



*The signs of spring*

Page 16



**Mental health:**

Self-care and reaching out when you need help.

Page 11

# ATA NEWS

April 6, 2021 | Volume 55, Number 11

News Publication of The Alberta Teachers' Association

## Government drops new K-6 curriculum, draws fire from all sides



Your Views | page 3  
ATA launches review | page 5  
Off Script | page 7

INSIDE

ISTOCK



### Data matters

Tracking class size is key to transparency and accountability.

Read Jonathan Teghtmeyer's editorial on page 2.



### Local bargaining concludes

Last two locals reach agreements with school boards.

See story on page 4.



### Wrong way

Post-secondary funding cuts threaten Alberta's future.

Read Viewpoints on page 3.



### Off to court

ATA files legal challenge over pension control

See story on page 4.

## Class size data supports transparency and accountability



### EDITORIAL

Jonathan Teghtmeyer  
ATA News Editor-in-Chief

The United Conservative Party's 2019 election platform pledged that "Education will be strengthened by working with parents, teachers, principals and trustees to protect school choice, improve accountability, and deliver the best possible outcomes for our children." It also said that their government would update standards for special education in order "to ensure accountability for quality inclusive education."

Yet the government's decision, just months after being elected, to scrap the reporting of class size data represented a giant step backwards in the public's ability to hold the government accountable. It leaves an interesting question about who's accountability is being highlighted in the election platform.

Parents and teachers in Edmonton Public are fortunate to have a school board that continues to see the value in reporting this data. Last month, the board released comprehensive data related to its class sizes for the 2020/21 school year.

It is important to note that year-to-year comparisons will be affected by the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Parents and students will have made some different choices related to at-home learning or home schooling that would impact enrolments, student placements and teacher deployment. Staffing will also have been impacted somewhat as a result of the infusion of federal funding. For instance, Edmonton Public's student enrolment this year is down about 1,000 students when they were actually projecting a 2,400 student increase.

With that aside, let's look at the data from Edmonton Public.

*"In the absence of provincially collected data, let's pressure school boards to make this important and easily compiled information readily available."*

Average class sizes are down in all four grade grouping divisions for 2020/21, but as we know, averages do little to portray a complete picture.

There is good news at the high school level where the number and proportion of classes over 30 students are down considerably. Notably there are only six classes with more than 40 students, down from 71 such classes in 2018/19.

At the junior high level, there is a reduction in classes sized 26 to 35,

in favour of more classes under 25 students, but at the same time, there is a sharp increase in the number of classes with more than 35 students. These largest classes previously represented about two per cent of classrooms, but this year they account for more than 350, or five per cent, of junior high classrooms.

The elementary school data is problematic.

In division two, there was a similar doubling of the instances of really large classes, with five per cent of classrooms

next year when provincial funding is set to the same levels, federal funding ends and we are likely to see many of this year's at-home learners return to physical classrooms.

To be clear, I don't blame Edmonton Public or its administrators for these challenges. It has been apparent to me for years that school board funding constraints always result in class size growth. To that end, I have consistently found that class size data is a vital barometer of funding adequacy.

That is why it is so problematic that the government removed this important measure of transparency and accountability. More school boards should follow the lead of Edmonton Public in making this data publicly available.

Fortunately, Edmonton Public has made it easy for them to do so. The division has developed scripts and processes that will allow the data to be easily collected and verified using PowerSchool. The report issued says that, "While this was a more involved process to complete the report this year, it is anticipated that in future years the changes will result in significant time savings for schools and student information in preparing the reports."

In the absence of provincially collected data, let's pressure school boards to make this important and easily compiled information readily available. ■

I welcome your comments. Contact me at [jonathan.teghtmeyer@ata.ab.ca](mailto:jonathan.teghtmeyer@ata.ab.ca).

## Contract terminations must follow due process



### Q & A

Dennis Theobald  
ATA Executive Secretary

**Question:** With education funding unknown for next year, I have been hearing about potential job losses. Can my employer simply terminate my contract in order to balance the budget?

**Answer:** It is important to note that all contracts are outlined in the *Education Act* and the process to terminate a contract are found in section 215 of the act. However, before we talk about termination, we need to look at the various contracts being used. Contract terminations must follow due process.

Temporary and interim teaching contracts end on June 30, unless another date is specified in the contract. Probationary contracts also end on June 30. In these cases, the teachers' employment is not being terminated; rather, the contract expires and there is no obligation by the board to offer any further employment to these

teachers, even in the case of successful evaluations of practice.

Teachers who hold a continuing contract have no end date to their contract, so a board would need to make a recommendation to terminate that contract. This is clearly outlined in section 215 of the act and in board policy. A teacher needs to be given notice of the board's intention to terminate a continuing contract. This is followed

by a hearing either before the board of trustees or the superintendent, who will make the final decision about terminating a contract. Teachers may wish to challenge the termination recommendation and/or appeal the

decision, and Association staff are available to assist with these processes.

If a school board needs to reduce its teaching staff, board policy outlines the process to be followed. Teachers on temporary, interim and probationary contracts are the first to have their employment expire. If these reductions are insufficient and continuing contract positions need to be reduced, the board is obligated to follow its policy. The least

senior teachers in the division, pending any school division needs, would be expected to be the first to be terminated. The board would work its way up the seniority list until a sufficient number of positions have been terminated. It would

be contrary to board policy to simply choose the required number of positions to eliminate without following due process. It is also important to note that these are divisionwide decisions, not school-based decisions, so termination of some contracts could result in other teachers being transferred to fill those newly vacant positions.

