

LEADERSHIP UPDATE

Volume 17

A publication for Alberta's school leaders

Number 1



Welcome to the 2021-2022 School Year.

As the President of The Council for School Leadership, I am very excited about some of the offerings for our members, both leaders as well as aspiring Leaders.

This year, we are very excited to be planning an in person uLead 2022 Conference in Banff on April 10-12, 2022, more information can be found at <http://ulead.ca/Welcome.html>.

In addition to our annual conference, we will also be continuing our conversations with some uLead headliners before the conference in the form of webinars open to all CSL members. Stay tuned to your emails for more information in the very near future.

If you have not yet joined the CSL, you may do so for no cost by visiting the link: bit.ly/SpecialistCouncilJoin. As a member of the CSL, you will receive email notifications regarding upcoming events, webinars and conferences as well as our annual journal and newsletters.

This year, our executive team welcomes our new ATA staff Officers – Chris Gonsalvez and Tanya Thiessen who will journey along side us. Additionally, in the spring we will be holding elections for positions on our executive and would welcome members to put their names forth when the time comes.

This is a pivotal year for the CSL and we are looking forward to having all of you journeying with us.

Mark Sylvestre, CSL President

New Resource for school leaders

One of the emphasis of the Alberta Teachers' Association this year is to promote and develop support services for school and district leaders. This is a large undertaking that has staff from across the association working together to ensure our leaders and aspiring leaders are well served. One of the first tasks this team undertook was to create a single site that brings together the many different learning opportunities for Alberta leaders. This site includes a digital leadership speaker series, information about ATA leadership conferences, connections to the Women in Leadership committee as well as events sponsored by the Council for School Leadership.

Alberta leaders and aspiring school leaders are invited to visit this site via the shortened link <http://tiny.cc/ATALeadersPD> or the full link <https://abschoolleaderspd.sched.com>.

If there are questions or suggestions for this page, you may contact me at chris.gonsalvez@ata.ab.ca or 780-447-9406.



**A leader is
best when
people
barely know
he exists,
when his
work is
done, his
aim fulfilled,
they will say:
we did it
ourselves.**

—Lao Tzu



Council for
School Leadership

Vaccination Q&A

There have been many questions about mandatory vaccinations being implemented in Alberta schools and what school leaders and teachers need to know about this. Below are some common questions:

Is a vaccination mandate legal?

Yes, if the mandate is reasonable. Field Law, on behalf of the Association, undertook a comprehensive review of labour law as it applies to the potential implementation of a vaccination mandate on teachers by employer school boards. Their analysis aligns with similar work undertaken independently for other labour groups and shared with the Association. Effectively, the courts have consistently confirmed that any rule or policy unilaterally imposed by an employer and not subsequently agreed to by the union, must be consistent with the collective agreement and be reasonable, a standard known as the KVP test after a precedent setting court case. The Association has set out in its public policy statement the conditions required for a policy to meet the test of reasonableness.

What if I am opposed to vaccinations or to receiving the COVID-19 vaccine on principle?

Under the Alberta Human Rights Code, an employer would be required to accommodate genuine religiously-based refusal to receive vaccination as religious belief is a protected ground. The actual accommodation might

include the measures outlined for medical accommodation. However, it is generally the case that a singular belief or personal preference against vaccinations are likely not protected under the Code. Individuals requesting accommodation on religious grounds may be required by the employer to provide supporting documentation from a recognized religious leader outlining the basis for the objection within the context of the faith as well as the employee's involvement and membership in the faith group.

Who should be responsible for checking proof of vaccination and/or negative test results in the school?

School leaders already are burdened with additional responsibilities relating to the continued safe operation of schools during the pandemic, and employers should ensure that every effort is made to minimize the additional administrative duties required to support the vaccination mandate policy. Generally, recording proof of completed vaccination should be a one time requirement for each affected staff member and should not be too onerous—this might reasonably be undertaken by the principal or a designated member of the school leadership team. Board policies providing for the presentation of negative COVID test results on an ongoing basis as an alternative to proof of vaccination will be more difficult to administer—boards should identify

alternative approaches to requiring school leaders to receive test results (perhaps requiring that results be scanned and submitted to the attention of a designated individual in central or regional office). In any event, the individual recording information related to the policy must be appropriately briefed on procedures to ensure the privacy of the information received.

