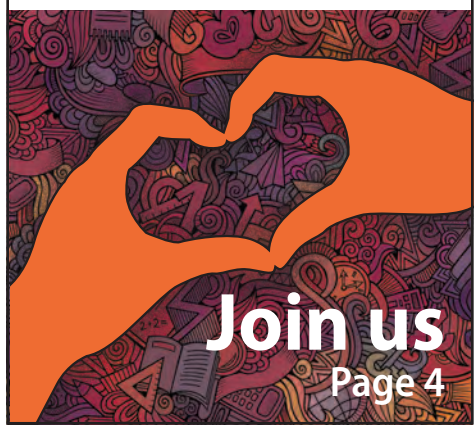


**This ...**    
from ATA President Greg Jeffery

Teachers are the **heartbeat** of education. » Page 4

WORLD TEACHERS' DAY | OCTOBER 5



# ATA NEWS

September 25, 2018 | Volume 53, Number 2 | News Publication of The Alberta Teachers' Association



## ATA rolls out Face of Education campaign

Story on page 6.



### Critical thinking

Exploring controversial topics a hallmark of quality teaching.

Read Dennis Theobald's Q&A on page 2.

### Local bargaining stuck due to school board tactics.

» Editorial on page 2.

» Story on page 5.



### Let this be a lesson

Offensive exam question highlights importance of reviewing resources.

Read story on page 5.

### Success Stories

ATA local supports members on disability through unique program.

See story on page 7.



### Project Overseas

International volunteering changes lives.

Read teachers' stories Pages 8-10.



### Pitfalls & Precautions

Discipline process a cornerstone of ATA's mandate.

See story on page 11.

### Up to standard

Get help with your professional growth plan.

Read story on page 6.

### Warm and fuzzy

Returning to the classroom brings feel-good moments. See Tale End on page 16.



## School boards need to get serious about settlement



### EDITORIAL

Jonathan Teghtmeyer  
ATA News Editor-in-Chief

More than one in 10 Alberta teachers have been working without a collective agreement since September 2016.

To put that into perspective, consider it this way: they are still trying to reach local agreements that, if they existed, would have already expired — because two-year terms were set by a central table agreement reached in 2016.

Local bargaining is not a game or a race, but if this was crib, these groups would be getting skunked. If this was Formula One racing, these teachers might soon get lapped.

Sadly, most of the gains that they could make cannot be applied retroactively. The trend for what improvements are likely in this round of bargaining has been well established by the 47 bargaining units that have already settled. The agreements typically make improvements related to teacher personal days, family medical days, administrator lieu days and working conditions for substitute teachers.

You would need a time machine to go back and access the family medical leave days that you might be able to negotiate.

These issues may seem small, but teachers are still prepared to take action in support of bargaining. That is because, in a number of these jurisdictions, the problem is not the lack of personal days; the problem is a lack of respect.

It seems that some of these boards are going out of their way to tick off their teachers.

More than one board has included a proposal to remove principals from the collective agreement. The proposal is clearly illegal and can only be interpreted as an effort to inflame teachers.

Another board unilaterally changed the structure of its employee health benefits at a time when issues related to benefits were up for discussion at the bargaining table.

Elsewhere, boards are disrespecting the improvements made in the central agreement or even attempting to renegotiate items that are clearly central table matters.

Then there are the francophone boards that insist on negotiating *en anglais*. The board members are first-language francophone; the teachers are mostly first-language francophone; the schools operate in French and

the collective agreement is written in French. But the board wants to negotiate in English. *Qu'est-ce qui se passe?*

I'll tell you what's going on. The contractor they hired to bargain on their behalf does not speak French.

Twelve of the 14 boards that remain unsettled have hired the same negotiator.

Coincidentally, (or maybe not), several boards have banded together to table the same initial proposal at each of their tables — including some proposals that don't even apply to existing situations in some of the school boards. These proposals often include regressive measures aimed at reducing long-standing entitlements.

*On its own, a lack of personal days is unlikely to push teachers to strike, but a lack of respect just might.*

Now, if the boards want to hire a consultant whose advice serves no purpose in reaching an agreement and only serves to irritate teachers, they are well within their rights. But they should keep in mind that at the end of the day,

the consultant gets to leave town and move on with his life. Meanwhile the trustees and district office personnel have to live with the broken relationship with teachers that was created in the process.

I've been involved in bitter labour negotiations and have been on the verge of walking out. From my experience, the conflict occurs not because of the issues on the table, but rather because of how the people are made to feel.

On its own, a lack of personal days is unlikely to push teachers to strike, but a lack of respect just might.

I have some free advice for school boards. The end is near. The trend is well-established. Take reasonable efforts to conclude an agreement and move on, because making your employees feel respected and valued is much more important than saving the relatively small costs associated with providing some lieu time for your principals or ensuring that teachers can access time off to take care of a sick child.

Just get the deal done, because healthy, happy and respected teachers are more productive and better able to serve the interests of students. ■

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

## Exploring controversial topics a hallmark of quality teaching



### Q & A

Dennis Theobald  
ATA Executive Secretary

**Question:** Why would the Alberta Teachers' Association invite Tzeporah Berman, a notorious opponent of oilsands development and pipeline construction, to speak at a conference—don't you realize that the energy industry pays teachers' salaries?

**Answer:** In the last couple of weeks, we have been asked this question (and more colourful variants thereof) dozens of times by members, the public and even media. By way of background, the Social Studies; First Nations, Métis and Inuit; and Global Environmental and Outdoor Education councils invited Tzeporah Berman to present at their upcoming joint conference at the River Cree Resort located on the Enoch First Nation. The conference is organized and paid for by teachers—neither school boards nor the provincial government are involved in funding or planning it. The audience for the conference will be composed of classroom teachers

who choose to register for the event; students will not be in attendance.

The teachers who have volunteered their time to serve with the three specialist councils understand that teachers are challenged to address the Indigenous, environmental and economic issues that dominate public affairs in this province. The classroom teacher's responsibility is to assist students, in a developmentally appropriate manner within the scope of the curriculum, to become active and thoughtful citizens of our democracy by exploring various perspectives on these and other issues in a constructive and respectful manner.

The conference seeks to provide teachers with additional insights and perspectives by encouraging respectful dialogue. Even the selection of the venue for the event is relevant in this regard: Enoch is a First Nation community that has supported its growth in large part from the development of its oil and gas reserves.

The conference planning has been underway for more than a year and continues. Tzeporah Berman was approached very early in the planning process and consented to bring her perspective with respect to climate change and First Nations. Berman's

*This is a process that fosters the critical thinking that is a hallmark of high-quality teaching and learning and that will make a positive, lasting contribution to the economic, social and political future of Alberta.*

positions on these issues are part of the larger public discourse. The councils have confirmed that well respected oil industry CEO, Chris Slubicki, will talk about responsible development in Canada's energy industry. Beyond this, the conference will cover a wide range of topics relevant to social, environmental, global and Indigenous education from various perspectives.

There are some who are calling for Berman's presentation to be cancelled because her views are contrary to the economic interests of Alberta. It is ridiculous to assume that cancelling this speaker would somehow make the issues she raises go away. Instead, teachers will provide a respectful but critical audience, and individual attendees will have an opportunity to be challenged by Berman and to challenge her views in return. This is a process that fosters the critical thinking that is a hallmark

of high-quality teaching and learning and that will make a positive, lasting contribution to the economic, social and political future of Alberta.

It is frankly strange that some of the voices calling for the cancellation of Berman's presentation say that they are opposed to her "indoctrinating" her audience and, by extension, students. Apart from the fact that the teachers in attendance are entirely capable of thinking for themselves, it is odd that the first response of some to the perceived threat of indoctrination is to advocate that certain legitimate, if controversial, opinions should not be heard at all. ■

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





# YOUR VIEWS

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### An alternate view on women in leadership

In the May 29 edition of the *ATA News*, Shannon Dube wrote an opinion column about the need to review the status of women in our profession. I would like to provide an alternative viewpoint.

Dube presented the fact that women make up 74 per cent of teachers, but less than 50 per cent of principals, superintendents and various ATA executive positions. She then went on to state her belief that “the highest levels of leadership should more accurately reflect the overall membership.” Seems fair, and she progressed to her next point — those women involved in leadership roles are those whose children are grown, or who do not have them. It is the assertion she made afterward that I have trouble with.

She said that women who don’t fall into these categories (meaning women with children) have been “unable to attain” leadership positions because they aren’t encouraged to take on leadership roles, or don’t see other women with children in leadership positions. I question the “unable to obtain” bit.

