

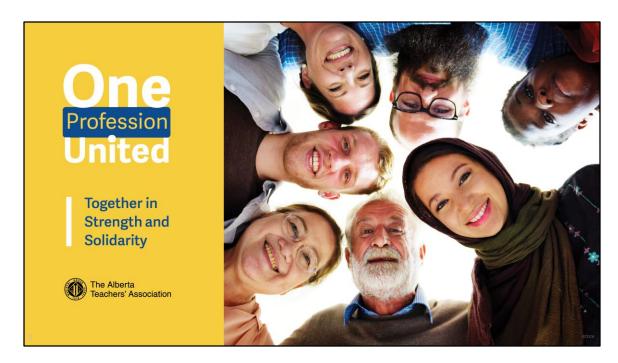
### Why change something that is working well?

The facts:

- Alberta's education system is globally recognized as one of the best education systems in the world. A key feature of our system is a culture of collegiality and collaboration that is woven throughout the teaching profession and the education system.
- This is not so in other provinces. We only have to look to our neighbours to the
  west to see a school system that reflects a culture of management, where both
  the conduct process and school leaders are outside of the BC Teachers'
  Federation.
- The minister wants to take over the teacher discipline file, but the government's own process is completely devoid of transparency.







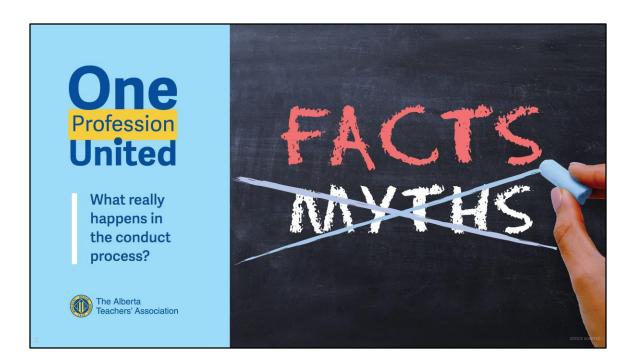
- A united association establishes a culture of professionalism that focuses on what's best for both teachers and students:
  - Growth, supervision and evaluation policies focus on improving and advancing professional practice instead of adversarial conflict between the union and management.
  - Principals are professional colleagues and instructional leaders instead of managers.
  - Teachers and principals work together to develop a positive school community.
  - Principals and teachers work together to improve student learning through continuous professional growth.
  - Our work includes a focus on issues of professionalism and effective practice balanced with what's best for teachers (compensation and working conditions).
  - Your ATA is a professional association. The form and functions of the profession establish, by design, a culture of professionalism that focuses on what's best for students, not just on the sole interests of teachers. That changes if the ATA becomes just a union.
  - We have school representatives, not shop stewards.

Together in Strength and Solidarity





 Teachers respect the Association and actively participate in all aspects of its work, both professional and union. In other provinces, the regulatory body is seen as an enemy of teachers and is not respected by the teachers.



#### The myths:

#### Myths vs facts

- The myth: The Association can choose which case to investigate. The truth: By law, the ATA must investigate all the complaints it receives. Articles 25 and 26 of the Teaching Profession Act (TPA), the legislation that governs the ATA, states that the ATA executive secretary shall refer all complaints to an investigator within 30 days of receiving them, and that the investigator must, within 30 days, initiate an investigation.
- Myth: The ATA defends and protects bad teachers.
   Fact: The ATA does not represent teachers in professional conduct hearings; they are responsible for their own defence.
- Myth: The ATA has a conflict of interest when it comes to disciplining teachers.
   Fact: The ATA takes the position of the public interest when it comes to teacher discipline.
- Myth: The ATA decides if a complaint is investigated.
   Fact: Anyone can file a request for investigation of unprofessional conduct,

What really happens in the conduct process?





and the ATA is obligated to investigate every request it receives.

- Myth: The ATA has the power to revoke a teacher's certificate.
   Fact: Only the minister of education can take a teacher's teaching certificate.
- Myth: A teacher given a penalty of suspension by the ATA automatically returns to teaching when the suspension lapses.