Will the Association represent me in a dispute with my employer concerning a vaccination mandate policy?

If the employer implements a policy consistent with the criteria set out in the Association's statement, it is highly unlikely that a general challenge of that policy would be successful. Furthermore, as the Association has considered the legal issues and options in some depth, it has acquitted its duty of fair representation with respect to policies consistent with the mandate. Association staff will be pleased to assist individuals with a legitimate ground for accommodation to ensure their rights are protected, but this will be a matter to be dealt with on a case by case basis.

These questions are only a few that the Association has provided responses to. To access more information regarding the Association's Vaccination and COVID FAQs, you may visit: <https://www.teachers.ab.ca/COVID-19/Pages/COVID-19-FAQs.aspx>.

Call for Submissions of Interest to Present at uLead 2022

Do you have a school leadership story to share with colleagues from around the world? A unique opportunity awaits. Join educational leaders from around the world in the beautiful world heritage location of Banff, Alberta, at one of the world's foremost professional learning events for school-based leaders, district-level leaders, and provincial and state education leaders. Join us in April, 2022 for a rare and historic dialogue with the world's leaders in education in a setting that has been called the jewel of the Rockies. A wide array of world-

class keynote speakers will animate the dialogue of those attending and there will be myriad opportunities for spouses and family members to explore one of the most pristine wilderness areas in the world during the conference. uLead 2022 is co-sponsored by the Canadian Association of Principals and the Council for School Leadership, a specialist council of the Alberta Teachers' Association. We are expecting over 1000 principals, assistant principals, district leaders, education ministry representatives from

around the world and national ministers of education to attend.

You are invited to submit an expression of interest to offer a presentation at uLead 2022. The call for expressions of interest to present at uLead 2022 is open and delegates can now also register for the event. We would love to have you share your Alberta leadership story with the world. If you would like to do so, visit tinyurl.com/PRESENT-AT-ULEAD22 to submit your proposal.

The Alberta Teachers' Association

SCHOOL LEADER SPEAKER SERIES

2021—OCTOBER 5
2022—JANUARY 13, MARCH 16 AND MAY 2

SAVE THESE DATES

VIRTUAL EVENTS

Register for free here:
[https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJclcO-rqT4qGN3fzA7z8awO-wpapO3POVnS](https://zoom.us/join/zoom/register/tJclcO-rqT4qGN3fzA7z8awO-wpapO3POVnS)



Registrations for uLead 2022: The Summit of Education Leadership Conference – April 10-12, 2022

A unique opportunity awaits. Join Educational leaders from around the world in the beautiful world heritage location of Banff, Alberta, at Canada's premier conference for school-based leaders, district-level leaders, and provincial and state education leaders. Join us in April, 2022 for a rare and historic dialogue with the world's leaders in education in a setting that has been called the jewel of the Rockies. A wide array of world-class keynote speakers will animate the dialogue of those attending and there will be myriad opportunities for spouses and family members to explore one of the most pristine wilderness areas in the world during the conference. uLead 2022 is co-sponsored by the Canadian Association of Principals and the Council for School Leadership, a specialist council of the Alberta Teachers' Association. Hundreds of assistant principals, central office teachers, district leaders, education ministry representatives from around the world and national ministers of education to attend. This conference will be memorable and ground breaking. Find out more at <http://ulead.ca/Welcome.html>. The event is a celebration of the roles teachers play in school leadership at every level in education systems worldwide.

School leaders from Australia, Iceland, Norway, Finland, New Zealand, the United States, Great Britain and beyond have already registered for uLead 2022. Expressions

of interest for presentations at uLead have been pouring in, and the opportunity to share your voice at uLead will remain open until the end of February.