I think many teachers with children look at the incredible demands placed on their time in a leadership position

and conclude the time would be better spent with family or in other areas. Women and men often value different things in life. Whether or not that’s a societal construct or ingrained biologically is another argument entirely. However, the fact remains.

We are a society that has become very focused on equality, and that’s a good thing. Equality of opportunity is vital, and I believe we’ve achieved it. However, opportunity and outcome are different things, and no amount of spending on “status of women” councils in our profession will achieve perfect equality when people make a conscious choice not to take a leadership position professionally.

I actually think it’s demeaning to women in the profession to suggest that they haven’t been making the decisions best for themselves and their families.

One final point. There seems to be a lot of discussion about trying to achieve equality in the profession. But remember that first statistic — 74 per cent of teachers are women. Not that I want it or *think it’s needed*, but if we’re trying to balance the equation, why aren’t there more scholarships and incentives encouraging men to go into teaching, as there are in the sciences for women? ■

Luke Peters, social studies, CALM and hunter education, Gus Wetter School, Castor

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.

## FOR THE RECORD

“ I was appalled to see such hurtful and offensive material given to an Alberta student. ”

- Education Minister David Eggen commenting on an exam question that asked about positive effects of residential schools.



# Let's keep walking the reconciliation road together



## VIEWPOINTS

Terry Lusty  
Special to the ATA News

It was four years ago in June 2014 that Edmonton played host to the final Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) national event that brought together hundreds of residential school survivors. One year later, thousands again descended upon the nation’s capital for the commission’s “closing ceremonies” and final report, which included 94 recommendations that were ultimately approved by the federal government.

Much of the TRC’s report was predicated on the personal testimonies of thousands of survivors, many of whom had told their stories in a marked, emotional manner based on their experiences, traumas and lingering impacts. The pain and suffering so many experienced was absolutely horrific. It’s no wonder so many referred to it as their “holocaust.”

Over the previous years, decades upon decades, the survivors’ silence was deafening. Why? Because they felt ashamed, intimidated and disbelieved, which is precisely what happened. Until one day in the 1990s, a brave survivor in British Columbia stepped forward and spilled his guts about the atrocious abuses he experienced, and he then proceeded with a test case in the Canadian courts of law.

The man in question was victorious. He and a few other test-case winners provided the impetus for a nationwide agreement (the Kelowna Agreement) between Indigenous survivors, the churches and government. It resulted in the largest compensation award in Canadian history.

More stories of abuse, denial and neglect filled the news. They became public knowledge via talks at schools, conferences, on radio and television, on the Internet, on the “winds” and around the world. The silence was no more. So many of the stories came from very credible sources. It was impossible to deny what was true.

The upshot was increased and improved awareness, understanding and acceptance, which have bolstered the process of forgiveness, reconciliation and moving forward.

*We move along in the spirit of doing good, doing what is right and just, for those impacted by the residual effects of the residential school system. We do so with the intent of furthering peace, harmony and reconciliation among and between Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike.*

This journey that we call reconciliation is not easy. Still, we move along in the spirit of doing good, doing what is right and just, for those impacted by the residual effects of the residential school system. We do so with the intent of furthering peace, harmony and reconciliation among and between Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike.

For eight long years, I personally experienced the effects of such a school. It was not, by any stretch of the imagination, a pleasant experience.

We’ve come a long way but still have a very long way to go. Apologies have come and gone from churches and governments. Survivor gatherings and healing circles and ceremonies have transpired. These, of course, contribute to the healing and reconciliation processes. The TRC has done a magnificent job, and its recommendations have been embraced by so many sources, but still require volumes of attention and tons of action. It’s a slow process and will

not come to completion for a very long time, if ever.

The process, an honourable one to be sure, is strongly supported by many politicians, corporate bodies, schools and societies all across Canada.

A fine example of school-related involvement is Orange Shirt Day, which usually takes place in late September. Involving students, school staff and the public, this day creates awareness, provides information and knowledge, and helps close the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

Students are learning what residential schools were all about, how they compromised native culture, language, religion and more. Many now understand why survivors act(ed) and behave(d) as they do/did. Students will continue to learn more as the residential school syndrome is woven into the curriculum. This, needless to say, will go a long way in helping all students to move forward together. It is far from perfect, far from achieving its final destination, but at least it’s happening.

It truly is so heartening to witness students, teachers and administrators marching along, together, in a unified manner with their bright orange shirts attesting to their willingness to be part and parcel of reconciliation.

Terry Lusty is a Métis historian, author, photojournalist and a residential school survivor. He taught high school in Alberta’s north and is an Elder in the Native Friendship movement. ■



# Meet your new staff officers

ATA News Staff

In June 2018, Provincial Executive Council appointed four Alberta teachers to positions as executive staff officers with the Association. Chris Gonsalvez and Myra Rybotycki are two of them, and they assumed their new roles Aug. 1.



## Chris Gonsalvez

Chris Gonsalvez brings to the Association a wealth of experience in planning and delivering professional development opportunities for Alberta teachers. Before joining the

Association staff, he was a teacher and principal with Lethbridge Public Schools. He attended the University of Lethbridge, where he earned his B.Ed. and B.Sc. He also earned a master of science and information technology management degree at Aspen University.

In addition to being a lead teacher for technology and the Alberta Initiative for School Improvement, Gonsalvez also was a member of the Association's Instructor Corp (a team of teachers who present workshops and seminars on topics requested by teachers). As one of the 700 plus Lethbridge teachers who form ATA Local 41, he represented local district administrators and served as a member of its Classroom Improvement Fund Committee.

Gonsalvez is an executive staff officer in the Professional Development program area.



## Myra Rybotycki

Myra Rybotycki joined the Association as a staff member after 20 years of teaching, 19 of which were with Parkland School Division. In addition to teaching, she served on the executive of the North Central Teachers' Convention Association and, prior to taking on her new role at the Association, was head of the modern languages and fine arts department. Rybotycki earned her B.Ed. at the University of Alberta and is completing her M.Ed. at the University of Calgary.

Involvement in the Association for Rybotycki began in 1999, when she became a member of the Council of School Representatives for Parkland Local No. 10. She maintained that role throughout her teaching career while serving the Parkland teachers in a variety of other positions with the local, including vice-president, member of the Economic Policy Committee (now Teacher Welfare Committee) and member of the Negotiating Sub Committee. She served on C2 and co-chaired the Classroom Improvement Fund committee.

Rybotycki is an executive staff officer in the Teacher Welfare program area.

### 5 more things about Chris

**Describe your first student-teaching experience in three words.**

Eye-opening, exhausting, exciting

**Knowing what you know now, what advice would you give yourself in your first year as a teacher?**

- 1) Have patience, the days are long and exhausting, but it does get easier.
- 2) Keep a copy of every class picture and write student names on it. You will be trying to remember names of former students for the rest of your career.
- 3) Get to know the support staff you work with (educational assistants, custodians and administrative support). Knowing their birthdays, favourite chocolate bar and how they take their coffee will be incredibly helpful.

**If you weren't a teacher, what would you be?**

An actuary

**Chris's favourite ...**

**book:** *An Astronaut's Guide to Life on Earth* by Chris Hadfield.

**thing about summer:** spending time at the cabin with family, living on the water. ■

### 5 more things about Myra

**If you could travel back in time as the teacher you are today, what advice would you give your K-12 self?**

I would give myself permission to be kinder to my first-year teaching self. I was so worried about doing everything right that I missed some of the enjoyment of teaching.

**The best thing about teaching is ...**

the relationships you make in your school community!

**What is the greatest life lesson teaching has taught you?**

The greatest life lesson teaching taught me is that everyone is learning!

**If you weren't a teacher, what would you be?**

There is nothing I'd rather be.

**What is your favourite place in the world?**

Alberta! ■



## The heartbeat of education



Students are the face of education and teachers its heartbeat. For me, and many other teachers who know the importance of the student-teacher relationship, that is the plain and simple truth. What's really cool is how that one sentiment is right now being conveyed in two separate campaigns.

"Teachers, the heartbeat of public education" is the theme for World Teachers' Day this year. I love this because it is so fitting. Public education has many moving parts — ministries, school boards, district administrators, school support staff, and specialists like audiologists and speech pathologists. All these individuals and organizations play a role in creating the best learning conditions possible for students.