Fact: A suspended teacher loses their job, and a permanent mark is placed on their record. Only one teacher in 100 years has successfully returned to teaching after suspension—and they were suspended for an unpaid fine. In more serious cases involving students, an expulsion is much more common than a suspension. But let's be clear: a suspension ends a teacher's career.

 Myth: Every other province has separated teacher discipline from the teachers' union or association.

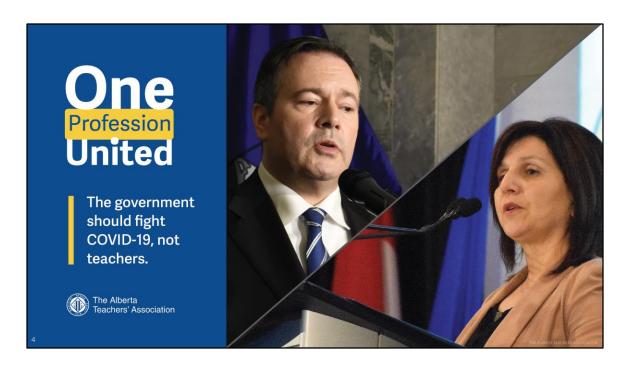
Fact: Four provinces and two territories have teacher discipline conducted by the profession. In BC, the splitting of their professional association has resulted in a dramatically different, more confrontational, culture in schools.

• The myth: The ATA discipline hearings are conducted in secret, behind closed doors.

The truth: In terms of transparency, the hearing itself is open to any member of the public who wishes to attend (*TPA* article 33), and the hearing committee's decision must be available to the public upon request and free of charge (*TPA* article 47(4)). After the investigation is complete, a recommendation is made to the minister of education about the teacher's certificate, because certification rests with the minister alone.

• The myth: The ATA did not do its job in the 15-year-old case of the Calgary teacher.

The truth: The Association did the exact job it was tasked with doing and was the only party that did the job it was supposed to do. As a result of the ATA processes, this teacher was removed from the profession and never taught again. A letter with the committee's decision was sent to the minister of education, and the minister agreed with the decision. The most recent allegations of sexual abuse were not part of the allegations and investigation that took place 15 years ago.



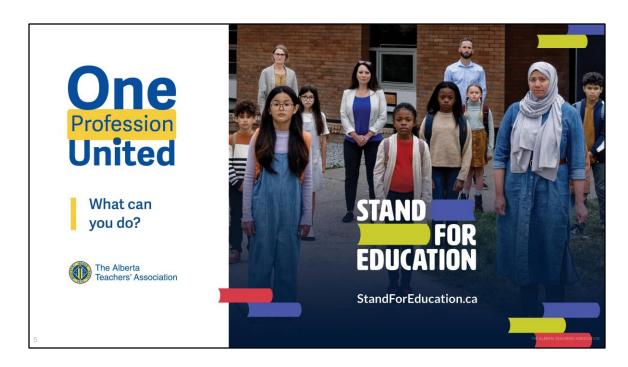
#### The politics:

So why is the minister proposing these changes? Ultimately, her motivations are political. The premier has always been clear that splitting the ATA was part of his political agenda. And why now? The premier and minister are trying to distract from the minister's own inability to handle the education file. She is responsible for funding cuts, a disastrous curriculum and an inadequate response to prevent COVID from spreading in schools. This is an attempt to change the channel, pure and simple. It is appalling that the government would choose this time to make this attack on teachers. Teachers are exhausted, and they feel completely abandoned in their efforts to manage the pandemic in schools and do what's best for their students.

The government should fight COVID-19, not teachers.







#### What can you do?

- This is a critical all-out push to fight back. Never have the stakes been higher; never has a minister said so definitively that they intend to split the profession.
- Step 1: Educate and inform your colleagues. We need them all to understand why this is important.
- Step 2: Contact your MLA. Write, call, request a meeting; you don't have to be perfect, just be persistent.
- Step 3: Stay tuned to ATA messages. A more significant call to action will come once legislation is introduced.

What can you do?