What does it mean to be a school leader, (a principal, a learning coach, a consultant, etc.) within the teaching profession? The theme for uLead 2022 is "Reimagining School Leadership" and seeks to be a provocation to attending delegates to think about the role of the school leader in leading teacher learning. A particular emphasis will be made to examine the role of the school leader in helping improve teacher capacity, both individually and collectively, as the core capability of a leader of learning, whether as a school principal, a teacher leader, or a central office leader. The resulting conversation will range from how leaders support teachers to continually enhance their teaching practices, to how those leaders develop an understanding of how to design and lead professional learning approaches that can have a positive effect on student outcomes so that we might be intentionally be thinking about transforming our education system to ensure a vibrant public education system as we go forward.

Registration for uLead 2022 is now open and the call for expressions of interest to present at the conference will continue until the end of February. A host of keynote speakers will be announced within the coming weeks. Among the keynote speakers already confirmed are:

- Bronwyn Ryrrie-Jones, University of Melbourne
- Beatriz Pont – Senior Education Policy Analyst – OECD
- Dr. Simon Breakspear, Agile Leadership and co-author of Teaching Sprints
- Barbara Watterston, author of Step In, Step Up – Empowering Women for the School Leadership Journey
- Steve Munby, Author of Imperfect Leadership and the driving force behind the UK's national organization for school leadership.
- Pasi Sahlberg, Professor of Education Policy – University of New South Wales
- Dr. Andy Hargeaves
- Dr. Dennis Shirley, Boston College
- There will two exciting full-day pre-conference workshops on Saturday, April 9th, 2022 - one focussed on Leading With Technology in the Service of Learning and the other focussed on Empowering Women for the School Leadership Journey. Please note details about that session in the following article.

Three things to consider about uLead 2022

- You are invited to share your story at uLead 2022 – The Summit of Educational Leadership from April 10-12, 2022 at the Banff Springs Hotel – expressions of interest for presentations can be shared at tinyurl.com/PRESENT-AT-ULEAD22.

- Registration is open now at www.ulead.ca with Early-Bird discounts for those registering prior to January 6, 2022.
- In addition to the Early-Bird discount offered for those registering prior to January 6, 2022 we are pleased to share that ATA members have access to a special discount code that will reduce the fee for the main conference and pre-conference workshops by 45%.
- The code for this 45% discount – which you can only use at the time of registration – is “ATA-MEMBER”

uLead Pre-Conference Full Day Workshop– Saturday, April 9, 2022

Leading with Technology in the Service of Learning

Details regarding this workshop will be available in the fall. We are planning a full-day event that will include presentations from a variety of world leaders in leading in education using technology.

uLead Pre-Conference Full Day Workshop– Saturday, April 9, 2022

Empowering Women for the School Leadership Journey with Dr. Barbara Watterston

Each year, as part of the many professional learning events connected with uLead, we host a full-day workshop of interest to all teachers who wish to take part in conversations regarding women in leadership in education.

uLead 2022 will continue this tradition. We are very excited about this event that will be led by Dr. Barbara Watterston from Melbourne Australia. Barbara will share about her recent book called : Step-In, Step-Up: Empowering Women for the School Leadership Journey as part of a full-day pre-conference workshop dedicated to this theme.

About Barbara Watterston

Barbara has extensive experience in education and has held a number of school and executive leadership positions across Australia within the education and not-for-profit community sectors. She specialises in facilitation and research focused on the design and delivery of professional learning programs to develop, enhance, and promote the work of the education profession – in particular school and system leadership to ensure learning for all, can thrive.

Barbara’s national and international research, consultancy, coaching, and speaking engagements centre on leadership development that emphasizes the impact of high-quality leadership on student learning. In Australia, her national research report, Insights: Environmental Scan Principal Preparation Programs, contributed to five major national recommendations for preparing future school leaders.