However, only teachers are responsible for the challenge of teaching our young people the curriculum and, most importantly, teaching them how to learn. We supply Alberta's "body" of 700,000 students with the knowledge, inspiration and caring it needs to grow and thrive. As Shayna Lewis put it in her editorial on the Canadian Teachers' Federation website, ([www.ctf-fce.ca/en/Pages/Events/WTD-2018-article.aspx](http://www.ctf-fce.ca/en/Pages/Events/WTD-2018-article.aspx)), we teachers "are the heartbeat of public education continually energizing all other parts of the system, and lending the momentum that fosters students to become positive contributors to their communities."

The Alberta Teachers' Association's new campaign is "The Face of Education." It depicts a diverse cross-section of K-12 students who share some of the small things their teachers say and do to support them as they progress through their years in the school system. The actors featured have faces that are dynamic, full of potential and reflect the variety of character that teachers see in their students today. What I like most about these ads is how they pick up on what teachers inherently know: when teachers have time to build relationships with their students, they can help those students grow, learn and achieve their fullest potential.

You, the heartbeat of education, are working hard to keep those faces of education bright-eyed and ready for the future.

Keep up the great work, Alberta teachers. The world needs you.

Oh, and starting Sept. 26, watch our website and social media channels for ways you can join us in the very special wrap up of the Association's 100-year anniversary and World Teachers' Day! ■

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

## WORLD TEACHERS' DAY | OCTOBER 5

Teachers, the **heartbeat** of public education

**Join us** at the Alberta Legislature grounds on World Teachers' Day, Friday, October 5 as we dedicate a statue to the people of Alberta in honour of the ATA's 100<sup>TH</sup> anniversary.

Time—Ceremony at 10 a.m.

Location—Northeast of the Legislature fountain

Email [jen.janzen@ata.ab.ca](mailto:jen.janzen@ata.ab.ca) for more information.



### 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)



# Outdated resource causes uproar

## Offensive residential school question a caution for teachers

Cory Hare  
ATA News Managing Editor

Check your resources. That's the lesson to be learned after an insensitive question about residential schools came to light via social media, says Melissa Purcell, an executive staff officer who oversees Indigenous programming at the Alberta Teachers' Association.

"My initial reaction was shock and disgust," Purcell said of the question. "I was in disbelief that such an insensitive question was asked and horrific multiple choice answers were given about the residential school system in Canada."

The question, "A positive effect of residential schools was," provided four possible answers:

- children were away from home
- children learned to read
- children were taught manners
- children became civilized.

(The answer key indicated that learning to read was the correct answer.)

The Social Studies 20 material was provided by the Alberta Distance Learning Centre (ADLC) and used in a classroom at the St. Paul Alternative Education Centre. The question generated a wave of criticism after it was shared on Twitter.



“ Schools can avoid this type of situation in the future by consistently reviewing resources and continuing to find opportunities to learn about newly updated or developed resources. ”

—Melissa Purcell, ATA executive staff officer

Apologies followed from Glen Brodziak, superintendent of the St. Paul Education Regional Division and David Garbutt, superintendent of Pembina Hills Public Schools, which operates the ADLC. Brodziak said that all St. Paul division staff have been reminded to review their resources, while Garbutt said ADLC staff are reviewing all the content of its courses.

Education Minister David Eggen also issued an apology and said ministry staff would review all ADLC material and contact every school authority in the province to ask them to take proactive steps to prevent students from being exposed to such material.

Purcell echoed the need for all teachers to be vigilant.

"Schools can avoid this type of situation in the future by consistently reviewing resources and continuing to find opportunities to learn about newly updated or developed resources," Purcell said.

The Association has been developing resources and professional development opportunities to help teachers increase their awareness and understanding of Canada's residential school system, she said.

The Walking Together: Education for Reconciliation project will be releasing a new professional development workshop called Indigenous Education Resources: Where do I Start? and a new resource for the Stepping Stones series called Professional Learning Resources in the upcoming months.

"The new workshop and resource will support teachers by identifying culturally responsive resources to support teacher-training needs, as well tools to critically review resources," Purcell said.

She also recommended that teachers seek recommendations from local Indigenous experts.

"Our greatest resource is knowledge and wisdom from local Elders,

Knowledge Keepers and Cultural Advisors," Purcell said.

### New standards

The province has revised standards for teachers and new standards for principals and superintendents. Each set of standards comes into effect in September 2019, and contains competencies that are specific to Indigenous education. As teachers work toward meeting these competencies, the overall quality of education around Indigenous issues will improve, Purcell said.

"This unfortunate incident is a significant reminder that we need to do more work to support teachers to meet changes in the Teaching Quality Standard," Purcell said.

The ATA is working to help members learn about the new standards and prepare themselves to meet the competencies. ■

### See related story on page 6.

Watch for the fall issue of the *ATA Magazine* in late September for a thorough exploration of the new standards for teachers, principals and superintendents.

# More than 5,000 teachers begin third school year without collective agreement

ATA News Staff

Fourteen bargaining units of the Alberta Teachers' Association remain unsettled in local bargaining even though central table bargaining has already begun for the subsequent term.

Teacher collective agreements in all school jurisdictions expired on Aug. 31, 2016. Negotiations began at that time for new collective agreements using a new bi-level bargaining model that included a central discussion on matters affecting all teachers in the province followed by 61 separate negotiations on local matters. Central negotiations ended in May of 2017 and, by law, local negotiations had to commence before the end of July 2017.

Forty-seven school boards reached an agreement with their teachers by the time the two-year term of the central bargaining ended in August 2018. Those agreements tend to focus on improvements to teacher personal days and family medical days, access to professional development and improvements for substitute teachers and administrators.

"These teachers deserve the same improvements gained by the majority of teachers elsewhere in the province," said Sandra Johnston, co-ordinator of Teacher Welfare. "Instead, the teachers are growing quite frustrated by the delay in some areas and some downright regressive bargaining positions and tactics in other areas."

“ These teachers deserve the same improvements gained by the majority of teachers elsewhere in the province. ”

—Sandra Johnston, Teacher Welfare co-ordinator

The *Public Education Collective Bargaining Act* leaves all standard processes and bargaining rights available to teachers in local bargaining. Most of the remaining units have applied for the assistance of a government appointed mediator in order to assist in reaching an agreement. The mediator can assist the parties to reach an agreement, compel the parties to vote on their recommended terms for settlement or simply decide that the parties are too far apart and "write-out" of the process.

After a mediator writes-out, either party may begin the process to move towards a strike or lockout.

ATA president Greg Jeffery says this is about respect, and he is worried that some tables may end up with a work stoppage.

"Teachers in a few of these boards feel a significant lack of respect from their employers," he said. "There is not a lot to be gained from a work stoppage, but if the employer is hostile and the relationship is broken, then teachers feel they have no other options."

Despite this possibility, Jeffery is still convinced that PECBA works.

"We have a good process for bargaining, that respects teachers' rights," he said. "I won't blame the bargaining

model or the central negotiators because a few school boards want to pick a fight with their teachers."

### Central table bargaining begins

Meanwhile, central table bargaining has officially begun for the 2018 round with the parties exchanging opening proposals at an initial meeting held on Sept. 10.

In a Bargainers' Blog post reporting on that meeting, Central Table Bargaining Chair and ATA vice-president Jason Schilling spoke of trust and respect.

"You trust us to represent you and your interests in bargaining, and I take that responsibility very seriously," he wrote, while promising to keep members informed through the blog.

"However, maintaining confidentiality at the table helps ensure that both sides are able to have full and frank conversations about sensitive matters that are important to teachers and the profession."

Members can read the blog for themselves and more on bargaining at [www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca) and clicking My ATA > Members Only, logging in with their online account and then selecting Collective Bargaining Updates. ■

### 14 units remain unsettled

The following ATA bargaining units have not yet settled local agreements for the 2016-18 term:

- Canadian Rockies Regional Division No. 12
- CS Centre-Est No. 3
- CS Centre-Nord No. 2
- CS FrancoSud No. 4
- Evergreen Catholic Separate Regional Division No. 2
- Fort Vermilion School Division No. 52
- Horizon School Division No. 67
- Northern Gateway Regional Division No. 10
- Peace Wapiti School Division No. 76
- Rocky View School Division No. 41
- St. Paul Education Regional Division No. 1
- Wetaskiwin Regional Division No. 11
- Lakeland Roman Catholic Separate School District No. 150
- Red Deer Catholic Regional Division No. 39



# Association begins new PR campaign

“Teaching is our job, but we recognize that public education exists to serve our children.”