As teachers, you are reminded to avoid signing or agreeing to any changes to your employment status without first speaking with staff in Teacher Employment Services. Even the decision to work part time in order to save a position could have long-lasting negative effects on your income and your pension.

I want to thank the following colleagues in Teacher Employment Services for their assistance in preparing this response: Robert Mazzotta (co-ordinator) and Keith Hadden (associate co-ordinator/SARO). If you have questions about your employment, please call Teacher Employment Services at Barnett House or at SARO. ■

Questions for consideration in this column are welcome. Please address them to Dennis Theobald at Barnett House ([dennis.theobald@ata.ab.ca](mailto:dennis.theobald@ata.ab.ca)).

# Alberta's future needs a strong post-secondary system



## VIEWPOINTS

Ricardo Acuna  
Special to the ATA News

There are two dynamics playing out in Alberta today that make it critical for us to have a stable and well-funded post-secondary education system. Despite that imperative, the current provincial government seems to be doing everything in its power to prevent the system from fulfilling its public interest mandate.

The first dynamic at play is the confluence of the collapse of the fossil fuel industry with the economic impacts of COVID-19. Recovering from the pandemic would be difficult at the best of times, but in Alberta it will be that much more difficult because of our economic dependence on an oil and gas industry that experts believe will never recover its past strength. Alberta's post-pandemic recovery will require a significant transition in our economic drivers, investment targets and job sources.

That type of economic shift does not happen without the research, innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship that comes from a thriving post-secondary system. We need well-paid and funded researchers working and teaching in well-equipped labs and facilities to develop the innovations, medicines and technologies that will drive our economy forward. We need world-class professors and instructors providing our youth with the skills, abilities, resilience and creativity they will need to build our province over the next 50 years. All of this requires investment in our post-secondary institutions. More importantly it requires an understanding that innovation does not come from focusing on the economy of today or of five years ago, but rather from allowing the researchers, academics and instructors the

freedom to question, explore, create, develop and teach without interference, and without concern for how their work will be funded a month from now.

The second dynamic impacting our province today is the reality that there is a demographic bulge of students moving through the system that will begin graduating high school in the next five years. Over the next decade, Alberta will see an increase of between 53,000 and 113,000 18–25 year-olds. This means that our post-secondary system provincially will need to increase capacity by up to 25 per cent by 2030 to accommodate this growth.

If Alberta's colleges and universities are not in a position to accommodate those students and ensure that they receive a world-class education from world-class instructors, then those young people will simply go elsewhere in search of their diplomas and degrees. And the research shows that a significant majority of young people who leave Alberta to attend school never come back. This would mean losing our best, brightest and most promising at a time when Alberta needs their vision and energy more than ever.

Keeping those students in Alberta requires much more than just creating post-secondary spaces. Those spaces need to be affordable and accessible. Our institutions must be able to attract and keep the best and brightest instructors and researchers from around the world. Our students need to have access to excellent learning and research supports from well-trained staff working with up-to-date systems in cutting-edge facilities. All of that takes planning, vision and, most of all,

funding that is adequate, stable, and predictable.

Both of these dynamics highlight the degree to which our provincial government should be prioritizing investment in a post-secondary system that will guide our province forward for the next 100 years. Instead, the Kenney government has cut core funding to Alberta's post-secondary institutions by more than \$400 million, or close to 20 per cent, over the last two years, and has indicated that more cuts will be coming next year.

At the University of Alberta, these cuts are resulting in 1,200 full-time front-line jobs lost, and 200 fewer instructors this year than last year. Larger classes, fewer supports for teaching, learning and IT, and ever-growing workloads are resulting in existing instructors and researchers looking to take their knowledge, grants, teaching and research to other jurisdictions. It is also resulting in students beginning to wonder if their needs would be better served by attending schools outside of Alberta. The brain drain has already begun, and it is exacerbated by the government's decision to increase tuition by 7 per cent per year, without any increase to student aid, loan or financial support.

In the 1970s the Lougheed government made the concerted decision to build a world-class post-secondary system in Alberta, and did not hesitate to invest the funding necessary to make it happen. Lougheed's vision has paid off, with two top-ten Canadian universities, one of the country's leading undergraduate universities, and globally recognized research including a Nobel Prize.

Today, more than ever, we need to continue to prioritize that vision. Sadly, the UCP's cuts are taking us in entirely the opposite direction. ■

*Ricardo Acuña is president of the Association of Academic Staff at the University of Alberta and has been executive director of the Parkland Institute for the last 19 years.*

## YOUR VIEWS

Teachers react to new draft K-6 curriculum

### FACEBOOK FEEDBACK

**Merissa Stenkowski**

How can anyone be proud of this very embarrassing curriculum draft?

**Stephanie Shakotko Gokarn**

So far my feedback consists of every swear word I can think of.

**Jenna Lindsay**

Please, PLEASE, do something. We can't be expected to teach this.

**Anne Mouck**

I'm sure we can all say we can't teach this in good conscience. Does that mean we are protected by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms?