Barbara’s doctoral thesis focused on gender, leadership, and learning, which informed her contribution as co-editor of the book *Women in School Leadership: Journeys to Success* (2010). Barbara’s advocacy for women in leadership was fuelled by the lack of representation of women in leadership roles. Together with the importance of enriching a more inclusive perspective of leadership, she saw this as missing

out on the incredible potential of women to influence and positively impact on reforms and outcomes.

Barbara also found that a significant component to enabling greater diversity meant women letting go of some of their own self-imposed barriers. Her co-authored book *Step In, Step Up: empowering women for the school leadership journey* (2019) provides a practical guide for current and aspiring women leaders through a twelve-week leadership journey. A rich array of activities, reflection prompts, and stories empower readers to overcome gender barriers to leadership and engage in opportunities to learn, grow, and lead within their school communities.

Barbara has been recognized for her contribution to leadership and professional learning. She was the inaugural recipient of the Women of Achievement Award (Western Australia, 2005), is an honorary fellow of the Melbourne Graduate School of Education and is a National Fellow of the Australian Council for Educational Leaders. Her expertise is regularly sought out to contribute in an advisory capacity as a member of numerous universities, departmental, school, and professional boards.

Her Australian and international projects include emerging, executive, and system leadership programs. She has a special interest in the links between leadership sustainability, wellbeing, and impact on performance. She is the the Executive Director of the Australian Council for Education Leadership (ACEL). Registration for uLead Pre-Conference workshops can be made at <http://ulead.ca/Welcome.html>.

Curriculum Update

On 2021 03 29 the Minister of Education presented the draft K–6 curriculum to Albertans. Teachers were quick to express their shock with its content. Over time they have increasingly realized that this curriculum has a very different philosophical base, as well as different structure and content than previous Alberta curriculum. This shift in design is significant and marks a dramatic shift for K–12 education in Alberta. A quick overview of the 673-page document reveals that it is unlike that of previous programs of study produced over the last several decades including the most recent 2018 draft.

A cursory review of the sources referenced in the Guiding Framework reveals that the Government has based this shift in curriculum philosophy on educational research that represents very conservative perspectives on teaching and learning, and demonstrates that the Government is committed to implementing a curriculum based on a philosophy and design in line with what is known as the Core Knowledge curriculum. The Core Knowledge curriculum does not incorporate learning based on current brain research and, as it implies, is heavily dependent on rote memorization of isolated facts and events. It is likely that the junior high and high school draft curriculum will follow the same approach.

In response to the draft K – 6 curriculum’s release, the Curriculum Committee suggested that a study of the draft K–6 curriculum be undertaken consisting of

- an online survey open to all Alberta teachers,
- written submissions from select specialist councils, and
- a one-day curriculum circle of classroom teachers who gathered together virtually on 2021 05 31 to participate in guided conversations.

Alberta Education’s guidelines for the development of K–12 curriculum were used as the criteria for the study. This had benefits and drawbacks. The benefits of using the guidelines are that they provided a framework for the study, supported the development of the survey instrument prior to the release of the draft and ensured that the study could not be criticized by the government as being biased. The drawbacks are that upon seeing the draft curriculum there are other issues that could have been further explored such as the lack of critical thinking outcomes, the number of outcomes and the underlying curriculum philosophy. Although these issues were raised by teachers and mentioned in the report, there was insufficient data to address these issues in a substantive way in this report. All the statements in this report are backed by the data collected from teachers and information in Government publications, which has been carefully referenced.

6,028 teachers responded to the online survey; eight specialist councils provided a written submission by deadline; and 120 teachers participated in the Curriculum Circle. A report containing 14 Key Findings, titled *A Professional Curriculum Analysis and Critique of Alberta Education’s 2021*

Draft K–6 Curriculum has been prepared and can be found on the Alberta Teachers’ Association website here: [COOR-184 Curriculum Response Report.pdf](#) (teachers.ab.ca).

