word*  
(APRIL 4 IN CALGARY)

IMPROVED PUBLIC SERVICES  
POVERTY ELIMINATED  
FAIR TAXATION  
STRONGER DEMOCRACY

CUTS TO PUBLIC SERVICES  
INCREASED POVERTY  
INCOME INEQUALITY  
PRIVATIZATION

#PIAconf

[pialberta.org/conference2018](http://pialberta.org/conference2018)

IEEP-T-26



# 100 GIFTS

FOR 100 YEARS

Morgex is coming to your local ATA convention to help celebrate your 100-year anniversary, and we've got our gifts ready.

**STOP BY OUR BOOTH FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN A \$500 GIFT CARD!\***

Plus, enjoy the gift of up to **50% savings** on auto insurance<sup>1</sup> for teachers in Alberta.



The Alberta Teachers' Association



Learn from the past. Inspire the future

**Call or get a quote online today**  
**Morgex.com**  
 1-888-262-9522



Committed to Teachers in Alberta

Morgex Insurance is a division of Johnson Inc. ("Johnson"), a licensed insurance intermediary. Home and auto policies are primarily underwritten by Unifund Assurance Company ("Unifund"). Described coverage and benefits applicable only to policies underwritten by Unifund in Alberta. Unifund and Johnson share common ownership. Eligibility requirements, limitations, exclusions or additional costs may apply, and/or may vary by province or territory. <sup>1</sup>Full 50% savings amount available on auto insurance if the following discounts are applicable: conviction free, loyalty, new business, age, group member and multi-vehicle. Percentage savings may vary otherwise. Applicable only to policies underwritten by Unifund in Alberta. Eligibility requirements, limitations and exclusions apply. Call 1-855-616-6707 for details. \*NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. Open February 8, 2018 - March 9, 2018 to legal residents of Canada (excluding QC and NU) who: (i) have reached the age of majority in their jurisdiction of residence; (ii) are a member of the Alberta Teachers' Association at the time of entry and winner selection and (iii) attend a teacher's convention. One hundred (100) prizes available to be won, each consisting of: one (1) \$500 gift card. Odds of winning depend on the number of eligible entries received. Math skill test required.



The Alberta Teachers' Association

## RETIREMENT CONSULTANTS NEEDED

The Alberta Teachers' Association Retirement Consultant (RC) Corps exists to provide retirement and pension information to members and assist members in preparing for retirement. RCs are active teachers who provide this volunteer service to members in their geographic area as required. No specific pension background or knowledge is required.

### Applicants to the provincial RC corps should have

- a valid Alberta teaching certificate (or equivalent)
- five years' teaching experience,
- strong communication skills and
- relevant skills and capacity to travel and work evenings and weekends.

*Demonstrated commitment to the Association (or another teachers' organization) is considered an asset.*

### Selected applicants will

- serve an initial three-year term to a maximum of three consecutive terms (up to nine years)
- receive training via seminars at the Association Summer Conference (in August) during the first three years of the appointment and
- attend two Saturday training sessions during the school year (one in the fall and one in the spring).

### TO APPLY

Teachers interested in applying should submit letter of application to Chris M Gibbon, Executive Staff Officer, Teacher Welfare via email [tw@ata.ab.ca](mailto:tw@ata.ab.ca) or mail to 11010 142 Street NW, Edmonton T5N 2R1. Letters should highlight reasons for applying and any relevant skills.

Deadline for application is **March 9, 2018**.

TW-141 2018

## SKETCHNOTING WORKSHOP

with Sylvia Duckworth

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

**Saturday, March 3, 2018**

**Southern Alberta Regional Office (SARO)**

**100, 3016 5 Avenue NE, Calgary**

Free to ATA members (Lunch provided)

Register at [www.surveymonkey.com/r/9BXLZF5](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9BXLZF5).

(Space is limited to the first 30 registrants.)

For more information, contact Nancy Luyckfassel

at [nancy.luyckfassel@ata.ab.ca](mailto:nancy.luyckfassel@ata.ab.ca).



**Canadian International School**

**Guangzhou**

### Looking For Passionate Teachers To Join Our Team

We are seeking career teachers with an interest in teaching children from Kindergarten to High School. We are an Alberta accredited school, implementing Alberta curriculum in all subjects. We are moving to our new campus in April 2018. We offer a competitive package and salary.