—Greg Jeffery, ATA president

Jen Janzen  
ATA News Staff

They are the faces of education and we believe in them.

That’s the message behind “The Face of Education,” a new three-year public relations campaign created by the Alberta Teachers’ Association. The campaign’s goal is to advocate for public education and highlight the shared needs of teachers and students.

The ads, which began running in September, will be featured on grocery store ad bars, radio and television as well as in movie theatres, newspapers and magazines. They will also appear online.

The ads feature children of all ages and ethnicities. In the video and radio ads, the children speak of teachers who have had an impact on their lives. The children also mention some of the challenges teachers are facing, such as

class sizes and cyberbullying.

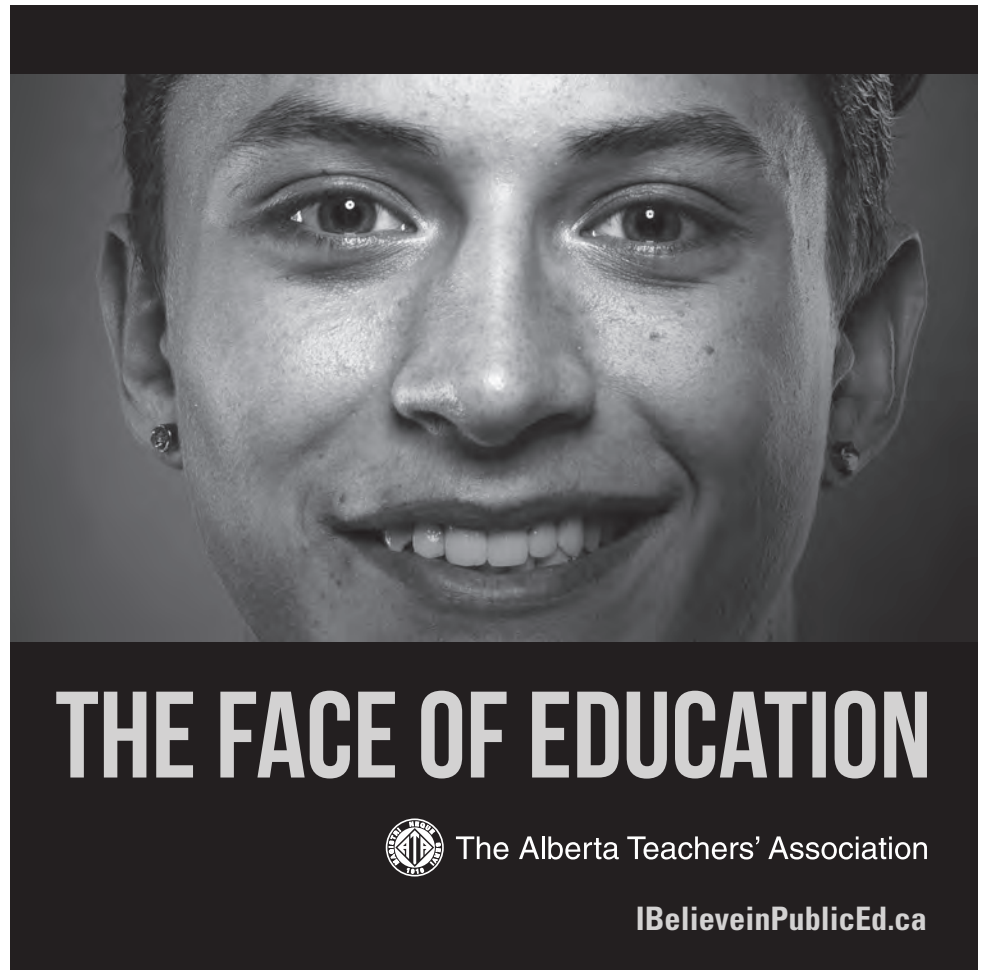
In one of the ads, an 11-year-old boy speaks about his favourite teacher, Madame Martine.

“She’s really good at explaining things and getting stuff done,” he says. “If we don’t have enough tablets for all of us, she says, ‘Jackson, don’t worry; I’ll see if we can get some from the other grades.’ She always figures it out.”

ATA president Greg Jeffery pointed out that while students’ learning conditions are teachers’ working conditions, the point of the campaign is to illustrate the importance of remaining focused on students.

“Teaching is our job, but we recognize that public education exists to serve our children,” he said.

The Association’s last campaign — “Learn from the past. Inspire the future.” — recognized the ATA’s 100th anniversary and featured glimpses of public education throughout the last century. ■



# Online tool updated to reflect new practice standards

ATA News Staff

With a new Teaching Quality Standard set to take effect next year, teachers and school leaders can now begin to prepare by creating a professional growth plan using an updated interactive tool that’s available on the Alberta Teachers’ Association’s website.

In February 2018 the education minister signed three professional practice standards, making all teaching professionals accountable for their applicable standard. A revised and updated Teaching Quality Standard (TQS) outlines contemporary competencies for teachers. And, for the first time in Alberta, professional practice competencies expected of school leaders and school jurisdiction leaders are outlined in a Leadership Quality Standard (LQS). Also, competencies for school superintendents and chief deputy

“This is a significant change for Alberta, and it places the province at the forefront of teacher standards worldwide.”

—Mark Swanson,  
Professional Development co-ordinator

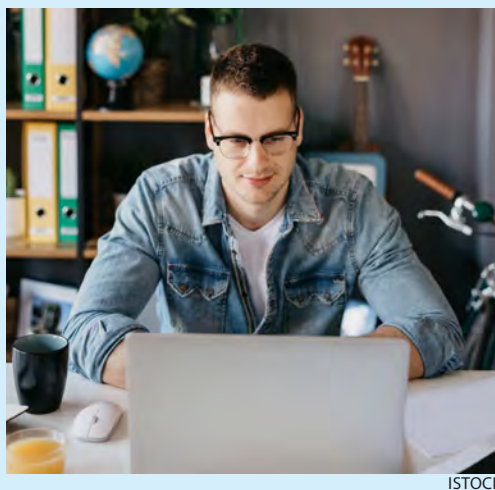
superintendents are contained in a Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard (SLQS).

“This is a significant change for Alberta, and it places the province at the forefront of teacher standards worldwide,” said Mark Swanson, co-ordinator of the Professional Development program area of the ATA.

The new standards are mandatory on Sept. 1, 2019.

Since this is the time of year when all teachers are required to complete an annual professional growth plan, and given the new standards, the Association has updated its digital interactive tool entitled Reflection on My Professional Practice. The tool helps teachers and school leaders reflect on the knowledge, skills and attributes (KSAs) of their professional practice as related to the competencies outlined in the new TQS and LQS.

Teachers and school leaders wishing to familiarize themselves with the new competencies and indicators or wishing to use the 2018 revised TQS or new LQS to create their growth plan can now sign up to use the tool. ■



ISTOCK

## Access the tool

The interactive tool can be accessed via the Association’s website at [www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca). Click My ATA > Professional Growth Plans > A Digital Resource.

For additional information, please contact Professional Development co-ordinator Mark Swanson at [mark.swanson@ata.ab.ca](mailto:mark.swanson@ata.ab.ca).

## What does it do?

- It uses a guided format for a personal self-reflection of confidence in achieving of the KSAs associated with a competency.
- It visually displays the results of one’s confidence in achieving the KSAs for each competency in a summary bar graph to assist in identifying growth goals.
- It identifies several online resources to support implementation of the competencies and indicators that can be used in developing an action plan to achieve growth goals.
- Its results can be printed and/or archived and notes can be written to assist in developing the annual professional growth plan.

## Professional growth plan

The requirements for an annual teacher professional growth plan (TPGP) are outlined in the Teacher Growth, Supervision and Evaluation Policy of Alberta Education. The TPGP is an important component of the policy that ensures teachers are maintaining the Teaching Quality Standard. This annual plan has to reflect the goals and objectives based on an assessment of learning needs by the individual teacher. Furthermore, it has to show a demonstrable relationship to the Teaching Quality Standard.

