

LEADERSHIP UPDATE

Volume 7

Number 1

Professional Development Program Area

Who are we and what do we do?

A. Who Are We?

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The mandate of the Professional Development (PD) program area is to promote and maintain high standards of professional practice. Program area activities include matters related to pedagogy, curriculum and student assessment, social justice, leadership and staff development, teacher education and induction, technology integration, and educational accountability.

The Professional Development program area offers a wide range of programs and services to teachers, school staffs and Association subgroups (locals, teachers' conventions and specialist councils) and provides representation to education partners. Association PD staff members are available to assist you in planning and meeting your professional development goals.

B. Professional Development Subgroups

Association Instructors

The Association Instructor corps comprises 56 teachers and administrators from across the province who are trained to deliver workshops for school staffs, system PD days and teachers' conventions. Each instructor delivers between 7 and 10 workshops a year, using materials prepared by the Association.

Association Administrator Instructors

The Association Administrator Instructor corps comprises 15 principals and vice-principals from across the province who are trained to deliver workshops for school staffs, administrator groups, system PD days and teachers' conventions. The Association Administrator Instructor corps offers workshops related to school improvement and leadership development.

Professional Development Chairs

PD chairs, with the support of local PD committees, are expected to provide leadership, motivation and assistance in meeting the professional development needs of teachers at the local level. Local PD committees should have a policy and frame of reference to guide the work of PD chairs. PD committees are organized into seven geographic regions, and each region has a PD executive staff member and two PD facilitators assigned to work with the local PD committees and PD chairs.



The most important thing in life is to stop saying "I wish" and start saying "I will." Consider nothing impossible, then treat possibilities as probabilities.

—David Copperfield



Professional Development Facilitators

A corps of PD facilitators supports the work of locals in developing professional development programs in their locals and schools. Direct assistance to local PD chairs across the province is provided in a wide variety of areas: developing needs assessments, refining district programs, planning and developing school-based programs, and coordinating district and PD committee activities. PD facilitators are assigned to each PD region to assist Association PD staff in liaising with local PD chairs.

Specialist Councils

Specialist councils foster the professional development of teachers with common curriculum, subject specialty and function areas. Opportunities to share ideas and gather information in each of the 21 specialties are provided through annual conferences, publications, websites, regional workshops and seminars. The councils publish newsletters, journals or news journals pertaining to their subject or specialty.

Teachers' Conventions

Under the *Teaching Profession Act*, the Association is responsible for advancing and promoting the cause of education in Alberta and enhancing the teaching profession. A primary way in which the Association fulfills this obligation is by organizing annual conventions for teachers. The Association has established 10 convention associations across the province, each of which is governed by a constitution and a board made up of teachers selected by the participating locals.

The 10 convention associations are

- Calgary City
- Central Alberta
- Central East Alberta
- Greater Edmonton
- Mighty Peace
- North Central
- Northeast
- Palliser District
- Southeastern Alberta
- South Western Alberta

C. Professional Development Services

Teacher Professional Growth Plans

Teachers have a professional responsibility to keep abreast of new developments in education and to continue to develop their professional practice. In Alberta, every teacher employed by a school system must develop and implement an annual plan for professional growth that outlines the professional development activities the teacher intends to undertake in that year. The requirements for an annual teacher professional growth plan (TPGP) are outlined in the Teacher Growth, Supervision and Evaluation Policy of Alberta Education.

The Alberta Teachers' Association has developed a self-paced online tutorial intended to help teachers develop a professional growth plan. The tutorial has been organized into four sections:

Section 1: Review Provincial Policy Regulations

Section 2: Reflect on Your Professional Practice

Section 3: Develop a Professional Growth Plan

Section 4: Prepare for a Successful Review of Your Growth Plan

To access the TPGP tutorial, visit the Association website at www.teachers.ab.ca.

For more information about teacher professional growth, supervision and evaluation, contact Association PD staff.

Teacher Qualifications Service

The Teacher Qualifications Service (TQS), established in 1966, is the agency in Alberta responsible for evaluating a teacher's years of education for salary purposes. Evaluations completed by the service are released on a Statement of Qualifications. Statements of Qualifications are accepted by all public, separate and francophone school boards in the province, as well as some private boards, for the purpose of determining the placement of teachers on salary scales.

Assistance to University Faculties of Education

The Association provides assistance to and liaison with the university faculty of education programs in the province. Members of staff are assigned to liaise with a specific faculty of education. This assignment includes Association representation on a variety of faculty of education committees. Staff members are responsible for the Association's Area Field Experiences Committees. These committees provide feedback to the universities regarding the specific teacher education program and provide feedback to their members about issues relating to the teacher education programs.

Beginning Teachers

Beginning Teachers' Conferences, held annually in the fall in Edmonton and

Calgary, are designed to assist new teachers. The conferences are two-day programs that focus on the following goals:

- Orient new teachers to the services and structures of the Association
- Provide support for beginning teachers
- Deliver workshops that enhance the skills and knowledge of new teachers
- Establish a network for beginning teachers
- Celebrate teachers and teaching

Follow-up activities by locals, specialist councils and teachers' conventions continue the program of support for new teachers.

