



Off Script
with ATA President Jason Schilling

Teachers:
Thank you!
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WHO'S WHO?

Your elected
leaders at
a glance.

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ATA NEWS

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Teachers furious at government's pension grab

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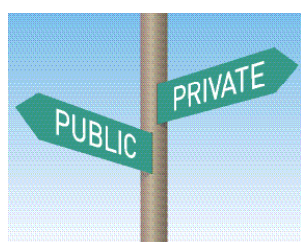
Inoculate yourself against the GERM

Beware of manufactured education crises in the wake of upcoming PISA test results.
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Teachers in Calgary public hit hard by layoffs

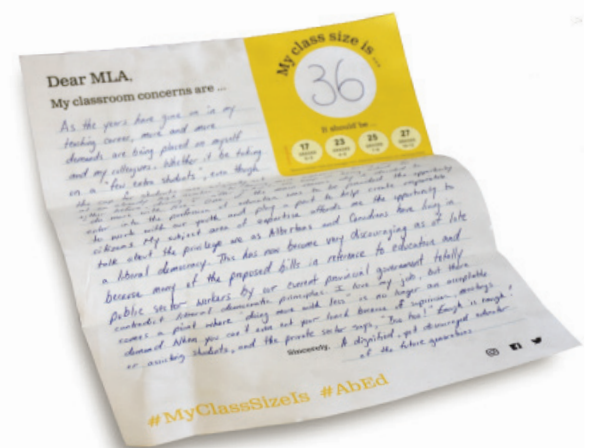
"A lot of heartache out there"
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Where's the equity?

UCP exploration of school choice raises questions.
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Dear MLA,



Hundreds of teachers share their stories.
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In the pension world, trust matters



EDITORIAL

Jonathan Teghtmeyer
ATA News Editor-in-Chief

Teachers are relatively familiar with matters of trust.

We have trustees who govern our school boards. Every teacher knows about the fiduciary duty we owe to the students in our care. This trust relationship concept originates in the financial world and teachers — whether they like it or not — are getting a better appreciation for this concept.

A trust relationship is at the heart of all pension plans. Teachers contribute their own money to the pension fund to be held in trust until retirement. The government makes roughly equal contributions* as deferred compensation for teachers. The money, teachers' money, is held and managed by trustees until the teacher retires and receives retirement income paid from the combined contributions and returns on investment.

The players in this relationship are the trustor, the trustees and the beneficiaries.

The trustors are the government and teachers themselves — those who make the initial contributions.

The beneficiaries are the teachers who receive the retirement benefits. The trustees are the directors of the pension board, in this case the Alberta Teachers' Retirement Fund (ATRF) board. These trustees owe a duty to the trustors to act in the best interests of the beneficiaries.

The ATRF board holds the money, oversees the investments and, therefore, has a duty to teachers and the government to act in the best interests of plan members to keep those assets

budget documents. The initial move did not engender trust.

The ATRF board, the group currently entrusted with fund management, identified concerns that the move was not in the members' best interests (as is their duty). Instead of sharing further data to make the case, the government dismissed the concerns.

As a dispute emerged over the data being used to justify the decision, the government rejected a reasonable suggestion to bring in an independent third

decision. Now, how can they be trusted to act in plan members' best interests?

What the government is proposing amounts to shifting a big chunk of the trusteeship relationship from joint control by the sponsors to sole control, and yet their behaviour has eroded all trust that teachers might have had. How can you do this without the trust of teachers?

Imagine (to borrow from the educational trust relationship), if divorced parents with joint custody agree to send their child to one school and then out of the blue, unannounced, one parent unilaterally walks to school, pulls the student out and transfers her to a new school with absolutely no consultation with the other parent and in the face of objections by the student herself. It would be considered a gross travesty.

Yet, here we are. Bill 22 has passed and the Alberta Teachers' Association will explore and use any legal recourse. But that doesn't change the fact that the trust has been irreparably broken. And that's not a good position to be in relative to the people who are managing your money.

Because trust matters — a lot. ■

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

“The whole scheme and the way it was implemented amounts to a huge breach of trust.”

safe so a pension can be paid upon retirement.

It is here where we begin to really appreciate the offensiveness of the government's move to forcibly transfer teachers' pension assets to government control. The whole scheme and the way it was implemented amounts to a huge breach of trust.

First off, the decision was made without consultation with either teachers or the ATRF. The decision was announced by surprise, buried deep in

party, the auditor general, to review the data and the decision. The government carried on toward the predetermined outcome, unwavering by the concerns of the beneficiaries, the partner trustors or the trustees themselves.

Finally, in the face of significant pressure and demonstrable resistance, the government used procedural strong-arm tactics to limit debate and ram the legislation through. Well over 30,000 emails have been written to MLAs expressing concern about this

* The Alberta government makes slightly smaller contributions to the pension fund because teachers have opted for an enhanced cost-of-living-allowance benefit.

The ins and outs of leadership certification



Q & A

Dennis Theobald
ATA Executive Secretary

Question: When my principal or vice-principal is away from school, either short term or on a medical leave, what are the expectations or requirements for acting administration to be in possession of the leadership certification? Further, do teachers applying to leadership positions require the leadership certificate prior to accepting the position?

Answer: As required by the *Education Act*, effective this past Sept. 1, principals, and only principals, are required to hold valid certification as a school leader. This requirement extends to an individual who is appointed as an acting principal by a board for a period of not more than a year. The *Education Act* is “silent” when it comes to leadership certification requirements for vice-principals, associate or assistant principals. Such silence in effect excuses them from any such requirement.

Having said that, many vice-principals, associate or assistant principals are now in possession of a leadership certificate. The Alberta Teachers' Association played a key role in designing and delivering a two-day inservice to vice-principals, associate and assistant principals and central office leaders throughout 2019. The inservice was a short-term means of providing school leaders with a preparation program leading to certification (excepting principals whom the minister deemed eligible to be

that take them out of their school and often out of their community for brief periods of time. To ensure that there is one point of contact at the school for teachers, students and the public, the vice-principal, associate, assistant principal or a classroom teacher will normally be asked to assume the duties of the principal in their absence. These individuals who on occasion “act for” the principal are not required to possess a leadership certificate. Typically, they have not been appointed by the

principal” for the duration of the leave. The *Education Act* requires that an acting principal in such circumstances possess a leadership certificate.