**Rachael Robinson**

This curriculum for social studies is crazy! The religion component of Grade 6 is similar to a first-year university religion studies course I took. How can they expect 6-11 year olds to know this stuff!

**Tina Rogers**

Can we talk about the music curriculum where it ignores super famous composers and mandates we teach about Kenney's grandpa instead?

**Bri An**

Is it possible to strike to refuse the new curriculum?

**Paul Flowers**

I have two words. Dumpster fire!

**Annie Jacques**

Welcome back anxiety ... for me and for the kids.

**Leona Tomkow**

What can we do to delay its release? Is there money in the budgets for new resources and PD?

**Lorilee Bennett Philpot**

I am so disappointed. How much were teachers involved or parents? I don't know anyone who would agree to this curriculum.

**Tracey Garland**

Parents need to be better informed about this.

**Bill Houston**

Of course there is no political ideology involved in any of the learning outcomes ... right. Lord preserve us.

**Gerald-Wendy Feschuk**

My first thought is timing — why would they choose to present this new curriculum when most teachers are on spring break? It has been a very difficult teaching year and a break to rest and rejuvenate with little stress was much needed and now this??? So much for caring about teachers.

### ON TWITTER

**Don Brookwell @brookwell\_don**

All over Alberta, teachers are giving up their evenings, rest or time with family to read and review this new curriculum. Unrecognized and unappreciated. There should have been proper, effective consultation during the writing period.

**Wade Westworth @Mr\_Westworth**

Spent my lunch time looking at the new draft curriculum. My first impression is that this will do to our students (and thus our future) what open pit coal mining will do to our mountains and environment. Do better.

### FOR THE RECORD

“

Another promise made,  
promise kept.

”

— Education Minister Adriana LaGrange speaking to the government's new draft K-6 curriculum.





ALBERTA TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

# Local bargaining concludes

Kate Toogood  
ATA News Staff

Local bargaining for the 2018/2019 and 2019/2020 school years was completed in March after agreements were signed in the final two school divisions.

An agreement was reached on March 10 in Conseil Scolaire FrancoSud (CSFS) and on March 21 in the Wetaskiwin School Division. The latter agreement followed tense negotiations that saw teachers vote 92 per cent in favour of requesting a government-supervised strike vote.

"Wetaskiwin teachers were extremely disheartened to have reached that point, especially in light of everything we were challenged with while teaching during the pandemic," said Morgan Spruyt, president of ATA Local No. 18.

"Our expectations and asks in bargaining were not different from what has been achieved elsewhere. The things we're asking for (protections for substitute teachers and a wellness spending account, among others) are standard in teacher agreements elsewhere, so our position is both reasonable and affordable."

Spruyt's comments echoed sentiments expressed by teachers across the province. Of the last six locals to conclude bargaining, five voted in favour of requesting a government-supervised strike vote — each by more than 90 per cent.

Teachers in one of those divisions, Conseil Scolaire Centre-Nord, also voted 94 per cent in favour of taking strike action, but signed an agreement with their board less than four days later.

"The decision to go on strike was not made lightly or without much discussion, but the results of that vote showed the solidarity of our members," says Éric Cloutier, president of L'Unité locale francophone No. 24.

"We knew the impact this has on parents and our students, and we are truly disappointed the board put us all in this position, but the vote results showed that our teachers believed they had no other choice."

A major barrier to reaching agreements was board unwillingness to accept terms that were standard in other contracts across the province, such as wellness accounts and administrative lieu days, the presidents agreed. In an op-ed column published March 17 in

the *Wetaskiwin Times*, Spruyt pointed out that Wetaskiwin teachers were asking to have what 99 per cent of other teachers in Alberta had received. She also emphasized an incongruity in the Wetaskiwin board's approach to bargaining and its relationship to teachers.

"What's particularly frustrating is the board prioritizes teacher wellness, yet they have been unwilling to offer a wellness account to teachers until later this year, when other education workers at Wetaskiwin Regional Public Schools have had one for years," she says. "We are also concerned the board chose to use public dollars to purchase new technology for its central office, rather than sending it to schools to make classrooms safer."

"This is about priorities, and it's not clear what priorities the board has."

Ultimately, Spruyt, Cloutier and the other presidents are relieved to be able to focus on teaching.

"Teachers have been tested in ways we could never have imagined, but I'm so grateful for how teachers and parents have come together to put kids first and to do our best to make sure they're still getting a good education," says Spruyt. "That's the most important thing." ■

## ATA files legal challenge over pension control

ATA News Staff

A government ministerial order that reduces teacher control of their pension plan's investments is unreasonable and should be declared invalid by the courts, argues a legal application filed by the Alberta Teachers' Association.

Documents submitted with the Court of Queen's Bench on March 10 outline how the terms and conditions imposed in Finance Minister Travis Toews's order are inconsistent with the *Teachers' Pension Plans Act* and how a duty of procedural fairness owed to the Association was breached.

Signed on Dec. 23, Toews's order imposed an investment management agreement on the Alberta Teachers' Retirement Fund (ATRF) and the Alberta Investment Management Corporation (AIMCo). This came after negotiations failed to reach an investment management agreement. ATRF has indicated that AIMCo advised in mid-November 2020 that it was ceasing negotiations. Negotiating an investment management agreement was part of the transfer of investment management control imposed by the government's Bill 22 in 2019.