Building Leadership Capacity for Professional Development

A variety of workshops have been designed to build leadership capacity for planning and facilitating effective PD at the school level. These include Building Leadership Capacity for Professional Development, Leading Professional Development for School Renewal and *Real Learning First: Examination of Teaching and Learning in the 21st Century*. These workshops can be booked by contacting the Professional Development program area.

Induction Ceremonies

Being formally welcomed as a member of the Association is an important step in the professional life of Alberta teachers. Local associations conduct orientation and induction programs to give teachers commencing practice in Alberta an adequate knowledge of professionalism, the professional organization, professional ethics and related matters. Materials for use in

induction ceremonies for new members of the Association—both those teaching for the first time and those who have come to Alberta from other provinces or countries—are available to locals from Barnett House.

Mentorship Program

The purpose of a mentorship program is to help beginning teachers become acculturated to the profession and to grow professionally. The Association can offer support to assist locals and school jurisdictions in organizing mentorship programs for beginning teachers. One of the most effective strategies is to pair beginning teachers with one veteran or several other teachers in their subject area, grade level or school community. Using such strategies as collegial support, reflective practice and collaborative learning, the program provides protégés and mentors with opportunities for professional growth and development. Evaluation of the program shows that both protégés and mentors are convinced that the mentorship experience, as part of a comprehensive induction program, improves their teaching practice and student learning.

Substitute Teachers

As active members of the Association, substitute teachers are eligible to receive both direct and indirect services. Some of the direct services provided include

- access to the *ATA News* and the *ATA Magazine*, as well as copies of ATA monographs and pamphlets;
- access to the Member's Diary through their local association;
- use of the ATA Library;
- advice and consultation on issues related to employment;

- advice and consultation on issues related to membership in the Association;
- opportunity to attend the annual Substitute Teachers' Conference;
- consultation regarding employment insurance and assistance with appeals; and
- legal advice and assistance if criminal charges are brought against them as a result of incidents that occur while they are providing service as a member.

D. Other Activities

Professional Development Standing Committees

Curriculum

The Curriculum Committee monitors curriculum changes and developments affecting student evaluation and receives reports from Association representatives serving on Alberta Education program, curriculum and assessment advisory committees. The committee reports regularly to Provincial Executive Council, advising it on key curriculum and student evaluation matters.

Diversity, Equity and Human Rights

The Association is the voice of the teaching profession and advocates the principles of diversity, equity and human rights in public education, within the broader commitment of building a democratic society. The Diversity, Equity and Human Rights Committee has the mandate to

- study, advise and make recommendations on policies that respect diversity, equity and human rights;

- offer inclusive learning communities grants to teachers, and support other activities that promote inclusion;
- produce *Just in Time*, an electronic newsletter; and
- provide print and web-based information and resources.

Professional Development Survey

Each year, PD chairs across the province complete the Professional Development Survey, which tracks opportunities for Alberta teachers to pursue professional development activities. The collected data provides a snapshot of each of Alberta's school jurisdictions regarding time provisions and local and district funding, as well as critical assessments of the school district efforts to support professional development initiatives.

PD *E-News*

The Professional Development electronic newsletter (PD *E-News*) is published quarterly and distributed electronically to PD leaders in the Association and selected education partners. The newsletter is posted on the Association's PD Collaborative Site.

E. Professional Development Workshops

Workshops have been developed by the Association to provide support to school-based professional development and to school and district leaders. All workshops use the principles of adult learning and incorporate a range of facilitation strategies. They are modified to meet the needs of

participants. Most PD workshops are facilitated by Association Instructors. Established in 1986, this group of 50-plus practising teachers and administrators is selected from across the province and facilitates a variety of workshops on topics such as effective classroom practice and global citizenship. A second corps of instructors, called the Association Administrator Instructors, comprises 15 school and district administrators. They support school leaders in their practice and facilitate the development of school staff and professional learning communities.

Workshops include

Global Citizenship

- Beyond Good Intentions: Partnering with Schools in Developing Countries
- Building Human Rights Communities
- Character and Citizenship Education in Alberta Schools [English/French]
- Global Citizenship—Target 2015
- Green Street—Environment and Global Education [English/French]
- Our Circle and Beyond—Becoming Global Citizens

Effective Classroom Practice

- The Art of Questioning in a Critically Thoughtful Classroom [English/French]
- Assessment Can Become Effective Instruction
- Brain Matters—Teaching Strategies with Syn-ap
- Brain Research—Applications for Teaching and Learning
- Collaborative Learning [NEW]

- Connecting the Digital Dots [NEW]
- Deeper Dialogue Through World Café
- Differentiated Instruction
- Engaging Students—The Art of Effective Instruction [NEW]
- Exploring Multiple Intelligences
- Learning Disabilities in the Inclusive Classroom
- Media Literacy—Reading Beyond the Lines
- Student Portfolio—Beyond the Scrapbook
- Winning Strategies for Struggling Students