Alberta Education has indicated that certification requirements are not intended to be a barrier to those wishing to apply for a school principalship. They are also not intended to make it difficult for boards to recruit for vacant principalships. Finding interested individuals to take on these positions can be especially challenging in Alberta's remote and rural areas. To avoid such circumstances, Alberta Education will provide a letter of authority to individuals who do not possess a leadership certificate and have been successful in being appointed as a principal or acting principal. A letter of authority is a form of temporary certification that has conditions applied to it. While working as a school principal under a letter of authority, there will be an expectation of the individual to complete requirements for a leadership certificate within a three-year period. ■

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

“These individuals who on occasion “act for” the principal are not required to possess a leadership certificate.”

issued a school leader certificate given that they were already in the role). The inservice was held on 55 occasions in 12 locations throughout the province. Close to 4,000 participants completed the program and subsequently became eligible for certification.

From time to time school principals attend meetings and other functions

board to be acting principal as per the *Education Act*, for this relatively brief period. Provisions for compensation exist in collective agreements and vary considerably depending on the particular board and the time frame.

When a school principal is on a short-term leave like a medical leave, the board may appoint an “acting



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YOUR VIEWS

f FACEBOOK FEEDBACK

Teachers should decide who oversees their pensions

VIEWPOINTS



Katherine Pritchard
Chair, ATA Pension Committee

I have sat on the ATA Pension Committee for the last two years, and this year I am honoured to serve as chair. The committee's duties include "[t]o study and monitor all pension issues of concern to the Association." The committee is made up of two district representatives, four field members, and representatives from the Alberta Teachers' Retirement Fund (ATRF) board and the Alberta Retired Teachers' Association (ARTA).

Each year the Pension Committee receives presentations from ATRF on various topics: service to members, the annual report, plan performance, and most recently, responsible investing. The ATRF also presents to the Annual Representative Assembly (ARA). Through Pension Committee members and ARA representatives, teachers have a direct line to ATRF and how their plan is managed. ATRF is a member of the United Nations Principles for Responsible Investments, the Carbon Disclosure Project (a global initiative to encourage companies to publicly disclose information on risks associated with greenhouse gas emissions, water, deforestation) the Canadian Coalition for Good Governance and the Pension Investment Association of Canada.

Our plan is currently in great shape thanks to the expert oversight of the ATRF board and the 2007 resolution of the pre-1992 unfunded liability (caused by the government not contributing its share to the plan from 1956-1992). The board is made up of appointees — half are appointed

by teachers, half by the government. This joint governance structure has been in place since our plan was first created back in 1939.

Buried deep in the government's recently announced budget is a decision to transfer ATRF's assets (about \$18 billion) to the Alberta Investment Management Company (AIMCo) for investing by December 2021. AIMCo invests government money such as the Heritage Fund and some other pension plans. The same decision also prevents the other pension plans from leaving.

This decision was made without consulting either the ATRF or the ATA. This lack of consultation was disrespectful. The hijacking of funds is concerning. Why mess with a plan that is working so well for both teachers and the government? What are the motives behind this move?

On Monday the government introduced legislation — Bill 22. Even before the bill was announced, the government gave notice to invoke closure, limiting debate. By the time the bill had passed, they'd used closure at each of the three stages of debate.

I am concerned that AIMCo does not produce the same excellent returns as ATRF. The replies that teachers have received from MLAs to personal emails or after visiting the website handsoffmypension.ca state that AIMCo will generate \$500 per teacher through cost savings and economies of scale, and also that AIMCo has performed better than ATRF. These are very different numbers than those provided by ATRF. Requests asking where this

data comes from have been met with silence.

For every dollar retired teachers receive in pension, 75 cents comes from investments, 12.5 cents from the government and 12.5 cents from individual teachers. If the plan does not keep producing decent returns, teachers and the government will need to pay more.

My second concern is that ATRF is a pension company, whereas AIMCo is an investment company. ATRF has a fiduciary responsibility to plan members. It exists to nurture and protect your pension. It can directly tailor investments to match our pension liabilities. It is involved in many private investments and real estate deals that produce excellent returns for plan members that are not readily going to be improved by economies of scale.

My third concern is that AIMCo is, in theory, at arm's length from the government. But the act gives the finance minister, who is president of the Treasury Board, the power to issue directives to AIMCo, and AIMCo must comply. Teachers who are worried that their pension will be used to fund government projects that might not produce the same returns are not being alarmist. It is a real possibility. Any shortfall in returns is made up by increased contributions. And we would not be able to fire AIMCo for these lower returns.

If this is such a good deal for teachers, why invoke closure? You should have debated the issue. You should have had the auditor general investigate. You should have shown us the independent data. This is our money. You should have let us as teachers, as cogovernors of our plan for 80 years, choose what is best for our future. ■

Katherine Pritchard is the South West district representative and teaches at Noble Central School in Nobleford.

Teachers react to Bill 22, which includes a measure to transfer assets of the Alberta Teachers' Retirement Fund (ATRF) to the Alberta Investment Management Company (AIMCo), a Crown corporation.

Sheryl King

What right do they have to move money that is not theirs? Why the rush to push this through? Hands Off My Pension!!

Michelle Senkow

It is Not the UCP's Money & they have No right to touch it!!

Kim Toth Johnson

I would love to see how other people in Alberta would feel if the government decided to "manage" their pensions!!! You'd hear the public screams to space! Disgusting!

Edna Warriner

Sad that they rushed this through. And with their horrendous practices with managing money we should all be worried! Hands OFF my pension!

Melissa Cox

I'd really like the government to explain how this is a good move!

Don Flaig

I smell a rat. I suspect the long game is to have political control over where our funds would be invested.

Liz Maree Brown

This is so wrong on so many levels!

Merissa Stenkowski

This is horrible. This government does not understand democracy at all.

