



The Alberta
Teachers' Association

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Teachers

The
Professional
Face of
Education



The Alberta Teachers' Association

What Is Professionalism?



Professionalism is defined as exhibiting quality of practice characterized by competence and conduct that meets high standards.

Professionals reflect high standards of conduct. They are expected to govern themselves according to an established set of ethics or expectations.

Professionals are characterized by the practice of extensive and discrete knowledge unique to a specialty. Professional skills and knowledge are both abstract and practical, take a significant time to acquire, and are difficult to master. Professionals make independent, effective and informed decisions regarding their practice.



Why Is Professionalism Important?



Teachers as professionals

are the recognized experts in their field of specialty. They are ethical and exhibit high standards of practice. Teachers as professionals exercise a high degree of autonomy in instructional and assessment techniques and conduct themselves accordingly as it pertains to students, school authorities, their colleagues and the profession.

As a result of their consistent adherence to high standards of practice and conduct, Alberta teachers have earned the trust and respect of the community.



***Teachers** are educational professionals who display expertise in pedagogy, instruction, assessment and knowledge of curriculum.*



What Does Professionalism Look Like?





PREPARATION

Strive to arrive early and be ready for instruction. Act with integrity by role-modelling the positive behaviours that you would like your students to exhibit.



COMMUNICATION

Speak with confidence and authority on educational issues. Use effective and appropriate written and oral communication. Exercise caution when using social media for personal and professional use.



ATTIRE

Be aware of what you wear. Teachers' dress should reflect the professional nature of their work. It should project the values of the individual teacher while maintaining the honour and dignity of the profession. Keep a neat, clean and well-groomed appearance.



BODY LANGUAGE

Demonstrate confidence and approachability with an open and friendly demeanour. Make eye contact and use active listening techniques. A respectful, cheerful, energetic and courteous manner invites confidence from students and colleagues.



ATTITUDE

Be aware and concerned about education, not only within your classroom but also in the broader school, jurisdictional, provincial, national and international arenas. Maintain a constructive approach to problem solving while being open-minded and showing respect for those with whom you work. When appropriate, express your thoughts and opinions in a respectful, thoughtful and professional manner.



Outcomes of Professionalism

By advancing and maintaining a professional image, teachers ensure continued trust and respect from students, parents and the public, as well as enhancing the overall credibility of the profession.

Teachers face important issues in policy making, professional development and accountability. Professional autonomy and self-determination are hallmarks of professionals, as seen in individual commitment to ongoing professional growth. Retention of professional authority over pedagogy, including assessment of student learning, requires accountability systems that are characterized by trust and respect and that rely on teacher expertise.





The Professional Organization of Teachers

The ATA's objective is to ensure a strong teaching profession through

- ◆ maintaining high standards of professional practice and conduct,
- ◆ providing strong representation in the development of educational policy,
- ◆ attaining the best economic and working conditions, and
- ◆ assisting teachers with professional issues.

The Alberta Teachers' Association, as the professional organization of teachers, promotes and advances public education, safeguards standards of professional practice and serves as the advocate for its members. To achieve this mission, the Association offers a wide range of programs and services to its members. The Association is dedicated to advancing the cause of education and to building the teaching profession in Alberta.