Positive School Climate

- Classroom Management—What Works [English/French]
- Dealing with Bullying and Cyberbullying
- Increasing Student Resiliency—Releasing Diamonds from the Rough [English/French]
- Invest in Yourself—Share the Profits
- Opening Pandora's Box—Addressing Controversial Issues in Schools
- Teachers and Parents—Same Goals, Different Roles [English/French]
- Team Building for Tomorrow

Respect for Diversity

- Building Inclusive Schools—Focus on Racism, Sexism and Homophobia
- Here Comes Everyone—Teaching in the Culturally Diverse Classroom [NEW]
- Respecting All Faiths in Alberta Schools
- Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity—Workshop Series

First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FMNI) Education

- Understanding Alberta's FNMI Peoples
- Communicating with FNMI Students, Parents and Caregivers
- Addressing Prejudice and Discrimination Relating to FNMI Students
- Increasing Resiliency in FNMI Students
- Effective Assessment Practices for FNMI Students [NEW]

Workshops for Leaders and Learning Communities

- Building a Culture of Learning
- Building Resilience for School Leaders
- Building and Sustaining a Learning Community
- Shared Mission, Vision, Values and Goals
- Tools for Collaborative Teams [English/French]
- Developing Leadership Capacity
- Data-Based Decision Making
- Professional Inquiry and Classroom-Based Research

Booking a Workshop

Association workshops can be integrated as part of your coordinated, collaborative, comprehensive professional development planning. Please book at least six weeks before the date they are to be offered. The Association charges a nominal, inclusive fee of \$100 plus GST for each workshop.

For a complete listing, please visit the ATA website at www.teachers.ab.ca or call 780-447-9400 or, toll free in Alberta, 1-800-232-7208.

WCEAC 2010— Leadership Today for Tomorrow

Registrations are now being accepted for this year's Western Canadian Educational Administrators' Conference. WCEAC 2010—Leadership Today for Tomorrow is an exciting professional development activity tailored to the needs of district and school-based leaders from across Western Canada, the Northwest territories, and the Yukon.

The conference takes place at the Fantasyland Hotel, in Edmonton, and features sessions that address a range of topics for administrators and aspiring teacher leaders such as First Nations education, the innovative use of technology in education, Universal Design for Learning, the 21st-Century Learner, poverty, and—of course—school leadership.

Confirmed keynote speakers at this year's conference include Bernajean Porter, one of the world's most in-demand speakers on digital storytelling and on the leadership and supervision of innovative technology use in the classroom. Bernajean Porter will host a special full-day preconference digital storytelling camp. We are fortunate to also welcome Lieutenant-General Roméo Dallaire (Ret'd), a dynamic and courageous presenter who has shared vibrant keynote addresses throughout

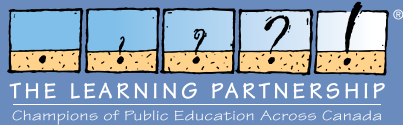
the world on the true meaning of courage, leadership and the gift of oneself. As well, Chief Clarence Louie joins us at WCEAC 2010 with a powerful message about change and ideas about how educational leaders can best serve the needs of this generation of First Nations students. These three speakers have been strong, positive agents of educational change in Canada and throughout the world. A very special session will close out WCEAC 2010—our first Ministers'

Forum. This forum will feature ministers of education from across western Canada, each sharing the innovative ideas that are resulting in growth and progress

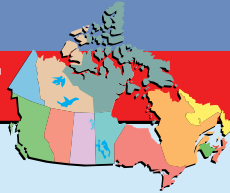
in their provincial education systems as well as the challenges they are facing. A moderated question period will provide the ministers participating with a further opportunity to share their ideas. The Ministers' Forum provides a unique moment to hear from the ministers of education from Canada's western provinces as they share the story of their provinces' education systems.

This year's conference will fill up very quickly! Further information regarding the conference is available at the conference website, www.wceac.org. Registration is available online at www.wceac.org/WCEAC_2010/Welcome.html.





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or contact **Jon Powell**

Tel: 416-440-5112

E-mail: jpowell@thelearningpartnership.ca

Teacher Growth, Supervision, Evaluation and Practice Review

Teacher Growth Supervision and Evaluation Policy 2.1.5 reflected a major change in philosophy about supervision and evaluation. It now reflects a professional model based on teacher growth rather than teacher deficiency. The policy takes seriously the professionalization of teaching, whereby all teachers are responsible for students' learning within a model of collegial collaborative work to share teaching practices in professional learning communities. In addition, in the fall of 2009, the Association assumed responsibility for Practice Review, which has a direct impact on you as an administrator.

You are invited to attend

Teacher Growth, Supervision, Evaluation and Practice Review workshop

October 7–8 in Calgary
(location TBD based on numbers)
or

October 25–26 in Edmonton
at Barnett House

If you are interested in attending, please e-mail Marilyn Terlaan in Member Services at marilyn.terlaan@ata.ab.ca.

To find archived issues of *Leadership Update* go to 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.

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UPDATE**

An ATA/CSA publication for school administrators



The Alberta
Teachers' Association