Patricia Helen Lockhart

This is just a cash grab! Disgusting!

Christine Chappell

Hands off my pension!! I wrote several letters to our MLA with no reply. I am deeply concerned about what the future holds for teachers in our province.

Sasha George

Time for a Supreme Court case or a provincial strike!!

Sandra Joy

Why aren't protests planned? They've attacked public education and teachers over and over!! Enough is enough!

Cameron Ashton Reidy

Democracy? What democracy?

Brie Chad McCrady

Taking something without permission is stealing.

Manuel A. Gutierrez

This is theft. I do not give permission to Jason Kenney and the UCP to take my pension.

Rosa Bianca

No words can express the disgust I feel about this.

Rita Roste

So disgusting what this Kenney gov't is doing. Really have to wonder if folks who voted UCP actually wanted this or were they totally duped?

Michael Shore

Lack of consultation with teachers = lack of respect for the teaching profession.

Angela Grace

I'm very upset and have sent more than one email to my MLA and finance minister.

Anna Greenwood

If this is such a great deal and idea, one would think there would be a consultation process first. The lack of trust and collaboration with this government makes it hard to believe!

Sue Jane

The lack of collaboration and consultation with ATRF is indicative to me that this government is not to be trusted. Keep my pension where I know it's in good hands — with ATRF!

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.



Thank you, teachers

Things have been, well, let's say a bit crazy lately. We are seeing policies by the government that are aiming to erode public education in Alberta, something I know you value as much as I do.

Lately the Alberta Teachers' Association and I have been asking a lot of teachers, in terms of using your voices to advocate for public education. I believe in public education, and I also believe that teachers bring hope

— let's never lose sight of that. I have said repeatedly that this advocacy work cannot be done alone, that we must band together.

However, I know you are busy: report cards, parent-teacher interviews, marking, planning, coaching, book clubs, PowerSchool, and, oh yeah, your lives beyond school. So, for all you have done, for all you are doing, thank you. Advocacy is not easy work, and I greatly appreciate your efforts. ■



Inoculate yourself against the GERM

Beware of manufactured education crises in the wake of upcoming PISA test results



EXECUTIVE REPORT

Phil McRae
ATA Associate Co-ordinator of Research

For many years the Global Education Reform Movement (GERM) has destructively spread like an epidemic across and throughout education systems. The GERM promotes more frequent testing of students at all grade levels, increased standardization and a narrowing of curriculum to obsessively focus on science, technology and math. Over time, the GERM infects and diminishes the promotion of creativity, the arts, talent diversity, interpersonal communication and even the notion of play in K-12 learning environments.

The GERM has far too often been smuggled into schools by the PISA test, promoted by the Programme for International Student Assessment. In Alberta we don't want to catch the GERM like so many others have, especially when we are asked to embrace the results of the 2018 PISA test.

What is the PISA test?

The PISA test is a two-hour standardized test that attempts to assess the competencies of 15 year olds in reading, mathematics and science in 80 different countries. The PISA assessment is a mixture of open-ended and multiple-choice questions organized in groups based on a passage about a real-life situation. Students take various combinations of different tests and are asked (along with their school's principal) to answer questionnaires on their background, school and learning experiences and their broader education system and learning environment.

The PISA test was first administered in the year 2000 by the Organisation for Economic Co operation and Development (OECD) and is conducted every three years in Alberta, with PISA 2018 being the seventh international ranking. In 2015, PISA covered the domains of science, reading and mathematics, with a focus on scientific literacy. In 2012 the spotlight was on mathematics, with reading and science assessed as minor domains, and in 2009

the PISA test focused primarily on 15-year-olds' reading abilities. The next iteration of PISA — PISA 2021 — will return to a focus on mathematics, and 15 year olds will be assessed on their creative thinking abilities.

The PISA 2018 results — including Alberta's performance — will be publicly released on Dec. 3. The PISA testing in 2018 has continued to test students on mathematics and science but focused heavily on reading. The last time PISA focused on reading was in 2009. Further, in PISA 2018, students in some countries were also tested on financial literacy and global competencies.

Who profits from PISA testing?

To carry out PISA and create a market for many other follow-up services for governments, the OECD has created alliances with global for-profit companies. These corporations have been shown to have gained financially from the perceived deficits that come from the PISA tests and international benchmarks.

Pearson Education, the world's largest for-profit education company, developed the frameworks for the PISA 2018 international benchmarking test. The frameworks defined the overall approach used to develop the tests and questionnaires in PISA 2018, what was being measured, and how it will be reported. As noted in a recent research report entitled *Pearson 2025 — Transforming Teaching and Privatising Education Data*, scholars Sam Sellar and Anna Hogan state: "Pearson is a new type of edu-business that operates across multiple education sectors and industries with a more ambitious global corporate vision than many of its competitors."

When examining the perceived winners and losers in the past PISA global rankings, it is important to note that the top five education systems have always done extremely well in international standardized tests,

especially in math, primarily because they are so test-centric and hyper-focused on mathematics. One of the lesser examined aspects of PISA is how the testing has correlated with the rise of private tutoring (a shadow education industry) around the world.

Of note is that Pearson earns the majority of its global profits from online learning tools, virtual schools, digital texts, digital testing, student and teacher testing programs and services, student information systems and instructional management systems.

Why should I care?

The PISA test results have historically sent shockwaves throughout countries and stirred national debates across Canada on how best to reform entire K-12 education systems, even though it is only a two-hour test of a selection of 15 year olds. In the recent past, PISA has been used as a way to declare a crisis in education systems and to justify knee-jerk reactions, which include increasing standardized testing and narrowing curriculum. Of particular note is that the "math crisis" across Canada erupted soon after the 2012 PISA results became public.

If history is to repeat itself, then there is potential for a math and/or reading "crisis" to be generated by the results of the PISA 2018 assessment. Even if Alberta remains at the top of the PISA league tables and is stable with past performance, there is a risk that it will still be made into a crisis to narrow our Alberta curriculum back to the basics, and further focus student learning on financial literacy and/or ambiguous global student competencies.

