

# LEADERSHIP UPDATE

Volume 7

Number 3



## healthy interactions RESOLVING INTERPERSONAL CONFLICT

Is conflict an issue at your school? You may wish to consider implementation of the Healthy Interactions program at the school in order to improve communication and reduce the potential for conflict.

Healthy Interactions is a communications and conflict-resolution program offered by the Alberta Teachers' Association. The redesigned four-day workshop is available to principals or teachers who wish to receive a certificate as a trained facilitator in the Healthy Interactions program. Facilitators can offer the program at their own school and/or district for other staff members. Support for facilitators who wish to implement Healthy Interactions at the school or district is provided by Member Services in conjunction with Association Administrator Instructors.

### FOUR-DAY FACILITATOR WORKSHOP

The four-day facilitator workshop is being offered three times in 2010/11—in January, in Calgary, and in April and August, in Edmonton. Please visit the ATA website for specific dates and locations.

### REGISTRATION

Registration is free to active ATA members and includes all training materials, breakfast and lunch. Participants are responsible for substitute teacher costs, travel and accommodation costs. Registration forms are available online at the ATA's website ([www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca)).



Failure should  
be our teacher,  
not our  
undertaker.  
Failure is  
delay, not  
defeat. It is a  
temporary  
detour, not a  
dead end.  
Failure is  
something we  
can avoid only  
by saying  
nothing, doing  
nothing and  
being nothing.

— Denis Waitley



## PROGRAM DETAILS

The four training modules of Healthy Interactions include



### Module One: Understanding Conflict Resolution

- The Definition of Conflict
- Understanding Conflict
- Conflict-Resolution and Conflict Management
- Core Conflict and Complicating Factors
- The Conflict Cycle
- Interest-Based Framing

This module will give participants a greater understanding of conflict and conflict resolution. The conflict cycle is discussed, and participants identify factors that increase resolution resistance. Core conflict is separated from complicating factors. Interest-based framing is used to define underlying interests, as this often makes it easier to resolve conflict.

### Module Two: Communication Skills

- Good Communication
- Valuing Others
- Clarifying Skills
- Paraphrasing
- Positions to Interests
- Identifying Interests by Reframing
- Opposition
- Structures
- Dealing with Anger
- Communications Scenarios

This module will reinforce participants' existing skills, and allow participants to develop and practise new communication skills to deal with conflict.

### Module Three: The Healthy Interactions Process

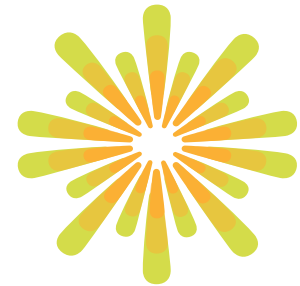
- The Template
- Establishing a Positive Environment
- Define the Problem and Clarify the Issues
- From Solutions to Action

This module teaches participants how to implement a jurisdiction or school template for handling concerns in a consistent, comprehensive and interest-based manner that is fair to everyone.

### Module Four: An Ethos of Good Faith

- Effective Parent-Teacher Interviews
- Making Your School Accessible to Parents
- Conflict in Our Schools
- Building Trust in Your School Community
- Promotional Materials

This module discusses school culture and proactive strategies to build trust and decrease the potential for conflict.



## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For more information, please contact Joyce Sherwin or Brian Andrais at the ATA. Telephone 780-447-9400, in Edmonton and area, or 1-800-232-7208, toll free from elsewhere in Alberta.

# Healthy Interactions

## RESOLVING INTERPERSONAL CONFLICT

Teachers, administrators, support staff and trustees

-  work to resolve every concern
-  follow a standard process in addressing concerns
-  identify needs and interests of all parties: student, parent, teacher, community member





**Q & A**  
**GORDON THOMAS,**  
 Executive Secretary

**Q:** I am a new administrator at my school and am finding some resistance from the staff concerning supervision. Is there a difference between walk-throughs and focused observations?

**A:** Among the many ideas found in the literature to assist school administrators regarding supervision of staff was a method called the Classroom Walk-Through, a mechanism that purports to ease the task of overseeing classrooms within their schools. Classroom walk-through procedures have been imported from the

United States and appear to have been designed for different models of teacher supervision and evaluation. Much of the terminology in the journal articles and resource materials is incongruent with the Alberta context and does not align with definitions of the terms supervision, evaluation and professional development. While frequent visits by principals to classrooms is considered a beneficial feature of most walk-through models, there is danger in adopting overly-simplified procedures that do not mesh with Alberta’s provincial policies and regulations. Placing a check mark next to a descriptor on a list has little potential to improve instruction or inspire professional growth in any long-term, sustainable or meaningful way. These short observations provide a short video clip of the moment of what is happening in your school; they are not meant for individual teacher feedback.