An affidavit signed by ATA president Jason Schilling outlining teachers' objections and the lack of consultation around the entire transfer process was also submitted for filing with the courts.

"Teachers were very concerned that investment management for their pensions was required to be transferred from ATRF to AIMCo with no option by ATRF to select other investment managers," reads the sworn affidavit.

"Teachers were also concerned that this decision was made without any consultation with the Association, when teachers make more than half of the contributions to the fund. Pension benefits for services after 1991 are not guaranteed by the government, so teachers bear half the risk of any shortfalls or deficiencies."

The application indicates that the government established a reasonable expectation for consultation before decisions were made about an investment management agreement when it repeatedly made representations that the ATRF would retain control over the investment policy and pension funds. The ministerial order provided AIMCo with veto power over the ATRF's investment policy.

In the application, the Association requests that the case be heard on an expedited timeline, as the transfer of pension asset management has already begun and must be completed by the end of 2021. The Association is also seeking an order from the courts prohibiting the transfer of additional assets until an investment management agreement is negotiated between the ATRF and AIMCo or a valid ministerial order is enacted.

No date has been set yet for the matter to be heard. ■

## Arbitration dates set for list bargaining

Arbitration dates have been set to discuss outstanding items stemming from the latest round of list bargaining.

List bargaining is the first step in central table bargaining, which results in contract provisions that apply to teachers in every ATA local.

The Central Table Bargaining

Committee and representatives of the Teachers' Employer Bargaining Association will meet with the arbitrator in June to finalize the list of items to be bargained centrally and items to be bargained locally. The two committees concluded list bargaining on Jan. 27 after failing to reach agreement on some items. ■

### More information

Teachers wanting more information are encouraged to speak to their Teacher Welfare Committee representative.



### STORIES AND PHOTOS WANTED

If something newsworthy is going on in your school, district or local, please let us know. We will also consider articles, photos and cartoons. Please email tips and submissions to managing editor Cory Hare: cory.hare@ata.ab.ca.

“What was anticipated to be an opportunity to tell future generations of Albertans about the fulsome and diverse history of this province, including the histories of Treaty First Nations that have existed here since time immemorial, has instead devolved into a Eurocentric, American-focused, Christian-dominant narrative that perpetuates rather than addresses systemic racism and falls far short of providing a balanced, nuanced perspective on Treaty 6 First Nations history and culture.”

Confederacy of Treaty 6 First Nations

“Our citizens were shocked, and we are disheartened, to see our input and collaboration reduced to nothing more than a sidenote in the draft that was presented to the public. The tone of the curriculum carries a Eurocentric-American point of view that effectively eliminates the voice and history of the Métis Peoples in Alberta.”

Audrey Poitras, president, Métis Nation of Alberta

“I think this is the stuff of parents’ nightmares, honestly.”

Taylor Schroeter, Beaumont parent and administrator of the Facebook group Parents Against Alberta’s New Curriculum Draft. Reported by the CBC.

“The content of the curriculum itself is so flawed that the implementation, I think, is just going to fall flat. And there will be a great deal of resistance — not only from teachers, but also from families and students, because this is a curriculum that is hugely overloaded, with lists of information, with names and places.”

Dr. Carla Peck, University of Alberta professor and social studies curriculum expert. Reported by the CBC.

# ATA launches independent curriculum review

## Teacher input sought following release of draft program of studies for K–6

Kate Toogood  
ATA News Staff

The Alberta Teachers’ Association has launched an independent review to gather teacher feedback on the new draft K–6 curriculum that the government released on March 29, the first day of spring break for many teachers.

New curriculum has been in development for years and the new draft has drawn criticism from teachers, education experts and parents for its outdated content that many have said is inappropriate for elementary learners.

ATA president Jason Schilling chalks this up to the government’s unwillingness to include the teaching profession in the curriculum development process.

“Teachers understand the readiness of young students for different pieces of content and how to bring curriculum to life in the classroom,” Schilling said. “To develop a curriculum without incorporating a grassroots, classroom-based understanding of how students learn could set our students up for failure.”

Education Minister Adriana LaGrange said the updated curriculum

brings a renewed focus to literacy, numeracy, citizenship and practical skills, giving students a strong base of essential knowledge for future learning.

“The new curriculum delivers on our commitment to Albertans to refocus learning on essential knowledge and skills in order to give our children the best possible chance at success. Parents and teachers have waited a long time for this, and I’m pleased to say that we’ve delivered,” she said.

Schilling also expressed concern about the minister’s expectations for piloting the new curriculum in the 2021/22 school year.

“We still have a lot of pandemic ahead of us, and our current research shows that nine out of 10 Alberta teachers are expressing concern about piloting a new curriculum during these uncertain times.

What was released is barely a plan, and certainly not a plan for success.”

Because teachers take curriculum development seriously, the Association was keen to provide them with an opportunity to provide feedback on the draft, Schilling said. Therefore, on the same day that the curriculum draft was introduced, the Association launched an extensive and in-depth evaluation project to gather feedback from active teachers.

The project features an online questionnaire that’s open to all teachers and principals in Alberta’s public education system, including hundreds of elementary subject and grade-level specialists. A number of round-table discussions with subject-matter and curriculum-development experts will follow in late spring. The

ATA will provide updates and a final report to the government and the public throughout the process.