The PISA ideology accepts that economic imperatives — growth and competitiveness — are the primary aims of schooling, and assures that student achievement in math and science are used as the key indicators of the future economic health of a region or society. It fails to recognize that the role of education is much broader and includes (among a host of other responsibilities) the nurturing of social cohesion in rapidly changing complex societies, passing on our diverse cultural heritage, and the promotion of civic engagement and citizenship.

What should I do?

After the PISA 2018 results are released, as a professional, pay special attention to how the conversation about PISA develops in the popular press and within your local school communities. Be informed of the purpose of this test, the increase in international benchmarking in Alberta, and the deep concerns noted above that are associated with PISA and its global testing regime.

Of note is that paying for, supporting and administering international benchmarking tests in general, and the PISA test in particular, is of significant concern for Alberta's teaching profession. In fact, in 2016 the Association established policy opposing PISA that explicitly states

22.2.5.1 The Government of Alberta should give notice that Alberta will not participate in future iterations of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), and Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS). [2016]

Most importantly, take part in a conversation around what you believe is the purpose of K-12 schooling and how the PISA test will undoubtedly shape that discourse for the parents of your students, and the conversations around education reforms in Alberta. ■

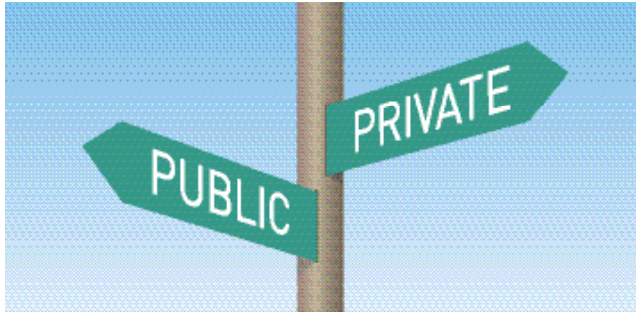
OPEN LETTER

In an open letter to the head of the PISA programme, more than 80 world-renowned academics expressed deep concerns about the impact of PISA international benchmarking, and called for a halt to this standardized testing. To read the letter, visit <http://bit.ly/PISANOW>.



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.



Proposed voucher system not equitable, ATA president

Jen Janzen
ATA News Staff

AN UCP constituency's proposal of an education voucher system that would see private schools fully funded is drawing criticism from ATA president Jason Schilling. Policy 15, which will be voted on at the 2019 UCP annual general meeting, which takes place in Calgary from Nov. 29–Dec. 1, seeks to implement an education voucher system.

Schilling says the proposed amendment, which comes from the Lacombe–Ponoka constituency, would produce inequities across the province.

"Alberta's public education system already supports 95 per cent of Alberta students in Catholic, Francophone and public schools," he said, "and the budget has already been gutted, resulting in larger class sizes and fewer teachers."

The wording in the 2018 policy document states "The United Conservative Party believes that the Government of Alberta should ensure equitable per-student funding in accordance with school choice — public, separate, charter, home or private." The additional proposal seeks to add "implement an education 'voucher system' that will provide for equal per-student funding regardless of their school choice, free from caveats or conditions."

However, Schilling says the move is the opposite of equity in education.

"The voucher system promotes boutique education in urban areas," he said. "Public education is built on the premise that no matter what a parent's income is, what their religious beliefs are or how smart the student is, everybody is welcome."

Although the policy's rationale states the voucher system would be cost-neutral, Schilling says that's an impossible claim.

"Private schools are already funded at 70 per cent," he said. "Where is the other 30 going to come from? Why would we further decimate public education to serve the small, self-selected elite?"

The policy's rationale also says Alberta Education "no longer provides curricula that give students adequate English/French literacy, mathematical literacy, scientific literacy or historical literacy." It goes on to say that "students are entering adulthood unemployable and increasingly radicalized by extremist ideologies."

It's a statement that Schilling finds to be ironic.

"If this government was serious about improving the learning experience of school-age Albertans, it would have properly funded public education, which is led by democratically elected boards that reflect the needs of the entire community." ■

Survey seeks input on education choice

Through an online survey that is now open, the UCP government is seeking input "to help identify opportunities to help protect and enhance education choice."

Although he says the survey is flawed and biased, ATA president Jason Schilling is urging teachers to complete it anyway.

"I know you are busy, I know you are tired of surveys," he wrote to Alberta teachers on social media in mid-November. "But when this is our only connection at this point, then we need to once again show this government why public education is important."

The survey is available on the Alberta government website at alberta.ca/choice-in-education-engagement.aspx. It closes on Dec. 6.

Teachers incensed by pension grab

Mark Milne
ATA News Staff

THE government's takeover of the teachers' pension plan suggests that it doesn't care about teachers' views, says ATA president Jason Schilling.

"This makes me worry that teachers' voices don't matter to this government," Schilling said after the government passed legislation that will transfer assets from the Alberta Teachers' Retirement Fund (ATRF) to the Alberta Investment Management Company (AIMCo), a Crown corporation.

Bill 22, which contains the *Teachers' Pension Plans Act*, passed its third and final reading on Nov. 21.

"Teachers are incensed by the aggressive use of closure three times in the past 16 hours to ram this legislation through all three stages of debate in less than a day," said Schilling. "It erodes trust between teachers and government."

Tens of thousands of teachers expressed their concern over Bill 22, the *Reform of Agencies, Boards and Commissions and Government Enterprise Act, 2019*. More than 30,000 emails have been sent to MLAs through the handsoffmypension.ca website.

"This is teachers' money," said Schilling in a news release. "Teachers should have a say in how it is invested, and teachers must be consulted before a significant takeover like this is implemented."

Independent review

Sandra Johnston, chair of the ATRF board, met with Finance Minister Travis Toews in early November for insight into why the government is pursuing this course of action. Toews was unable to provide Johnston with any hard evidence proving AIMCo's superiority, claiming it could not be released until the bill was tabled.

Two days later, however, Toews posted an open letter to all ATRF members on his Facebook page, outlining AIMCo's superior performance supported by the previously "embargoed" evidence. The figures listed by Toews showed AIMCo outperforming ATRF. Data gathered by the ATRF and provided to Toews indicate the opposite.