Alberta has developed a system of teacher growth, supervision and evaluation that is based on the premise that teachers are competent individuals who are constantly growing professionally. Policy 2.1.5 Teacher Growth, Supervision and Evaluation (TGSE) deals with accountability and continuous professional growth. It is a provincial regulation that recognizes the excellent teaching provided by Alberta teachers and their contribution to the achievement of Alberta students, who are among the best in the world.

Alberta principals work with teachers through ongoing supervision to ensure that the Teaching Quality Standard is being met and to provide instructional leadership. Quality teaching is seen to occur when the result is “optimum learning by students” (Teaching Quality Standard). In this role, principals make frequent classroom visits and help teachers by providing ongoing guidance and support. Principals are seen as trusted, fair, competent supervisors who fulfill a supportive, guiding role. They are problem solvers, able to assist with resources to ensure optimal learning and continuous growth. There is room in the professional growth process for risk taking, encouragement and support as teachers incorporate new and effective teaching strategies. The Alberta model of supervision supports the principle that school leaders are focused on student learning through instructional leadership and that strong collegial relationships are vital to school improvement. The success of Alberta’s students is in no small way due to the strength of this collegial teacher–principal relationship. So, in short, teachers in Alberta are under constant supervision where it is an ongoing process of judging a teacher’s competence against a prescribed standard and specific descriptors. Data collection within the teacher supervision process must be grounded in clearly defined goals. The data gathered must be carefully examined to determine its use in making decisions about teaching and learning.

**To find archived issues of *Leadership Update* go to [www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca) and click on Resources for School-Based Administrators.**

**Feedback is welcome. Please contact Konni deGoeij, associate coordinator, administrator assistance, Member Services, at [konni.degoeij@ata.ab.ca](mailto:konni.degoeij@ata.ab.ca).**





# *Leadership Essentials*

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## FOR ADMINISTRATORS

*November 15–16 2010*  
*Westin Hotel, Edmonton*

Open to administrators within the first two years of their appointment or administrators new to the province of Alberta. There is no registration fee, space is limited; apply early. Registration forms are available at [www.teacher.ab.ca](http://www.teacher.ab.ca), Grant-in-Aid for Association members is available (as per Association guidelines).

### *Keynote Speakers*

Dr Robert Marzano—Instructional Leadership and You  
Dr Phil McRae—Leadership and Sustainability of School Improvement

### *Network with colleagues and learn about*

Fostering Effective Relations • Embodying Visionary Leadership • Leading a Learning Community • Providing Instructional Leadership • Developing and Facilitating Leadership • Managing School Operations and Resources  
• Understanding and Responding to Larger Societal Context

### *Breakout Sessions*

• Getting on the Same Page: Discipline Strategies • Leading and Managing a School Effectively • Understanding Alberta's First Nations, Metis and Inuit People • The Role of the School Administrator in Fostering an Inclusive Learning Community • Suspensions/Expulsions/Attendance Boards • Guide to Education • The Principal Quality Practice Guideline and Administrator Professional Growth • Top Ten Sections of the School Act • Technology Traps and Treasures • Dealing with Difficult People and Difficult Issues • Interpreting and Understanding Collective Agreements • Teacher Safety Net • Policy 2.1.5 The Teacher Growth Supervision and Evaluation Policy (including Practice Review) • Effective Practices in Teacher Supervision and Evaluation • Bullying (including Cyber Bullying) • Teachers and Teacher Assistants • The Principal and Investigations: To Do or Not to Do • Bill 44: Understanding the Implications for School Leaders and Classroom Teachers

For further information please contact Karin Champion at Barnett House at 780-447-9435 (local calls) or 1-800-232-7208 (from elsewhere in Alberta) or visit the ATA's website at [www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca)



This conference is organized with the Council on School Administrators of the Alberta Teachers' Association.



The Alberta Teachers' Association

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**LEADERSHIP**  
**UPDATE**

*An ATA/CSA publication for school administrators*



The Alberta  
Teachers' Association