The questionnaire garnered 1,500 responses in the first three days.

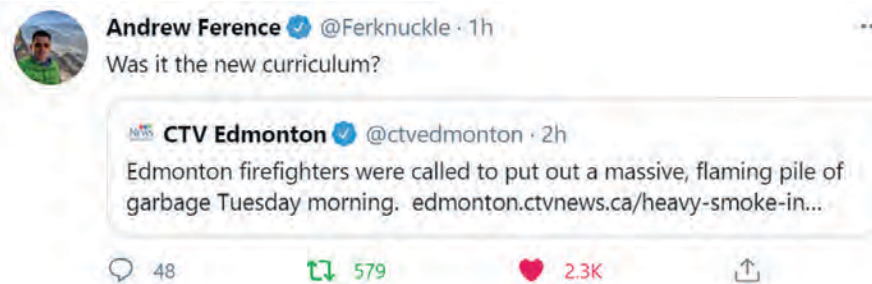
“Ultimately, we need to ensure curriculum properly prepares Alberta’s students for the future,” Schilling said. ■

### Read it and comment

Teachers can read the draft curriculum documents and provide their feedback here: <https://surveys.teachers.ab.ca/s3/curriculumreview>

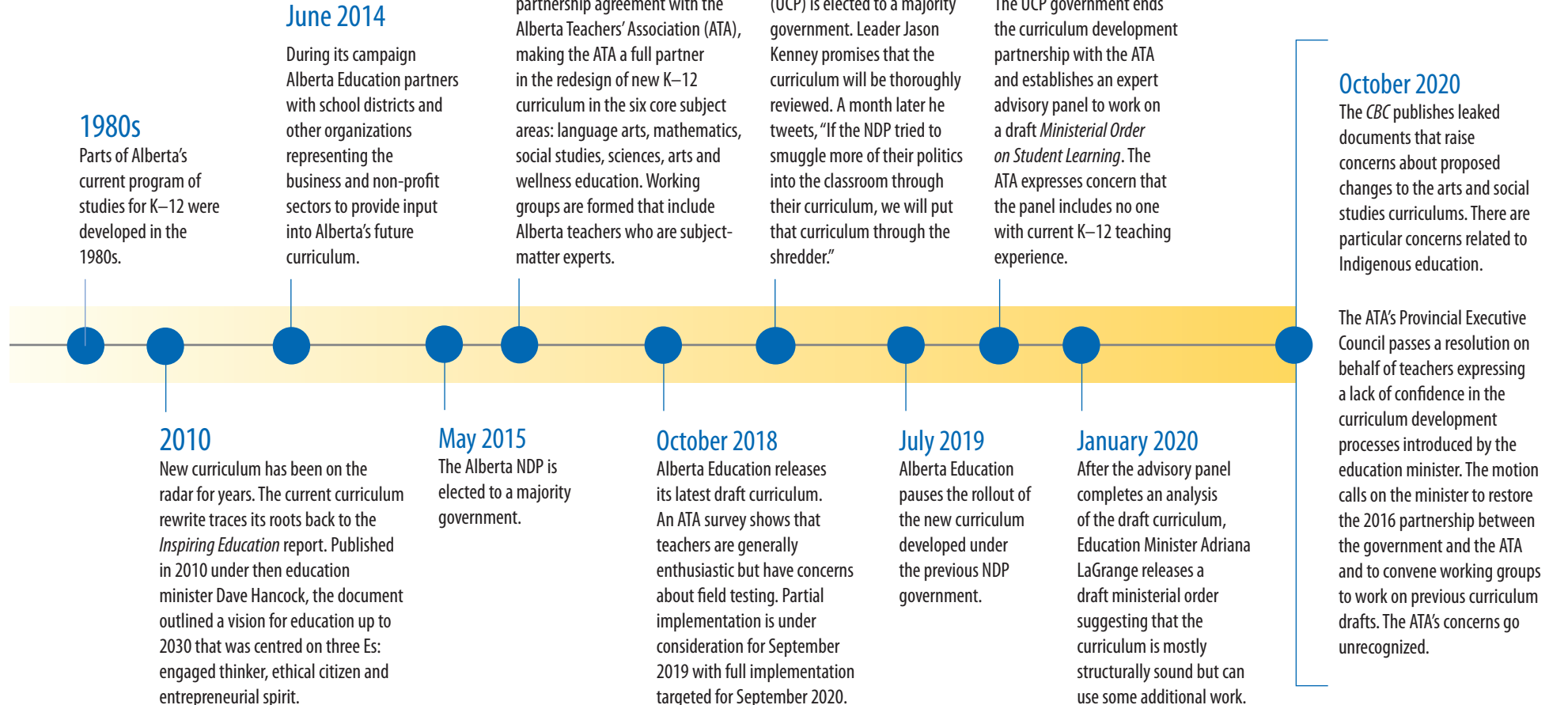
### Parent group forms

Within days of the release of the draft curriculum, a Facebook group formed called Parents Against Alberta’s New Curriculum Draft. The group had 16,000 members within a few days of forming and initiated a program called Chalk the Walk, which encouraged group members to write messages on sidewalks outside their MLA’s office, take a photo and tag it #abedfails.



Former Edmonton Oiler and Calgary Flames’ player Andrew Ference was among the many Albertans who voiced displeasure at the government’s new draft curriculum following its release on March 29.