For more information or to make an initial application, please contact [www.cisgz.com](http://www.cisgz.com)

Ms. Lorianne Tenove, Head of School, [Lorianne.tenove@cisgz.com](mailto:Lorianne.tenove@cisgz.com)  
Ms. Lucy Bertrand, HR Manager, [Lucy.bertrand@cisgz.com](mailto:Lucy.bertrand@cisgz.com)

## Autos for sale

### 2015 Volvo S60 T6

**Features:** Loaded with leather, heated seats, back-up camera, blind spot info system. Winter tires with rims included.  
**Colour:** Black sapphire  
**Engine:** 3.0L V6 (gasoline)  
**Transmission:** 6-speed automatic  
**Kilometres:** 118,069

This is a **sealed bid auction**, so please mail your bid letter in a **sealed envelope marked "Car Bid - Volvo S6," attention Tracy Pohl, Accountant, Alberta Teachers' Association, 11010 142 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T5N 2R1.** Bids will be accepted until 5 P.M., **February 16, 2017.**

### 2015 Jeep Cherokee 4WD Limited

**Features:** 4 door, leather seats, heated steering wheel, back-up camera, parking sensors. Winter tires with rims included. New windshield Aug 2017.  
**Colour:** Navy blue  
**Engine:** 3.2L - V6  
**Transmission:** Automatic  
**Kilometres:** 125,325

This is a **sealed bid auction**, so please mail your bid letter in a **sealed envelope marked "Car Bid - Jeep," attention Tracy Pohl, Accountant, Alberta Teachers' Association, 11010 142 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T5N 2R1.** Bids will be accepted until 5 P.M., **February 16, 2017.** For more information, contact Tracy Pohl at [tracy.pohl@ata.ab.ca](mailto:tracy.pohl@ata.ab.ca) or by telephone: 780-447-9482 or 1-800-232-7208 (toll free) ext. 482. The Alberta Teachers' Association reserves the right to refuse the highest bid if it is deemed to be inadequate.

## NOTICES AND EVENTS

### Calgary's Sherwood Community School celebrates 60th anniversary

A celebration of Calgary's Sherwood Community School's 60th anniversary is scheduled for May 25 and 26th. For more information, contact Roy at [sherwoodreunion60@gmail.com](mailto:sherwoodreunion60@gmail.com) or 403-217-3900.

### To Advertise

**For advertising information,** contact the advertising manager: 780-447-9417 direct 1-800-232-7208 toll free email: [advertising@ata.ab.ca](mailto:advertising@ata.ab.ca).

#### Next Deadline

Friday, Jan 19, 2018, 4 P.M. (publication date Jan 30, 2018)

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

#### Cost

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

#### Payment

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

**Circulation:** 44,000

### Attention, teachers | ATA News advertisements of institution programs

Advertising by institutions offering educational programs is accepted by the ATA News on a commercial basis. There is no guarantee these institutions fulfill the requirements for consideration as a recognized institution for salary grid purposes.

Teachers considering enrolling in educational programs for purposes of increasing salary levels should consult the Teacher Salary Qualifications Board Principles or inquire directly to the Teacher Qualifications Service regarding the acceptability of the program.

## CLASSIFIEDS

### Goods and Services

**Feeling overwhelmed?** Call stress coach Teresa Dawn, RHC, for your free phone consultation. (780) 907-6549; [www.purpledoorhealth.ca](http://www.purpledoorhealth.ca).

### Travel and Recreation

**Asia: Land of Amazing Contrasts!** Touring in Asia will amaze you! Experience cultural adventure by joining us either on a tour to China, July 8–22, \$3249, or Vietnam/Cambodia, July 31–August 14, \$3949. Includes hotels, most meals, transport, guides and admissions to sites. This is amazing value for your money. References and payment plan available. For itinerary contact [e.mouland@asiancuriositytours.com](mailto:e.mouland@asiancuriositytours.com) 587-436-2968.

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

### HOTEL RATES

A directory of special rates at some of Alberta's hotels is available online or in hard copy. Available online at [www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca) under Publications. Hard copy available from Doreen Link at SARO—403-265-2672 in Calgary or toll free at 1-800-332-1280.