"This only serves to confuse our members," replied Johnston in a follow-up letter, "particularly when your analysis has not been shared with either the ATRF board or its members."

The fund analysis discrepancy prompted Johnston to contact Alberta's auditor general and request a full and independent review of the data. A day later, Schilling also petitioned the auditor general to pause the bill and enlist an unbiased third party

to determine if the move is in the best interest of teachers. No pause was implemented, and the Kenney government invoked closure on the bill.

"It's a shameful move by the governing party," Schilling said.

School athletics impacted

The 172-page omnibus bill contains a variety of items ranging from the elimination of the election commissioner to the dissolution of Alberta Sport Connection. This was an arm's-length organization that oversaw the funding of the Alberta School Athletic Association (ASAA), which provides structure and co-ordination for school sports and competitions across the province.

ASAA executive director John Paton says he's unsure of the amount or source of future funding but added that a cut in funding will most likely translate into a rise in membership fees for schools.

"We've received no communication from anyone on what this means," he said.

With a membership of 373 schools, the ASAA provides services for more than 50,000 school athletes and 9,000 coaches and volunteers. ■



ATA past president Greg Jeffery participates in a pension rally at the Alberta legislature on Nov. 20. The rally was organized by the United Nurses of Alberta and attended by representatives of several other public sector unions.

Calgary public teachers hit hard by layoffs

Cory Hare
ATA News Managing Editor

AS 300 Calgary teachers are slated to lose their jobs, the government has ordered an independent audit and governance review of the Calgary Board of Education.

Facing a \$32 million budget shortfall, the CBE informed its staff on Nov. 19 that 300 teachers on temporary contracts would see those contracts terminated as of Jan. 2.

"These teachers will be placed on the substitute teacher roster on January 3rd and a number of them may be considered for future temporary contracts," said superintendent Christopher Usih in the statement.

"We are in the midst of making several other decisions to cover our budget gap, and these will be communicated to staff and parents as soon as possible."

On Nov. 20, Education Minister Adriana LaGrange issued a news release announcing the audit and governance review.

"I sympathize with the education professionals, students and parents affected. Unfortunately, this is another example of this board's inability to appropriately manage its finances and prioritize student learning in its operations," she said in the statement.

LaGrange said the CBE is not doing enough to minimize impacts on front-line staff and teachers.

"The Calgary Board of Education has a history of questionable, irresponsible decision making when it comes to its finances," she said.

"There is no reason that a board with an operating budget of \$1.2 billion servicing 130,000 students should be reducing teaching positions and harming our children's education experience."

Bob Cocking, president of Calgary Public Local No. 38, said the news has upset teachers throughout the division.

"The morale is definitely really low. Staff are really upset, including the staff that aren't affected, because these are their team partners that they've been working with since the beginning of the year," Cocking said.

"We're getting inundated at our office with phone calls from them. They just don't understand. They just started their careers in education ... a lot of heartache out there."

He said the school board had no choice but to resort to layoffs due to the provincial budget.

"This was totally avoidable and unnecessary," Cocking said. "There was no reason for this to happen if the provincial government had kept their promises of funding the same or better — they said they were going to fund for growth. All those promises were broken." ■

Who's who—Provincial Executive Council members and local presidents 2019/20

PRESIDENTS AND VICE-PRESIDENTS



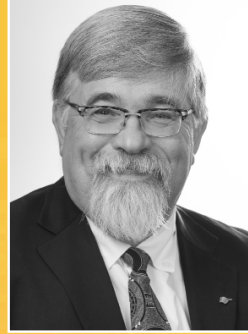
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ATA President