Based on the fourteen findings of this study the following resolution was adopted by Provincial Executive Council on 2021 08 09:

That the Association provide the Minister of Education with a copy of the report and insist that:

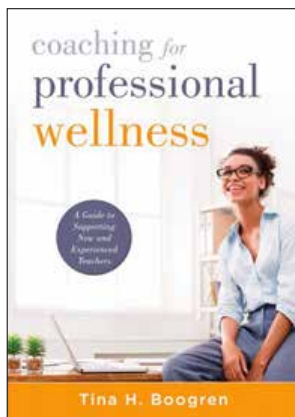
- 1) A moratorium be placed on piloting the K–6 draft curriculum and further development of the Grades 7–9 and 10–12 curriculum.
- 2) A provincial Curriculum Committee be established including representatives from the Alberta education stakeholder groups including Indigenous representatives and Alberta Francophone representatives, with the mandate to:
 - a) develop a new framework for K–12 curriculum development,
 - b) oversee the development and piloting of a new K–12 curriculum,
 - c) oversee the development and/or selection of teaching and learning resources for the new K–12 curriculum, and
 - d) design and facilitate the implementation of the provincial curriculum.
- 3) The development of the curriculum be led by Curriculum working groups, including practicing teachers identified by the profession, representatives of the Alberta teacher preparation institutions, experts in subject disciplines, Human Rights scholars, members of the Indigenous

communities, and members of the Alberta Francophone community, as appropriate.

- 4) The Curriculum Working Groups review and revise the K–6 draft curriculum (2021) considering all the input received, and draft the curriculum consistent with the well-established standards of an Alberta Program of Studies.
- 5) The development of the curriculum be open and transparent and, include authentic opportunities for public consultation prior to piloting.

New from your ATA Library

To sign out this, or other leadership resources visit <http://library.teachers.ab.ca>.



Join us for the 2021 Leadership Essentials conference!

Leadership Essentials (LE) is a two-day conference intended for school and system leaders who are new to their role, within the last five years, and focuses on the exchange of information to assist them in their leadership roles.

When: 2021 11 22–23

Where: Virtually via Zoom

Registration Link: <https://surveys.teachers.ab.ca/s3/Leadership-Essentials-Conference-2021-Registration>

If you have any questions about the conference registration process, please contact Nikki Cloutier in Teacher Employment Services at 780-447-9400 (in Edmonton) or toll free 1-800-232-7208. You can also reach her via e-mail at nikki.cloutier@ata.ab.ca.

Registration is free to active ATA members. For non-members the cost is \$600 plus GST.

The conference will run from 9:00 AM to 3:30 PM each day.

The deadline to cancel your registration is November 20, 2021.



LEADERSHIP ESSENTIALS
FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

SAVE THE DATE

NOVEMBER 22-23, 2021

School and system leaders new to their role within the last five years are welcome to register for this foremost conference in educational leadership.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



Todd Whitaker

Professor at the University of Missouri and professor emeritus at Indiana State University
What Great Leaders Do Differently



Candy Palmater

Motivational speaker and comedian,
The Candy Show
The Road Less Travelled



Big Daddy Tazz

Motivational speaker and comedian
Out of My Mind



For event information and to register visit www.teachers.ab.ca and click on My ATA > Professional Development > Conferences and Events > Leadership Essentials for School Leaders.



The Alberta Teachers' Association

COOR-70t 2021-07

To find archived issues of *Leadership Update*, go to www.teachers.ab.ca and click on Other Publications (under Publications), then go to School Leaders.

Feedback is welcome. Please contact Chris Gonsalvez, executive staff officer, Professional Development, at chris.gonsalvez@ata.ab.ca.

LEADERSHIP
UPDATE

An ATA/CSL publication for school leaders



The Alberta Teachers' Association



The Alberta
Teachers' Association



Alberta
School Councils' Association

**PUBLIC
EDUCATION IS**

UNDER THREAT

Parents and teachers
are fighting back.

Join us.

STAND 
 **FOR**
EDUCATION

StandForEducation.ca