## Teaching Quality Standard Six competencies

1. Fostering effective relationships
2. Engaging in career-long learning
3. Demonstrating a professional body of knowledge
4. Establishing inclusive learning environments
5. Applying foundational knowledge about First Nations, Métis and Inuit
6. Adhering to legal frameworks and policies

## Leadership Quality Standard Nine competencies

1. Fostering effective relationships
2. Modeling commitment to professional learning
3. Embodying visionary leadership
4. Leading a learning community
5. Supporting the application of foundational knowledge about First Nations, Métis and Inuit

6. Providing instructional leadership
7. Developing leadership capacity
8. Managing school operations and resources
9. Understanding and responding to the larger societal context

## Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard Seven competencies

1. Building effective relationships
2. Modeling commitment to professional learning
3. Visionary leadership
4. Leading learning
5. Ensuring First Nations, Métis and Inuit education for all students
6. School authority operations and resources
7. Supporting effective governance

[www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca). Click My ATA > Professional Growth Plans > A Digital Resource



# ATA local supports members on extended disability

## SUCCESS STORIES

Catherine Melnychuk  
Special to the ATA News

Disability is not a subject that is front of mind for teachers, and yet every year for myriad health reasons some teachers find themselves having to be placed on extended disability leave (EDB). Being on disability presents a number of challenges to negotiate, from financial to emotional. Teachers in our local are fortunate to have the Extended Disability Group to offer assistance. We believe that Edmonton Public Teachers Local No. 37 is the only ATA local in Alberta to have an active program to provide this type of peer support.

The Extended Disability Group is administered by teaching peers who are themselves on disability. The topics for meetings reflect the concerns and wishes raised by attendees. Meetings strike a balance between guest speakers on topics such as embracing change and

handling stress to social activities like bowling, board games, attending plays and visiting greenhouses.

Our June wrap-up meeting was held at the Muttart Conservatory in Edmonton, which provided for a very enjoyable afternoon.

Regardless of the reason for being on disability, the Extended Disability Group offers a valuable opportunity to interact with understanding and encouraging peers. If you are an Edmonton Public teacher on EDB, consider joining us. The 2018/19 meetings will be held on Oct. 2, Dec. 4, March 5, May 7 and June 4. Contact the local office for more information ([info@edpub.org](mailto:info@edpub.org)).

*Catherine Melnychuk is a steering committee member of the Extended Disability Group of Edmonton Public Teachers Local No. 37.*

### CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Success Stories is an ongoing feature that enables teachers to share their successes with their colleagues. To submit an idea or an article about a new program or approach that you've instituted, please contact managing editor Cory Hare at [cory.hare@ata.ab.ca](mailto:cory.hare@ata.ab.ca).



SUPPLIED

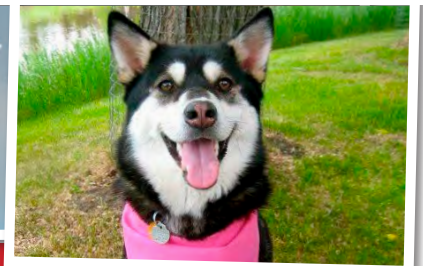
L-R: Susan Kolbowicz, Catherine Melnychuk and Christine Rutherford are members of the Extended Disability Group of Edmonton Public Teachers Local No. 37.

## Heritage moment

**RIGHT** Rick Kremp, president of Parkland Teachers Local No. 10, addresses members of Provincial Executive Council prior to lunch at the Stony Plain & Parkland Pioneer Museum on Sept. 20. Members of the local hosted PEC for a field trip that included a tour of a historic teacherage whose restoration has been helped by donations from the local and PEC.

**BELOW** ATA president Greg Jeffery, South West district representative Katherine Pritchard and ATA past-president Mark Ramsankar share a laugh during a visit to a one-room, 1910-era school.

PHOTOS BY CORY HARE



## SEEKING FURRY SUBMISSIONS!

The ATA News is seeking entries for Teacher's Pet, which profiles teachers' furry, feathered or even scaled friends.

If you have a cuddly companion that you'd like to share with your colleagues, please send us a picture, along with the following required information:

- Your name, grade, school and the subject(s) you teach
- Your pet's name and breed

Also, please answer these two questions:

- 1) What makes your pet special?
- 2) How does your pet help you in your profession?

A selection of entries will be published in an upcoming issue of the ATA News.

Please email your submissions to [cory.hare@ata.ab.ca](mailto:cory.hare@ata.ab.ca).

**DEADLINE: NOV. 16**



# Project Overseas delivers a

This past summer, 10 Alberta teachers participated in Project Overseas. Here is a sampling of first-person accounts of their experiences.

## What is Project Overseas?

Project Overseas is a joint endeavour by the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) and its member organizations to give professional assistance to fellow teachers in developing countries. The project takes place during the months of July and August.

Started in 1962 with one program in Nigeria, Project Overseas has helped teacher organizations in more than 50 countries in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and the South Pacific. Since its inception, more than 1,800 Canadian teachers have participated in the program. Currently, approximately 50 volunteers are sent each summer to about a dozen countries.

## Application deadline approaching

The deadline to apply for Project Overseas this year is midnight on Nov. 1. More information is available on the ATA home page at [www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca).



CHRISTINE MAGILL

Ugandan teachers learn how to make and use tangrams.

## Project a great way to give back

Christine Magill

After my fellow team members and I arrived in Uganda, we met our local co-tutors. These were Ugandan teachers who work as instructional coaches with the Ugandan Teachers Union. My partner was Anthony and we immediately clicked. We were in charge of planning a numeracy workshop. We both had ideas for activities and quickly decided on a theme for each of our three lessons with an overall goal of focusing on engaging student centres.

The next two weeks were spent running our workshops. Each week we had 80 teachers take part in the program. On the weekends we visited some local sites, including a history museum and Victoria Lake, where we saw the source of the Nile.

The workshops were a rewarding experience. It was my first time co-teaching and I loved working with another teacher and running a class together. I learned a lot about creative ways to use local materials for instruction and was inspired by the participants' excitement and enthusiasm. Many worked in very challenging conditions with chronic attendance issues, no resources or books for their students and very large class sizes. Some teachers were dealing

with class sizes of 100 to 200 students, but despite the difficulties they were excited to try new tools.

In the past I have travelled and participated in many other international volunteer projects and Project Overseas was by far the best organized and facilitated program I have been a part of. The long-term and lasting impact of the project was clear, and it was hard to say goodbye at the end of the trip. The teacher participants all expressed their desire to continue to have access to professional development and a wish that all teachers would have a chance to participate in similar workshops.

Since returning to Canada we have been sent videos and photos of teachers applying and using the strategies and tools from the workshop in their classrooms. It is difficult to put into words how rewarding it has been seeing the clear impact the workshops have had and the chain reaction effect they are having on student learning. I will always be grateful to have been part of such an amazing experience, and strongly recommend Project Overseas for those looking for a way to give back and support other educators. ■

*Christine Magill teaches high school math, social studies and Aboriginal studies in Strathmore.*



ELLEN BRAATEN

Teacher workshop participants create a skit to represent barriers faced by girls.

## Challenging and powerful

Ellen Braaten

For two weeks at the beginning of July, I had the amazing privilege of joining three colleagues from across Canada to partner in a "train the trainer" project in the West African country of Sierra Leone. To give readers some context, this country had the first university in Western Africa in the 1800s, is the setting for stories such as *Blood Diamond* and *The Book of Negroes*, went through an 11-year civil war in the 1990s and suffered a recent ebola outbreak.

After a long overseas flight, our team arrived in the capital city of Freetown on July 6. Once in this historic city, the site of the 1787 settlement for repatriated slaves from Nova Scotia, we were hosted by the Sierra Leone Teachers Union. We spent the next week working closely with five local educators to train a group of 40 teachers in topics such as literacy, numeracy, peace education and teachers action for girls. The following week we all travelled to the country's southern region, where those 40 teachers led

sessions teaching the same topics to a group of 100 teachers from the surrounding area.

The experience challenged me physically, professionally and personally as I worked alongside colleagues who teach in very different conditions from what I am used to. It was very powerful to watch female colleagues who had grown up fighting to be recognized as capable human beings as they passionately inspired their peers to take action to give dignity and educational opportunities to the girls in their communities.

It excited me to hear of the new government's plans to increase access to education through funding and reforms. It filled me with gratitude to think of my stable job with predictable pay, my well-equipped school, and my many opportunities for professional development as I got to know other teachers who approach their jobs with passion regardless of the absence of the privileges that I enjoy every day. ■

*Ellen Braaten is a Grade 5 teacher at Monterey Park School in Calgary.*



Canadian teachers meet colleagues belonging to the Grenada Union of Teachers.