DARRIN BAUER
ATA Vice-President



JENNY REGAL
ATA Vice-President



GREG JEFFERY
ATA Past President



NORTH WEST



PETER MacKAY
District Rep



MYRNA McLEAN
Fort Vermilion
Local No. 77



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



MICHAEL ALDRIDGE
Greater Peace
Local No. 13



JENNIFER TAYLOR
High Prairie
Local No. 62



MARIA MURRAY
Northern Spirit
Local No. 6



KRISTEL LADEROUTE
Northland
Local No. 69



RAY BUZIAK
Trumpeter
Local No. 26

CENTRAL EAST



MURRAY LALONDE
District Rep



STEPHANIE CUMBLETON
Aspen View Local No. 7



KARIN BRUSSÉ-PATERSON
Battle River Local
No. 32



CONNIE LANDSIEDEL
Greater St. Paul Local
No. 25



COLIN DESNOYERS
Lakeland Catholic
Separate Local No. 30

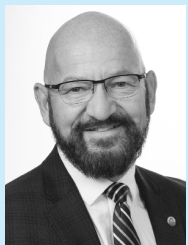


MARJORIE CHARLES
Northern Lights
Local No. 15



BRIAN SKINNER
Park Plains East
Local No. 31

CENTRAL NORTH



ROBERT TWERDOCLIB
District Rep



JESSICA SMEALL
Evergreen Local
No. 11



VANESSA AMYOTTE
Evergreen Catholic
Local No. 44



KATRINA ZACK
Northern Gateway
Local No. 43



RICK KREMP
Parkland Teachers'
Local No. 10



MICHELLE SAVOIE
Pembina Hills Local
No. 22



KIMBERLEY NAHIRNIAK
Woodland Rivers
Local No. 40

SOUTH EAST



HEATHER McCAIG
District Rep



HANNAH STEPHENSON
Grasslands Local
No. 34



VALERIE BROWNE
Medicine Hat
Local No. 1



DEANNA BURZINSKI
Medicine Hat Catholic
Teachers Local No. 39



DOUG LERKE
Prairieland Local
No. 36



STUART SHIGEHIRO
Prairie Rose Local
No. 2



LOUIS PERREAULT
Three Drums of
Wheat Local No. 20

SOUTH WEST



KATHERINE PRITCHARD
District Rep



JOHN TEMPLIN
Holy Spirit Catholic
Local No. 5



WALTER PLUMTREE
Horizon Local No. 4



DEREK RESLER
Lethbridge Public
School Local No. 41



SAVI HOULDIN
Livingstone Range
Local No. 14



NATALIE TOWNSHEND
Palliser Local No. 19



STEPHEN GIBBINGS
Westwind Local No. 12

EDMONTON DISTRICT



PAUL FROESE
District Rep



DENEEN ZIELKE
Elk Island
Local No. 28



RHONDA BOROWSKI
Elk Island Catholic
Teachers' Local No. 21



CARRYL BENNETT
Greater St. Albert
Catholic Local
No. 23



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



SHERRI DEVOLDER
Sturgeon Local
No. 27

EDMONTON MCMURRAY



NANCY BALL
District Rep



GREG CARABINE
District Rep



CARMEN GLOSSOP
District Rep



SANDRA HALTINER
Edmonton Catholic
Teachers Local No. 54



HEATHER QUINN
Edmonton Public
Teachers Local No. 37



SHANNON DUBE
Fort McMurray
Local No. 48

CENTRAL



BRENTON BAUM
District Rep



KIM MASON
Black Gold Teachers'
Local No. 8



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



MIKE WHEELER
Timberline Local
No. 9



ERIC CLOUTIER
Unité locale
francophone No. 24



AL BLACKER
Wetaskiwin Local
No. 18

CENTRAL SOUTH



DON BROOKWELL
District Rep



TREVOR SANCHE
Chinook's Edge Local
No. 17



TIMOTHY CROKER
Clearview Teachers
Local No. 33



STEPHEN MERREDEV
Red Deer Catholic
Local No. 80



KELLY ALEMAN
Red Deer City
Local No. 60



MICHAEL DOLL
Wolf Creek Local
No. 3

CALGARY DISTRICT



KAREN NAKASKA
District Rep



MONICA BULAS
Canadian Rockies
Local No. 59



CHRISTIAN SCHELL
Christ the Redeemer
(formerly Chinook)
Local No. 29



WADE WESTWORTH
Foothills Local No. 16



ANDREA MCLEOD
Rocky View
Local No. 35

CALGARY CITY



KATHY HOEHN
District Rep



KEVIN KEMPT
District Rep



DARREN MOROZ
District Rep



BOB COCKING
Calgary Public
Teachers Local No. 38



MARIO VERGARA
Calgary Separate
School Local No. 55

STUDENT LOCALS

AVERY TEO
University of Alberta ESA, Student Local No. 1

RUTH PANAGUITON
University of Calgary ESA, Student Local No. 2

WILLIAM LANGILLE
Red Deer College EUS, Student Local No. 3

BENJAMIN BELAND
University of Lethbridge EUS, Student Local No. 4

JAMIE GALE
Medicine Hat College EUS, Student Local No. 5

KAYLA DECHAMPLAIN
Concordia University ESA, Student Local No. 6

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

STEPHANIE BELL
Grande Prairie Regional College ESA,
Student Local No. 8

BRITAINA YOUNG
Keyano College ESA, Student Local No. 9

KENNA FRASER
Mount Royal University EUS, Student Local No. 10

TBA
MacEwan University EUS, Student Local No. 11

VANESSA PINHAL
Ambrose University College ESA, Student Local No. 12

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

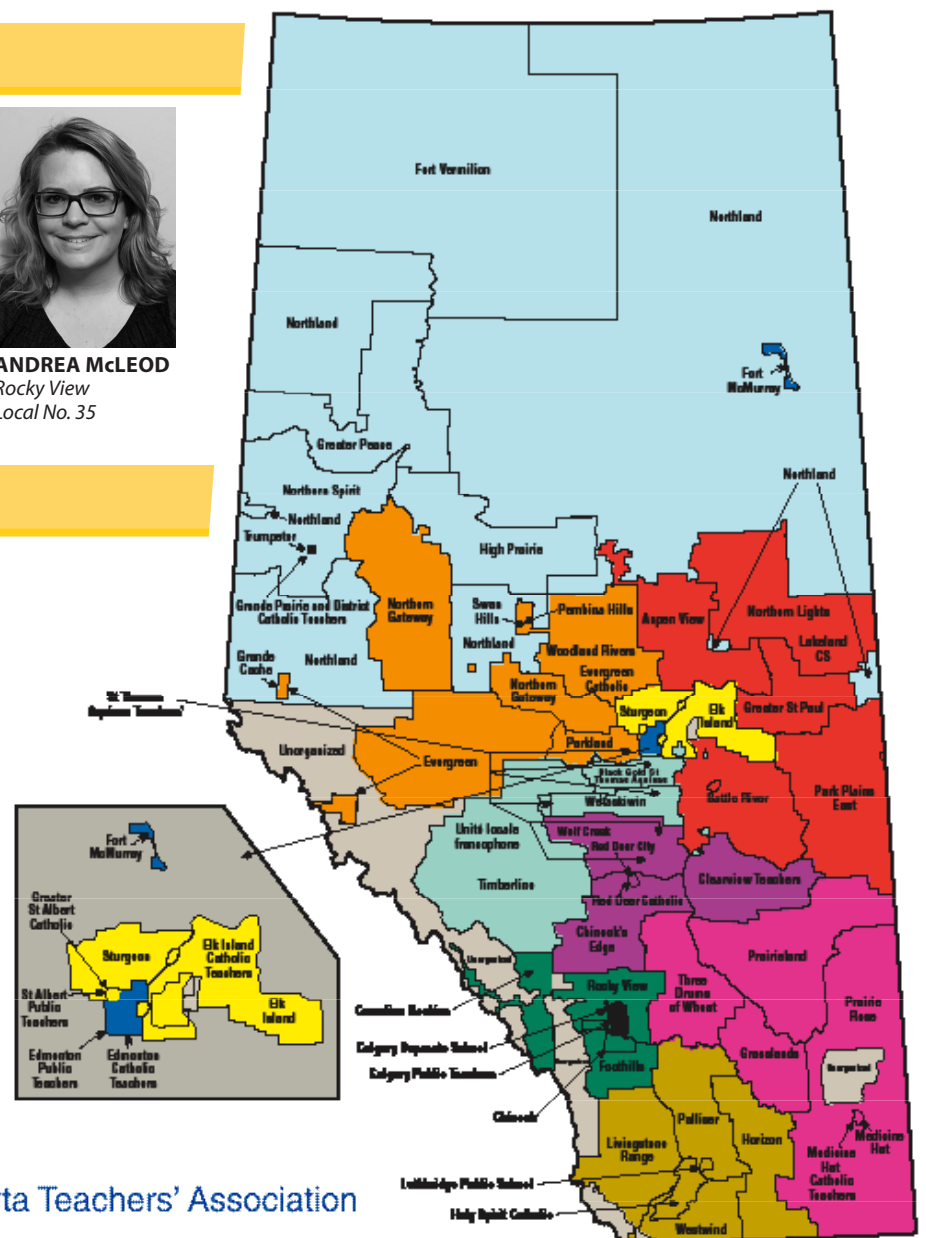
CHRISTINE MERLIHAN
St. Mary's University College Local No. 14