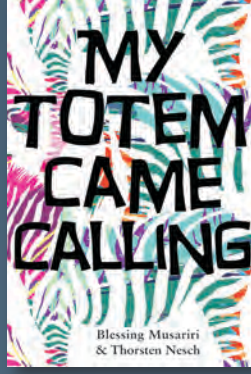
### Curriculum timeline





An Alberta teen is infected with a mysterious parasite

ECW PRESS | 9781770415935  
SCI-FI/FANTASY | \$19.95



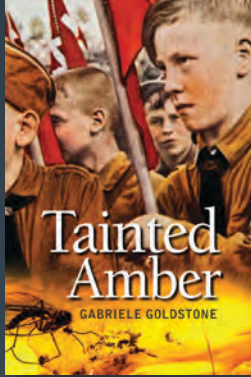
“...well-written with a good sense of voice.”  
– Canadian Review of Materials

MAWENZI HOUSE | 9781988449753  
YOUNG ADULT/FICTION | \$18.95



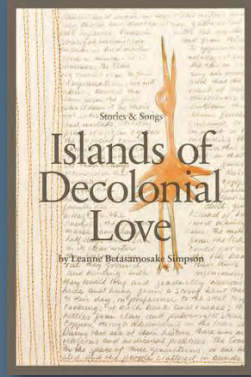
An ode to the responsibility of the teacher, and the search for meaning

NEW STAR BOOKS | 9781554201686  
FICTION | \$24.00



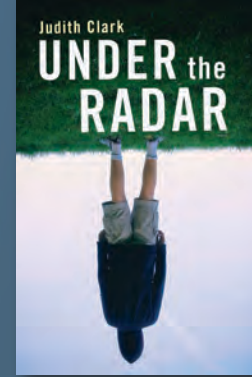
Aryan-passing Katya is horrified as Nazism upends her friends' lives

RONSDALE PRESS | 9781553806141  
YOUNG ADULT/FICTION | \$14.95



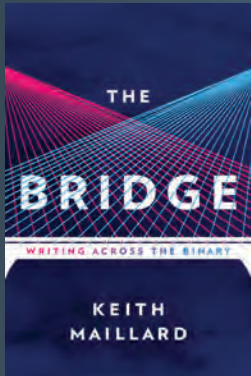
Leanne Simpson's *Islands of Decolonial Love* is a profound, important, and beautiful book of fiction

ARP BOOKS | 9781894037884  
FICTION | \$19.00



An uplifting story of a rural Albertan teen's coming out

CORMORANT BOOKS | 9781770865662  
YOUNG ADULT/FICTION | \$15.95



A true story of growing up nonbinary

FREEHAND BOOKS | 9781988298788  
MEMOIR | \$22.95



A graphic novel about a teenaged girl crossing the Mexico-US border

ARSENAL PULP PRESS | 9781551528366  
YOUNG ADULT/GRAPHIC NOVEL | \$19.95



“One of the 12 best books of poetry of 2018.”

– CBC Books

AT BAY PRESS | 9781988168104  
POETRY/INDIGENOUS | \$19.95



A gender-fluid trickster character leaps from Cree stories in new work by an award-winning poet.

BRICK BOOKS | 9781771315487  
POETRY | \$20.00



A little girl's parents prepare her for “a world of lions.”

LINDA LEITH PUBLISHING | 9781773900711  
JUVENILE FICTION | \$14.95



Nominated for the 2020 RMBA and Silver Birch Express awards

REBEL MOUNTAIN PRESS | 9781775301943  
JUVENILE FICTION/LGBT | \$21.99

**New Reads. New Perspectives.**

from the fiercely independent publishers of  
the Literary Press Group | Available on [allitup.ca](http://allitup.ca)



@allitupcanada



## Teachers will be heard on curriculum

“Consultation is not endorsement.” This is a comment I heard late last year when discussing the now released K-6 curriculum.

Since August 2019 teachers have been put on the sidelines of the curriculum redesign process and it shows. By disregarding the expertise and experience of teachers, the government has set up the redesign process for potential failure, something that Alberta teachers have said they do not want to see. Teachers want a new curriculum that excites their students and engages their learning. Our current curriculum is outdated in many respects; however, we don’t modernize an outdated curriculum

by including outdated thinking and research around curriculum and pedagogy.

When reviewing the draft curriculum, I see issues with both the content and the validation process. Obviously, there are sections of the curriculum that are flawed with regard to content, scope and sequencing. There are also several issues with process. There is a lack of concrete answers to our questions about resources, professional development and assessment. There are even greater gaps of silence when it comes to inclusion.

These issues could have been avoided if the government had chosen to engage the profession in a more

meaningful way as has been done in the past. Teachers know what they are doing. They are experts in curriculum and pedagogy, and they can tell the difference between the two. They know what works and what does not.

If consulted, the profession could be working with a draft curriculum that excites teachers in a very different way than this current one does. The government may not have wanted your voice in this process, but the Association does. Even though they did not ask us, we will still provide them our thoughtful and professional advice.

We’ve launched a comprehensive engagement project with active teachers to gather feedback on the proposed

curriculum. The project includes an online questionnaire that’s open to all teachers and principals in Alberta’s public education system. A number of round-table discussions with subject-matter and curriculum-development experts will follow in late spring. The ATA will provide updates and a final report to the government and the public.