SUPPLIED



# a life-changing experience



LAWRENCE HUNTER

Nkabom Team 2018 (L-R): Lawrence Hunter (ATA), Stephanie Marr (NBTA), David Douglass (ETFO) and Julia DeGirolamo (ATA)

## The most rewarding experience of my career

Lawrence Hunter

I first went to Ghana with Project Overseas in 2016 as part of the new entrants team and I knew I would return. This year I had the pleasure of returning as the Nkabom team leader.

In co-operation with local co-tutors, the Canadian team prepared and presented professional development workshops to approximately 500 teachers and headmasters from the Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT).

“The workshops became a collaborative exchange, an open dialogue of ideas and best practices.”

The workshops became a collaborative exchange, an open dialogue of ideas and best practices. It was very humbling to hear their stories of no teaching resources, crumbling schools, teaching under trees, 150 students in a class, students working well below grade level, language barriers, cultural division and teachers going for months without pay. Having a team of outstanding Canadian teachers and eager participation

**REWARDING EXPERIENCE**  
continued on page 10



CARMEN PON

Project Overseas participants visited the Sierra Leone cities of Bo and Freetown, where they delivered workshops and sessions on a number of topics.

## Sierra Leone provides life lessons

Carmen Pon

Our CTF team had the fortune of collaborating with educators from Sierra Leone. Over the course of six months, we met regularly online to prepare for the training ahead and forged new friendships. We then traveled to Freetown and Bo and conducted workshops in numeracy, literacy, peace education and sessions on girls' education, as well as topics in health education and disaster preparedness.

The collaborative project with the Sierra Leone Teachers' Union (SLTU)

provided useful insight into education in developing contexts. We were able to visit a school, chat with participants about their experiences, and examine the curricula and textbooks used. This experience has helped me understand the ways in which we can bridge education for newcomers as well as enabled me to think creatively about teaching with limited materials.

The education system in Sierra Leone faces a number of challenges, but having worked in partnership with SLTU, I have no doubt that the new generation of teacher trainers have the skills and knowledge to move forward in an

era of free education for all children. The trainers' enthusiasm was clearly demonstrated in their eagerness to explore new techniques. One of my favourite memories was playing numeracy hopscotch and other math games with the participants. Pedagogy aside, I feel much could be learned from Sierra Leone in terms of religious tolerance and reconciliation. It is truly a nation of resilient people. ■

*Carmen Pon is a Grade 6 teacher with Edmonton Public Schools. She is currently on leave in order to pursue a PhD in education and international development.*



SUPPLIED

Teachers practice a co-operative learning task called rally coach.

## A summer like no other

Carolyn Weiler

As part of a team of three incredible Canadian teachers, I travelled to Ouagadougou, the capital city of the west African nation of Burkina Faso. Our team worked with two partner organizations: the primary teachers union (SNEA-B) and the secondary teachers' union (SNESS).

Each Canadian teacher was partnered with a Burkina teacher trainer. Together we planned and put into action various professional development workshops for groups of about 65 participating teachers.

I was surprised at the universal nature of the topics of general pedagogy, such as inclusion, differentiation, gender equality, critical thinking and growth mindset, among others. As well, my teacher partner and I led workshops on French grammar, as well as on French reading strategies. As class sizes were very large, (70 to 100 students!), there was much need for differentiation and co-operative learning. I was able to integrate many co-operative learning structures that I use regularly at home in my classroom.

**LIKE NO OTHER** continued on page 10

## Our journey continues

Betty Fu

This summer I travelled with five other teachers from across Canada to collaborate with the Grenada Union of Teachers (GUT). Our team partnered with the GUT to provide a two-week summer course for teachers on the following topics: trade unionism and leadership, literacy, theatre and dance, numeracy and information technology. I worked alongside Dennie Walker, an information and technology specialist,

to help teachers find ways to integrate technology into their classrooms and to use technology to support planning, classroom management, assessment and reporting.

I learned so much from my Grenadian colleagues and was truly inspired by their passion and love of education. The teachers in the course spoke of their diverse classrooms and the need to engage learners at all levels, a common goal shared by teachers in Grenada and Canada! I was encouraged by their innovative solutions for the increasing

“I am thankful that in an increasingly technological world we are able to maintain the important connections we have built and can continue our partnerships and friendships even after our summer course officially concluded.”

complexity they face each day and am eager to apply the ideas and strategies they shared in my own classroom and teaching practices.

I am thankful that in an increasingly technological world we are able to maintain the important connections we have built and can continue our partnerships and friendships even after

our summer course officially concluded. Our journey together has only begun and I look forward to contributing towards building a global education community that supports publicly funded education. ■

*Betty Fu teaches junior high science in Edmonton.*





Participants in a numeracy session learn how to build critical thinking and deeper understanding into math instruction.

JULIA DEGIROLAMO

## A journey of personal growth

Julia DeGirolamo

“We live to teach” is the motto of the Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT). I had the privilege of witnessing that energy first hand, an experience that will stay with me forever. This summer, I was fortunate to be chosen by the ATA and CTF to participate in Project Overseas. Along with seven other Canadian teachers, I traveled to Kumasi, Ghana where we partnered with GNAT to deliver professional development workshops to over 400 Ghanaian teachers.

Alongside GNAT co-tutors, our team ran three week-long sessions on a variety of teaching and learning topics. My sessions focused on numeracy. Meeting the teachers of Ghana and hearing their stories and struggles made me aware of how much we have in Canada. The biggest challenge for us was to strip away all of the fancy resources, manipulatives and technology from our teaching practice and still provide meaningful and relevant sessions for our participants. This experience

inevitably strengthened my own teaching and I learned far more from them than I could have ever anticipated. The Ghanaian teachers are incredibly resilient people who embody the spirit of “We live to teach.”

Over the last 10 years, my teaching career and love of travel has allowed me to explore countries across five different continents. This love of travel and passion for teaching is what initially drew my attention to Project Overseas. I very quickly realized that the project was less about travel and more about personal growth and forming relationships. The days could be long and exhausting, but the weeks were short. At the end of our month together, I didn't want to say goodbye to my team, who had become family, and the incredible people of Ghana.

Project Overseas wouldn't happen without the passionate and hardworking teachers who live to teach! I feel privileged to have been part of that group. ■

*Julia DeGirolamo is a Grade 5 teacher at St. Wilfrid Elementary School in Calgary.*



SUPPLIED

Kim Carson presents her colleague Ernest Asamoah with an ATA pin.

## An experience of warmth and growth

Kim Carson

When I received notice that I had been selected to work alongside teachers in Ghana, Alberta was in the depths of a winter freeze. I could not wait to feel the warmth of the Ghanaian sun on my face. Throughout the next five months, my Canadian team met online on a regular basis to plan and prepare for the summer workshops. From the moment that my team of four landed in Accra, the only thing we experienced that was warmer than the sun were the kind, caring people of Ghana.

During the three weeks of the workshops, approximately 240 teachers from various regions gathered at the Kumasi Anglican Secondary School. With the support of a co-tutor, we delivered three sessions: Understanding the Beginning Teacher, What is Mentorship? and Teacher Wellness to beginning and head teachers.

My Canadian colleagues also delivered sessions in conjunction with their co-tutors. Regardless of the planned activities, teachers were keen to try new techniques, participated fully, explored ways to embed the ideas into their practice, and were committed to sharing their learnings with their colleagues back at their respective schools.

Project Overseas provides Canadian teachers with the opportunity to enhance their global perspectives on teaching and learning from their national and international colleagues. During our stay in Ghana, the Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT), provided opportunities for the Canadian team to gain further insights into the people and culture. We are grateful for the time and commitment the union representatives extended to us to enrich our time. Through every experience it was evident that GNAT is a well-respected organization in their country. Their ongoing commitment and dedication to the teachers of Ghana was apparent in their daily interactions. Working alongside this professional organization enabled me to understand some of the complexities and celebrations the teachers in Ghana encounter.

I am grateful to the Alberta Teachers' Association and CTF for their commitment to Project Overseas and for providing me with the opportunity to represent our union, province and country. The personal and professional benefits one gains can only be acquired through first-hand experience. Ghana will always hold a special place in my heart. ■

*Kim Carson is the principal of Thorhild Central School.*

## LIKE NO OTHER

continued from page 9

We also shared some of our Canadian culture with the participants during our Canadian “soiree.” Everyone especially loved tasting maple syrup!

The teacher participants were incredibly receptive and grateful for all of the workshops. They enjoyed the many icebreaker-type activities that we used, and especially seemed to love learning how to use games to teach curriculum!

Being a French immersion teacher, I was challenged to do workshops for teachers of English Second Language (ESL). How fun to see that universal strategies can be used no matter the language of instruction.