SPECIAL LOCALS

LORNA MCILROY
Alberta Retired Teachers' Association
Special Local No. 1

ATA geographic districts and locals

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





Applications are now being accepted

ATA-CHANGE FOR CHILDREN Teaching Tour

Guatemala | July

Spent two weeks in Guatemala assisting with the professional development of fellow teachers in the areas of language and communication, mathematics, and technology for learning.

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

Travel and living expenses are covered by the ATA.

Spanish language ability preferred.


To apply, visit teachers.ab.ca/For-Members/Programs-and-Services/International-Cooperation/Change-for-Children

For more information, email katrina@changeforchildren.org.

▶ **Application Deadline: December 11**

An ATA International Cooperation Program

The Teachers' Learning Collaboration Presents...



SAM BENNETT & CRIS TOVANI

How to get kids to read and write: Engaging our most bored, reluctant and angry students

Cris and Sam will work with registrants to plan out units that will engage even the most recalcitrant students.

May 28-29, 2020
Saskatoon, SK

Registration opens August 15th!

Early Bird Registration : \$440/person
Group rates available

For more information, visit us at:
www.teacherslearningcollaboration.ca




DIGITAL NEWS

The ATA News is available in a new digital format.

For the latest issue, visit teachers.ab.ca > News and Info > ATA News.

Subscribe to receive an email when a new issue is available.

bit.ly/2Subscribe_Now



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.

Supporting your students in your schools

Alberta Education is funding Alberta Distance Learning Centre to support Alberta schools to

- provide course content to Alberta teachers to use in your classrooms
- provide online and print courses taught by ADLC teachers to your students

There are no fees for instruction. Some courses require the purchase of materials.



Contact our Partner Support Team
info@adlc.ca
1-866-774-5333
adlc.ca

ADLC

Alberta Distance Learning Centre



The Canadian International School of Guangzhou in China

CIS is a Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 12 school and the first fully-accredited Alberta school in China.

2020-2021 Job Openings:

- Principal
- Assistant Principal Elementary
- School Guidance Counsellor
- English Language Learner Department Head
- Elementary Homeroom Teachers
- High School Math Specialist
- High School Science Specialist (Chemistry, Physics, Biology)



How to Apply

If you have a Bachelor of Education (Canada, USA, Australia, Britain, etc.) or the equivalent, we invite you to apply to us directly with your resume and references to be sent to the principal
Tanya Thibaut @ tthibaut@cisga.com
Successful candidates are required to have Alberta certification.

More info:
School Website: www.cisga.com
Email: HR@cisga.com

Small class sizes, state of the art technology, fully resourced brand new classrooms, a supportive career environment and global travel opportunities



We're here to help you put the pieces together.

Personal pension interviews and seminars will be held at teachers' conventions and other events across Alberta through 2019-20.

To book your personal interviews online, visit ATRF.com and click on Meet With Us.

One-on-one sessions are also available in our Edmonton office weekdays between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.



Call 780-451-4166 or toll free at 1-800-661-9582 to book your appointment.



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

Visit teachers.ab.ca for applications and details.



To Advertise

For advertising information, contact Trevor Batty
Clevers Media
1-778-773-9397
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Next deadline
Thursday, Nov. 28, 2019, 4 p.m.
(Publication date Dec. 10, 2019)

Advertisers are encouraged to book early — space is limited.

Circulation: 38,000

We accept Visa, Mastercard, cash or cheque.

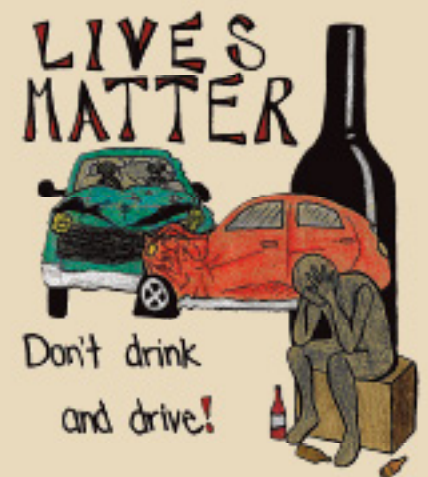
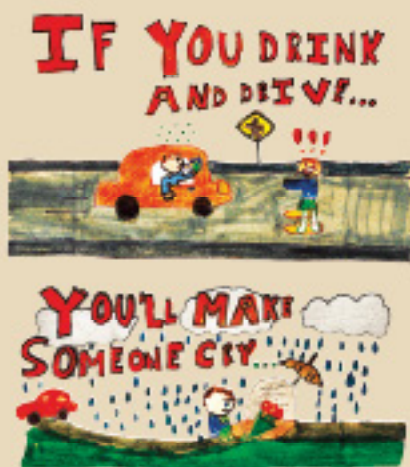
ATTENTION, TEACHERS

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.

2019-20 SADD LIQUOR BAG DESIGN CAMPAIGN



TEACHERS & STUDENTS!

Grab your pencil crayons and create YOUR message!

STUDENTS IN ANY GRADE CAN PARTICIPATE!