Teachers care about curriculum — it speaks to the very heart of our work, our students and their future. Please take time to become involved in this engagement process, first by visiting our website and completing the questionnaire. We need to make sure our voices are heard loud and clear. ■

## Bill for superintendents’ college introduced

*New regulatory body for superintendents seen as a step in de-professionalization of teaching*

Mark Milne  
ATA News Staff

If the new *College of Alberta School Superintendents Act* successfully moves through the legislature, it has the potential to fracture Alberta’s strong and unified teaching profession, says ATA president Jason Schilling.

“In my mind, there’s one teaching profession and we have different roles within that profession,” said Schilling. “Splitting off CASS into their own group undermines the collegial ideal of us being one cohesive profession working together towards a common goal.”

On March 9, Education Minister Adriana LaGrange introduced Bill 55 in the Alberta legislature.

“Having an education system full of tremendously professional leaders will foster better outcomes for all students across our great province, which is something Alberta parents and

students deserve,” said LaGrange in a public statement.

Currently, the College of Alberta School Superintendents (CASS) is a voluntary education stakeholder organization and membership is voluntary. Bill 55 proposes to transform that entity into the regulatory body for all school board superintendents, deputy superintendents and central office education leaders within public, separate and francophone divisions. Membership will become mandatory.

Schilling was relieved to see the framework for the new regulatory body will maintain some of the positive components existing in the current CASS model. For example, the proposed legislation upholds the requirement for regulated members to possess a teaching certificate.

“There was some worry that that might change,” Schilling said. “The decisions they (superintendents) make will be ones that affect the learning of

students and how things are taught. You want someone in that position who has a strong understanding of pedagogy.”

Schilling acknowledged that the creation of a separate regulatory body for superintendents could also have some negative repercussions down the road.

“If they were somehow to change the regulations so a superintendent doesn’t have to possess a teaching certificate, that would be a sure way to de-professionalize the profession,” he said.

Another concern of Schilling mirrors what is currently happening in Manitoba’s education system — the creation of a distinct regulatory body for school division administrators may eventually open the door for the removal of school principals and vice-principals from the Association.

“It would set up an ‘us versus them’ dynamic,” Schilling said. “That culture of collegiality that we enjoy now would

be ruined and that would be a huge detriment to education in Alberta.”

### Common ground

Schilling noted that the new legislation introduces some elements that should strengthen the superintendent role. For example, it will provide a common code of conduct and disciplinary process that will apply to all regulated members. It will also greatly speed up the hiring process. Currently, a school board must seek ministry approval to hire a new superintendent. Under Bill 55, the division would have the final say.

Though both Schilling and LaGrange agree that Alberta has one of the strongest public education systems in the world, Schilling is concerned that the passing of Bill 55 could alter that.

“Collegiality and collaboration are important to a unified profession in Alberta. That this bill seems to divide the system up is troubling.” ■



## NOTICES AND EVENTS

### Ag for Life launches second annual Junior Garden Club

Agriculture for Life (Ag for Life) is proud to announce the return of the Junior Garden Club, an opportunity for youth to experience the seed-to-table cycle of growing food while they learn new skills, responsibilities and build self-confidence.

The Junior Garden Club began on Wednesday March 24 and will run

until Oct. 15. It includes a wide range of garden activities, farm to fork recipes, and tips and videos to assist new growers and aspiring farmers. The club is open to all Alberta youth.

For more information on the Junior Garden Club and to register visit [www.agricultureforlife.ca/juniorgardenclub](http://www.agricultureforlife.ca/juniorgardenclub).



**SUPPORTIVE,  
ACCEPTING AND  
ADAPTABLE.**

They are the Educators and part of the FACE OF EDUCATION, and we believe in them.



The Alberta Teachers' Association



**DEHR =**

**SPEAKER SERIES**  
ANTIRACISM AND ANTIOPPRESSION

Two talks from  
*Tanya (Toni) De Mello, PhD*

**Unconscious Bias**  
Friday, April 23  
6:30-8:30 PM

**Allyship**  
Saturday, April 24  
2:30-3:30 PM

For access, visit <https://bit.ly/2QzylKk>.

\*These sessions will not be recorded.\*



The Alberta Teachers' Association

PD-80-55g1 2021-03-23



**DEHR =  
GRANTS.**



The Alberta Teachers' Association

**APPLY FOR A DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS GRANT TODAY**

The Alberta Teachers' Association is offering **grants of up to \$2,000 to schools** for projects that support the Association's vision of a public education system committed to educating all children well in an inclusive setting.

For more information or to download an application form, go to [www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca) and follow the links under My ATA > Programs and Services > Grants, Awards and Scholarships > Grants Supporting Diversity, Equity & Human Rights.

**APPLICATION DEADLINE: April 30, 2021**

PD-80-38e 2021-03



**2021 gotcha! PHOTO CONTEST**

**Cash prizes available!**

The ATA News invites you to get your camera out and start shooting those award-winning photographs.