This experience is certainly life-changing in that we see first-hand that the nature of teachers is worldwide: we all want the best for our students and we all try to do our best in our own teaching circumstances. Despite their lack of technology, books, and hands-on math and science materials, these teachers achieve so much with their students.

As Canadian teachers, the goal of this project was to add some teaching tools to the tool belt of our colleagues in Burkina Faso, but I know that I came away with much more. The Burkinabé are a proud and dedicated people. My own attitude and understanding of the world have been influenced by this experience. I was inspired by each of these educators, who do so much with so little, who want the best for their students and who work hard to educate their most precious resources.

*“Former les gens, ce n'est pas remplir une vase, c'est allumer un feu.”* ■

*Carolyn Weiler teaches Grade 2 French immersion at Ecole Connaught School in Medicine Hat.*

## REWARDING EXPERIENCE

continued from page 9

from the Ghanaian teachers made the workshops a great success. The off-duty hours were always a treat. As we enjoyed local meals of jollof rice, fufu, banku, kenkey and red-red, thousands of fruit bats would fly overhead. Procuring fresh fruit, groceries and personal souvenirs from local markets required haggling and the expectation of a humorous exchange of insults during the negotiations. The bright colours of the Kente cloth and glass beads were quickly adopted into our wardrobe.

Kakum National Forest offered a breathtaking walk in the treetops, Elmina Castle was a reminder of a darker history, and Kintampo Falls provided a reprieve from the heat. A safari in Mole National Park was a highlight that brought us face to face with kob, waterbuck, duiker, warthogs, baboons, monkeys and elephants. Floor hockey and traditional drums and dance were huge hits during the intercultural exchange of Canada-Ghana Night.

Being part of Project Overseas has been the most rewarding experience of my teaching career thus far. ■

*Lawrence Hunter teaches at L.Y. Cairns School in Edmonton.*



## Volunteer for Project Overseas WITH CTF IN THE SUMMER OF 2019

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

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

For more information and to apply, visit the ATA website ([www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca)) under My ATA > Programs and Services > International Cooperation.

If you have questions, contact Robert Mazzotta.

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

**Email**  
[robert.mazzotta@ata.ab.ca](mailto:robert.mazzotta@ata.ab.ca)



**Application deadline  
November 1, 2018.**



## Discipline process a cornerstone of Association's mandate



### PITFALLS AND PRECAUTIONS

**Cory Schoffer**  
Secretary, ATA Professional Conduct Committee

It is my pleasure to bring you this important column. Pitfalls and Precautions is an ongoing series that sheds some light on the results of the professional conduct process as it pertains to the actions of teachers and the decisions of the Professional Conduct Committee. This series has been around for a while, which means that it's time for a short refresher on the professional conduct process.

Sections 16 to 60 of the *Teaching Profession Act* define professional discipline and grant the Association the authority to discipline its own members. Guided further by our own Code of Professional Conduct, the entire discipline process for active members of the Association rests with the ATA.

There are two fundamental paths of the discipline process, investigations and invitations/hearings.

#### Investigations

Let's start with investigations. Anyone — parent, superintendent, colleague, student — can request an investigation of an active member, and the Association is required to conduct a preliminary investigation into the alleged unprofessional conduct. The executive secretary will assign a staff officer to conduct the preliminary investigation. The investigating officer will interview the complainant, the investigated member and other witnesses that he/

she deems to be pertinent to the case.

During the investigation, the investigated member is not entitled to receive advice or assistance from the Association, as it is the Association itself that conducts the investigation. Representation in the form of assistance from a staff officer may continue with respect to the member's circumstances with their employer, their colleague or parents, but this process is kept completely separate from any investigation.

#### Invitations/Hearings

Once the investigation has concluded, the investigating officer will write a report and submit recommendations to the executive secretary, who acts upon the recommendations of the investigating officer and the matter proceeds in one of three ways:

a. There is insufficient evidence to warrant a hearing.

This decision is appealable by the complainant. The appeal must be initiated within 30 days of notification, and accompanied by a payment of \$250 per case.

b. Invitation

An invitation is ordered if the matter does not rise to the level of a formal sanction. The investigated

**PITFALLS AND PRECAUTIONS**  
continued on page 12

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

### ATA Teacher Welfare

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

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

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

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

#### How many hours do I need?

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

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

Keep your own records of hours worked, including preparation time before and after school, supervision and extracurricular time after school, and time spent marking assignments

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

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

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

#### Should I apply anyway?

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

#### What if I am turned down?

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

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

## Exchanging Experiences 2019/20

### Full-year and short-term exchanges for educators and administrators.

Travel, refresh and renew your commitment, passion and dedication to education and lifelong learning in a new and exciting environment!

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#### Destinations

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Other Canadian provinces



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



The Alberta Teachers' Association

Alberta  
Government



## PITFALLS AND PRECAUTIONS

continued from page 11

member is required to meet with a senior member of the profession to discuss the behaviour in question. The discussion will include links to the Code of Professional Conduct. A successful invitation concludes with recognition by the investigated member of the unprofessional nature of their behaviour, and commitments regarding future behaviour.

### c. Hearing of the Professional Conduct Committee (PCC)

A hearing of the PCC will determine the guilt or innocence of the investigated member with respect to the related charge(s). If the investigated member is found guilty, they are subject to penalty.

Penalties vary depending on the nature of the unprofessional conduct:

- i. Reprimand (oral, written, severe, very severe, extremely severe)
- ii. Fines (up to \$10,000 per charge)
- iii. Suspension of membership in the ATA (defined period of time)

### iv. Cancellation of membership in the ATA

When it comes to the suspension or cancellation of an ATA membership, it is important to note that the Association has jurisdiction only over membership. The ATA has no jurisdiction over a teacher's certificate. In these cases, the penalty also includes a recommendation to the minister of education to take similar action with respect to the teacher's certificate. In order for a suspended teacher to have their ATA membership reinstated, the individual has to appeal to Provincial Executive Council following the end date of their suspension. A member who has had their membership cancelled is not eligible to appeal to have their membership reinstated.

It should be noted that both Provincial Executive Council and the investigated member can appeal the decision of a PCC as it pertains to guilt/innocence as well as penalty.

This is a very brief snapshot of the discipline process. This process is a fundamental cornerstone of the Association's mandate. Further information on the process can be found on the Association's website by clicking My ATA > Conduct and Competence.

I look forward to bringing this column to you and sharing with you the highlights from the Professional Conduct Committee. ■

## John Dunn : School Presentations

Inspiring, informative & visually stunning presentations based on John's expeditions in Arctic Canada & beyond

- education about northern Canada
- goal setting & problem solving
- celebrating Canada's wilderness
- creativity and innovation
- geography & history
- climate change & environment

**1-3:** "In my teaching career, I have only once or twice been so delighted with a presentation in my school." *Karen Norton, Jessie Duncan, Penhold, AB*

**6-12:** "... an exceptional speaker ... breath-taking photography." *Ken Sampson, St. Mary's, Taber, AB*

**K-9:** "A masterful ability to manage & engage our audience from K to 9." *David Walters, Enchant, AB*

NOW BOOKING FOR 2018/19: join 500 schools and 100,000+ students of all grades from coast-to-coast who have enjoyed John's talks

[jdunn@jdunn.ca](mailto:jdunn@jdunn.ca) 403-970-2700 [www.arcticlight.com](http://www.arcticlight.com)



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It also can play a part in your fundraising events too.

### Questions?

Email: [schoolmilk@albertamilk.com](mailto:schoolmilk@albertamilk.com)

Call: 1 877 361 1231

Visit: [albertamilk.com/clubmooregistration](http://albertamilk.com/clubmooregistration) to register your school with Club Moo

2017-18 Registration closes Dec. 31

2018-19 Registration opens March 1







## ATA INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION PROGRAM

**Volunteer** for the 2019 ATA–Masulita, Uganda Professional Development Project. It's a professional opportunity for Alberta teachers to co-teach with Ugandan educators in a government primary/secondary school in Masulita or within the Street Children's Project. Open to teachers who have completed three years of full-time teaching in Alberta before the overseas assignment commences.

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

**For an application form**, visit the ATA website [teachers.ab.ca](http://teachers.ab.ca) and click on My ATA > Programs and Services > International Cooperation > ATA Masulita Uganda Professional Development.

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

**Application Deadline: Dec. 1, 2018**



The Alberta Teachers' Association

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### SLIP US A TIP!