WHAT IT IS:

As part of our campaign, SADD and AGLC have again partnered to bring you the annual **SADD Liquor Bag Design Campaign** for all of Alberta's Grade 1 to 12 students, inviting them to create their own personal message on a paper liquor bag about the dangers of impaired driving. This activity assists educators in continuing the conversation with their students about the dangers of impaired driving.

HOW IT WORKS:

1. Teachers or project coordinators order **FREE** paper liquor bags at saddalberta.com and then distribute the bags to students.
2. Students create messages on the dangers of impaired driving.
3. Teachers or project coordinators take the completed bags to local liquor stores for distribution over the holiday season.

Visit saddalberta.com for more information.



Get the ATA News delivered directly to your email inbox. Subscribe today: bit.ly/2Subscribe_Now.



Morgex works hard to put ATA members first, and we offer a wide range of benefits and coverage options such as:

- First Claim Forgiveness
- Winter Tire Discount
- Up to \$10,000 coverage for teacher's tools and instruments
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Call or get a quote online today!

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TEACHERS COULD
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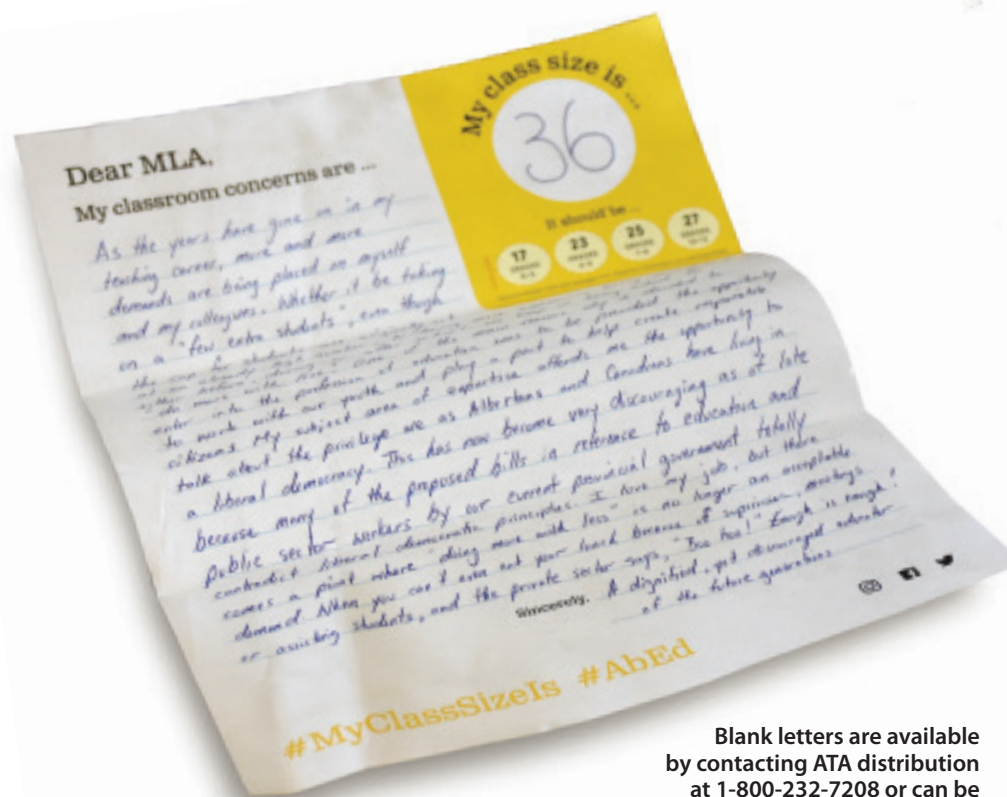
Look out for more
information in
January.

TALENT

November 26, 2019 | Volume 54, Number 5

Dear MLA,

Teachers have sent more than 1,800 letters to their MLAs since September, when the #MyClassSizeIs campaign began. Here are some samples of what they're saying.



CORY HARE

Blank letters are available by contacting ATA distribution at 1-800-232-7208 or can be downloaded from www.teachers.ab.ca (Click News and Info > Campaigns > MLA Letter Writing).

My classroom concerns are ...

- In the last 30 years I have seen a massive decline in support for our students.
- This year my school has cut 40 hours per week of educational assistant time and 10 hours of ELL assistant time. This has been a substantial amount of time taken away from students who need extra support.
- My class is a very complex mix of special people. I have a student who is gifted, requiring an enriched program, a student with ADHD who requires special strategies to help them succeed, a student with autism who also requires a daily individualized program. I [also have] two students who are low cognitive and eight English language learners who also need extra care and attention.
- We cannot meet the needs of all of our students — we have had to triage students being offered the extra academic support they desperately need, leaving many students on their own.
- All 20 of my students are English language learners, two of whom have only just started speaking some English.
- In a class of 37 students, it is very difficult to give the personalized teaching that we advocate for ... The classroom begins to feel more like an assembly line rather than a caring environment where the primary concern is learning and understanding.
- When you can't even eat your lunch because of supervision, meetings or assisting students, and the private sector says, "Boo hoo!", enough is enough!
- The increasing demands due to classroom sizes and complex learning needs mean I spend 65 to 70 hours working [each week]. The strain on my health from the long hours is not sustainable.
- Don't punish our students by continuing to take away their supports. Please, put students first.

DECEMBER 2019 Kindness CHALLENGE

CHALLENGE YOUR CLASS

to complete small acts of kindness every day using the Kindness Challenge Calendar!

Begins December 2

Visit everylivingthing.ca/kindnesschallenge for more information and to download the calendar!

EVERYLIVINGTHING.CA

The Alberta Teachers' Association

Communities of Practice Inquiry Grant

A Matching Grant Available from the Association Through ATA Locals

Proposals that support communities of practice activities occurring between November 1, 2019 and June 30, 2020, will be accepted until April 1, 2020.

To apply and for more information go to <https://bit.ly/21YuwJR>

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

January 30–31, 2020
Best Western Premier Calgary Plaza Hotel and Conference Centre

To register and for more information go to <https://event-wizard.com/events/TGSE0120>. Register online by January 24.