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

**Nutrition + more**

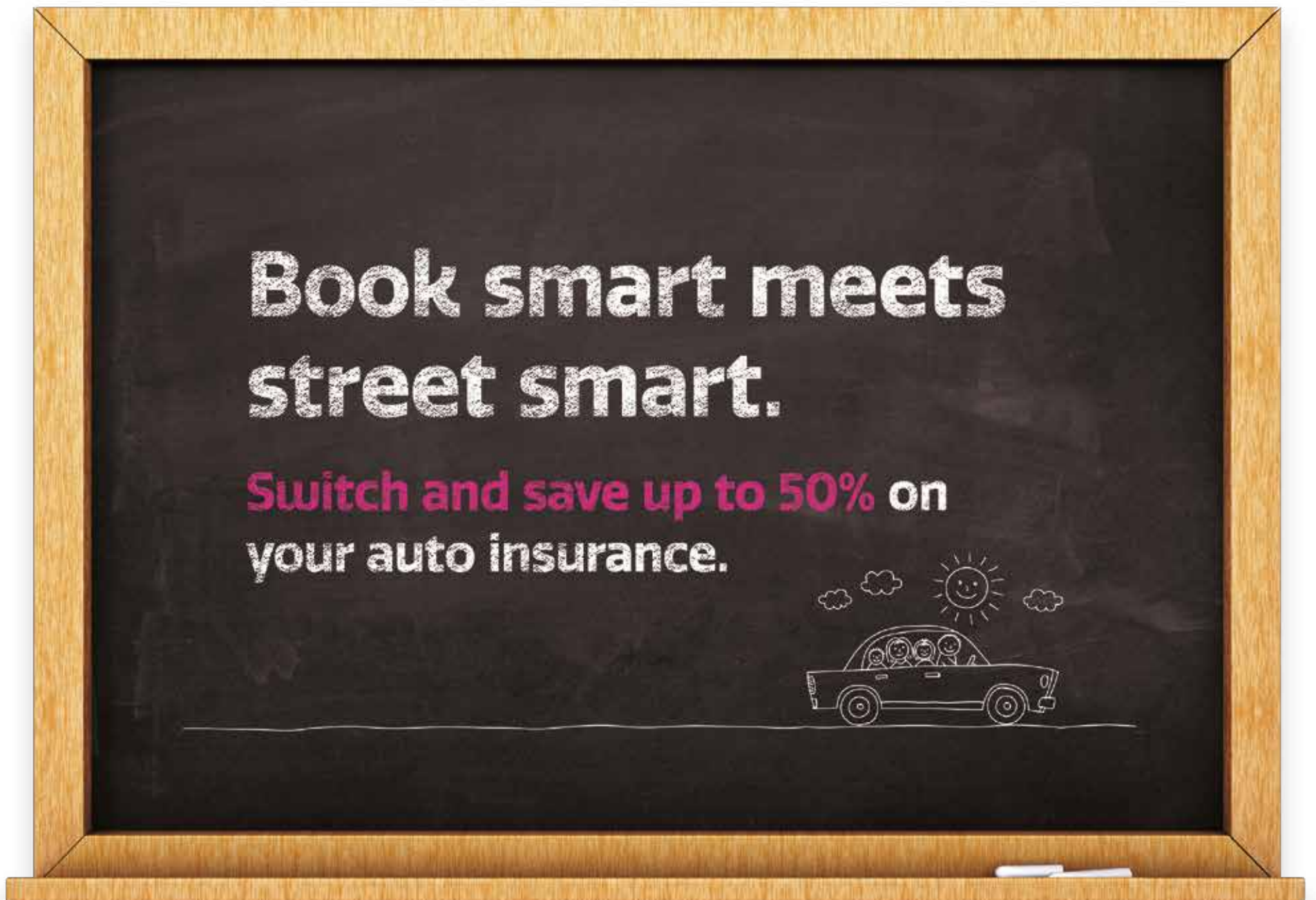
**2018 CATALOGUE FREE RESOURCES**

**DAIRY FARMERS OF CANADA**

BROUGHT TO YOU BY OUR DIETITIANS

**ALBERTA MILK**

**Order or view online today! [albertamilk.com](http://albertamilk.com)**



**Save up to 50% on auto insurance by switching to Morgex Insurance.**

PLUS, we'll give you a \$100 prepaid gift card. Switch your home insurance too and we'll give you a \$50 prepaid gift card. Now you can understand why we insure over 19,000 teachers in Alberta!

**Call or get a quote online today!**  
**Morgex.com/prepaidcard**  
**1.855.616.6707**



Committed to Teachers in Alberta

To activate this offer, mention code AUTO100 and HOME50



**100 YEARS CALLS FOR 100 REASONS TO CELEBRATE.**

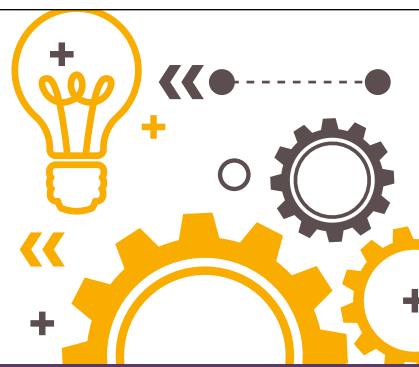
To commemorate your 100-year anniversary, we're coming to your local ATA convention to share a special gift, from us to you. Stay tuned for the big reveal.