**We want to hear about news in your school, district or local.**

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



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### LOCATION:

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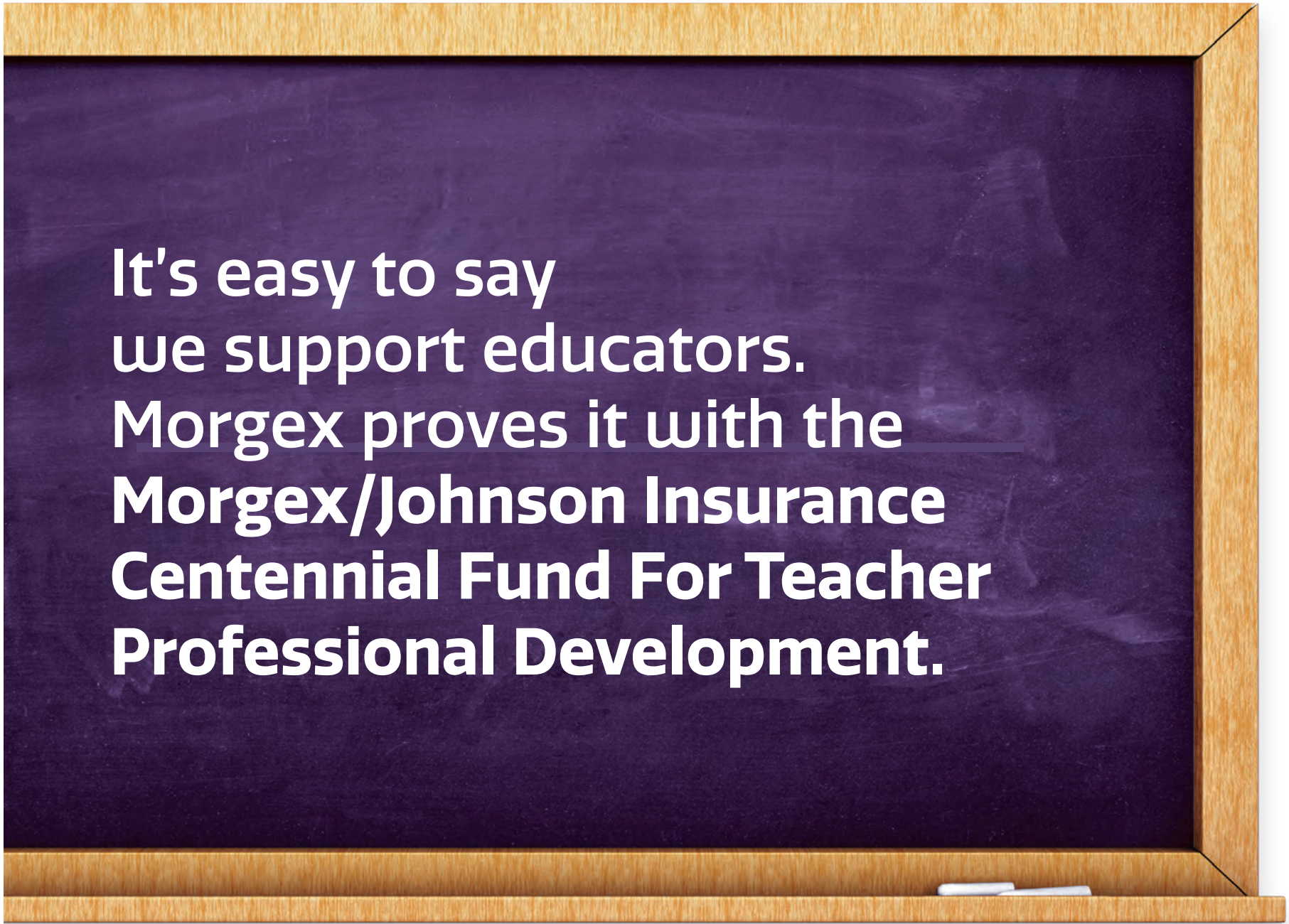
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**DAY 2** - Student Conference

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## 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** Thursday, Oct. 4, 2018, 4 p.m. (publication date Oct. 16, 2018)

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

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**Circulation:** 44,000

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## HOTEL RATES

A directory of special rates for Alberta Teachers' Association members at various Alberta hotels is available online under **ATA Membership and Services** found at [www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca) under News and Info > Publications.

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



DEADLINE:  
**OCTOBER 2** 2018

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



## Grounded in Truth, Soaring With Knowledge

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website: <https://www.rivercreeresort.com/hotel/>

**Early Registration June 30/18 \$300**  
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# LIFE-CHANGING GRADUATE PROGRAMS

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Faculty of Education

[edgradstudies.ca](http://edgradstudies.ca)

## Ulethbridge OPEN HOUSE

**October 20, 2018**  
Attend in person or virtually

[campaigns.uleth.ca/open-house](http://campaigns.uleth.ca/open-house)

## Auto for sale—2016 Ford F-150 Lariat

**Features:** Leather, heated and a/c front seats, back-up camera with navigation, remote start, soft rollup tonneau cover and power lift gate. Winter tires on rims incl.

**Colour:** Dark Blue  
**Engine:** 3.5L V6  
**Transmission:** Automatic, 4WD  
**Kilometres:** 121,250

This is a sealed bid auction so please mail your bid letter in a **sealed envelope marked Attn: Tracy Pohl – Car Bid**, Alberta Teachers' Association, 11010 142 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T5N 2R1. Bids will be accepted until 5 p.m., **October 15, 2018.**

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.



# TALENT

September 25, 2018 | Volume 53, Number 2



SUPPLIED

Members of Calgary Separate Local No. 55 march in the Pride parade on Sept. 2. About 80 local members attended.

## What gave you a warm, fuzzy feeling as you returned to the classroom?

### CRAIG BASKERVILLE

► It's my first year back in the classroom after three years of consulting for my school division. Needless to say I had some anxiety. In my first week I received an email from a student stating that he is very happy that I am his new social studies teacher. It was like a big hug!

### LEANNE JOHNSON

► One of my students from last year, whom I have again this year for a different class, wrote in his welcome back letter that "last year I did not like writing until Mrs. Johnson showed me an easy way to write and how to be good at it." 😊

### TIANA DANIELLE

► A student asking if they could make me art, and another student (who professed to "hate reading") reading my book suggestion in one night and taking out the sequel the next day!

### ROSA BIANCA

► Parents telling me their Grade 7 child is excited to be taking industrial arts classes with me!

### AMANDA JANE

► I moved up to Grade 5 this year after teaching Grade 2 for the last five years. I'm fortunate enough to teach many former students this year, and the ones I didn't have in Grade 2 are incredibly sweet as well. It's nice coming into an amazing group of students and amazing parents too!



ISTOCK

### RHONDA KELLY

► A parent bringing me homemade apple crisp one day and on the following day rhubarb crisp! Feeling the love! 😊

### NICOLE MOONEY

► Brand new school and division this year, and my colleagues and administration have gone out of their way to make me feel welcome and valued. Feeling very blessed this year! 😊

### MAJ-BRITT BIGOTTI

► I had one rough class last year, and I had to be tough to keep the students focused. I have all the same students this year mixed into different classes.

One of the students came up to me on the second day of classes and said I had a beautiful smile and an awesome laugh that she wished she could have heard last year. 😊

### PAULA KLINCK

► Gotta love it when your little kinders tell you that they had the best day ever, they just LOVE school or they cry because they don't want to go home. 🥰👧👦👧👦

### ANELLA EVA

► Four grades this year in our little one-room school house. And I love every student and every student loves me. Teaching is the best job!

### SUE KOPCHIA

► One of my students brought me a coffee mug all the way from his summer vacation in Jamaica!

### CASSANDRA LACROIX

► Three parents telling me my classroom feels like home on the first day. That, and the whispered, "I can't wait to come back!"

### JESSICA MARY MICHELLE

► On the first day of school one of my new Grade 1 students came up to me to give me an awkward hug. He looked up at me and just said "I love you Madame." My heart melted. 😊

### DE WITTAL SMITH

► A parent at meet-the-teacher night told me their child came home excited about LA, and they have never said that before. They just really liked my "vibe."

### JUANITA NOMAD

► First day of class, I spoke with a couple of my students who seemed to be feeling a bit isolated in their school as it is not as culturally diverse as some other schools. After sharing stories of growing up bicultural and with immigrant parents, when the students left my room I overheard them say, "She gets it bro!" That was a huge fuzzy for me. ■

Responses gathered via Facebook