Morgex Insurance is a division of Johnson Inc., a licensed insurance intermediary ("Johnson"). Home and auto policies are primarily underwritten by, and claims handled by, Unifund Assurance Company ("Unifund"). Described coverage and benefits applicable only to policies underwritten by Unifund. Unifund and Johnson share common ownership. Eligibility requirements, limitations, exclusions or additional costs may apply, and/or may vary by province or territory. \*Full 50% savings amount available on auto insurance if the following discounts are applicable: conviction free, loyalty, age, multi-vehicle. Percentage savings may vary otherwise. Applicable only to policies underwritten by Unifund in Alberta. Eligibility requirements, limitations and exclusions apply. Call 1-855-616-6707 for details. †Certain conditions apply. Offer available Aug 11/17 to Dec 31/2017 ("Promotion Period"). Open to calls placed during the Promotion Period by persons who (i) are legal residents of AB and 18 years of age or older; (ii) do not already have an AB home or auto policy underwritten by Unifund; (iii) are issued a home and/or auto policy underwritten by Unifund during the Promotion Period and (iv) mention the promo code ("Eligible Person(s)"). 1 pre-paid gift card ("Card") valued at: \$100 CAD for auto policy purchase and \$50 CAD for a home policy purchase to be awarded to each Eligible Person. Allow 8 weeks for Card delivery by mail. Johnson reserves the right to discontinue this promotion prior to the end of the Promotion Period by posting a notice on its website at www.morgex.com



## This...

from ATA President Greg Jeffery



**W**elcome back and happy new year, Alberta teachers! It's a new year with a lot of new things on the horizon in education — a new Teaching Quality Standard, new provincial curriculum, a new round of central table bargaining — oh, and *This*.

One of my resolutions in 2018 is to connect more regularly with you, our ATA members. And I'm hopeful my new column, *This*, will help achieve that. Thanks to the managing editor and editor-in-chief of the *ATA News*, I get to use *This* to share with you some of the things that are on my mind. In future editions, I will talk about issues like the ones I have already mentioned — bargaining, curriculum, the teaching quality standard, etc. Add to that list the provincial budget, as it too will impact the teaching profession and we as teachers.

Mental health, technology, human rights and poverty are all issues that can affect teaching and learning, so my views on those topics and others may show up in this space as well. If an issue is relevant to teaching or learning, I will talk about it.

But it won't be all business. No, no.

I may reflect on my favourite memories as a teacher, vent about the weather, wish you a happy World Teachers' Day, or even muse about the performance of my BC Lions or Vancouver Canucks (sorry, you can take the boy out of B.C. ...).

I may also want some inspiration. So, if you see me out and about (I will be attending and presenting at all 10 ATA teachers' conventions next month) say hello and share your ideas for *This*. ■

### Five things on my mind

1

#### ATA teachers' conventions

I need to start packing. The season begins with the first of 10 teachers' conventions held Feb. 8 and 9. Check the ATA website for your convention dates and location.

2

#### Budget 2018

The provincial budget and education funding are still TBA, but until Feb. 2 teachers and other Albertans can give input. See the ATA homepage for the story and budget survey link.

3

#### Central table bargaining

The current agreement between the ATA and the Teacher Employers Bargaining Association expires Aug. 31, 2018. Check the Collective Bargaining Updates link on the ATA homepage for the latest information.

4

#### K-4 curriculum

As per the provincial government's announcement in June 2016, new curriculum is to be developed for kindergarten to Grade 4 by late 2018.

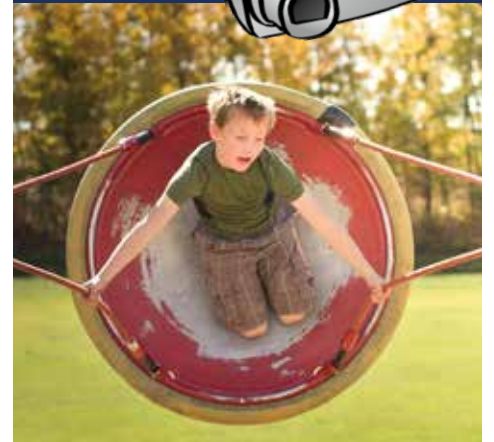
5

#### New Teaching Quality Standard

As you may know, a new Teaching Quality Standard is in the works. To stay updated, read the *ATA News*, watch the ATA website or follow us on Facebook or Twitter.

2018  
**gotcha!**  
PHOTO CONTEST

Cash prizes  
available!



The *ATA News* invites you to get your camera out and start shooting those award-winning photographs.

1st place: \$200  
2nd place: \$100  
3rd place: \$50

Email photos to [cory.hare@ata.ab.ca](mailto:cory.hare@ata.ab.ca).  
Entries must be received by 5 P.M.  
on May 15, 2018.  
Contest rules are available online  
at [www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca).

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



Learn from the past. Inspire the future.



The Alberta Teachers' Association