**1st place: \$200    2nd place: \$100    3rd place: \$50**

**GOTCHA! Contest rules**

- 1 Photos taken by active and associate ATA members of education- or school-related activities are eligible. (Hint: photos depicting action are best.)
- 2 Entries must be submitted by the member who took the photos.
- 3 Photos taken between Sept. 1, 2020, and May 15, 2021, are eligible.
- 4 Please email photos to [cory.hare@ata.ab.ca](mailto:cory.hare@ata.ab.ca). Entries must be received by 5 p.m. on May 15, 2021.
- 5 Each entry must be accompanied by a description of the activity; the names (if possible) of the people in the photo; the date when the photo was taken; and the photographer's name, school and contact information.
- 6 Cash prizes will be awarded to entrants whose photos place in the top three, as follows. First place: \$200; second place: \$100 and third place: \$50
- 7 Each winner will also receive a certificate of merit, as will those receiving honourable mention.
- 8 Up to 20 additional entries may be selected for an award of honourable mention.
- 9 Each entrant may submit up to five photos but no entrant can win more than one top-three prize.
- 10 A panel of individuals with photography, publishing and teaching experience will judge the entries. The decision of the judges is final.
- 11 Winning photographs will be published in the ATA News.
- 12 Photos submitted for the contest may be published in the ATA News, the ATA Magazine or other Association publications.
- 13 Please read carefully. Failure to comply with any of these rules may result in disqualification.

Get snapping and good luck!







FILE

# Highlights from the legislature

## Government and opposition debate education issues

Kim Clement  
ATA News Staff

The spring session of the 30th legislature began in February. Here is a summary of the education-related discussions that took place in recent weeks.

### School construction capital plan and Calgary

March 15—**Sarah Hoffman** (NDP—Edmonton-Glenora) asked Education Minister Adriana LaGrange why Calgary's largest districts aren't receiving new schools in this year's budget. LaGrange answered that there are six projects underway in Calgary that will create 5,000 student spaces. Hoffman noted that Red Deer has received two schools while Calgary students are forced into long commutes. LaGrange concluded by stating that projects are selected using Alberta Education's advice based on enrolment pressure, health and safety, and legal commitments.

### LGBTQ2S+ student supports

March 15—**Janis Irwin** (NDP—Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood) asked Education Minister Adriana LaGrange if she will stand up for Red Deer's LGBTQ2S+ community and advocate for the importance of pride week in schools. Irwin noted that the Red Deer Public school board announced it will not reconsider its decision to offer a "diversity week" rather than a pride week. LaGrange answered that she believes in local autonomy and that question is best directed at the board. She added that all schools have to be welcoming and safe and the *Education Act* contains some of the strongest legislation to protect LGBTQ2S+ students. Irwin continued by asking if the minister would commit to ensuring LGBTQ2S+ perspectives are not erased from her curriculum rewrite. LaGrange referenced the ministerial order on student learning, to pledge that "every student will see themselves included and reflected in the curriculum."

### Teachers' retirement fund management

March 16—Christina Gray (NDP—Edmonton-Millwoods) asked Finance Minister Travis Toews when teachers will be shown the respect that they deserve and if he will grant them control back over teachers' pensions. Toews answered that the Alberta Teachers' Retirement Fund (ATRF) continues to manage the ATRF pension and the changes made by amalgamating the investment function under AIMCo will serve teachers and Alberta taxpayers well.

Gray asked why the minister went back on his word with the Dec. 23 ministerial order that

imposed an investment management agreement. Toews stated "In December I implemented a temporary investment management agreement between the two parties so that ATRF and AIMCo can continue to move forward to pull assets over and get on with the business of investing those assets in the best interest of Alberta teachers and Alberta taxpayers." He added that he is hopeful that ATRF and AIMCo will form a new agreement which will then supersede the one that was implemented.

He concluded by stating that this decision will "result in lower costs in administering the investment strategies. That will result in better returns for teachers, and better returns for Alberta taxpayers."

### Education budget and curriculum redesign

March 17—**Sarah Hoffman** (NDP—Edmonton-Glenora) asked Education Minister Adriana LaGrange why she did not budget any new money to help teachers and students with the new curriculum. LaGrange answered that "We intend to make this rollout of the new curriculum very successful with the proper professional development, with the proper resources. I've indicated it is not coming out of the classroom. It is actually coming out of my budget. It has been allocated in my budget, and I look forward to more information when I'm able to roll out the curriculum."

Hoffman noted that the minister's own budget shows that the line item where curriculum is supposed to be funded from is cut from this year's spending. LaGrange said that in estimates she was able to show very clearly from budget to budget that there was an increase in the education department's spending.

### COVID-19 in schools

March 22—**Sarah Hoffman** (NDP—Edmonton-Glenora) asked Premier Jason Kenney why the government hasn't done more to support safe schools, noting that more than 1,400 students in Calgary's Central Memorial High School are being forced to learn online until at least after spring break due to a COVID-19 outbreak. Kenney responded that hundreds of millions of dollars for resources, materials, equipment, masks, etc. have been provided and the NDP is promoting fear and hysteria.

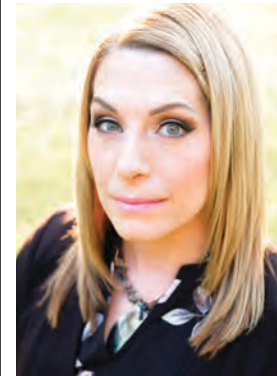
Hoffman continued by asking if the government would prioritize the use of rapid tests for COVID-19 in schools to help curb the spread. Kenney said government has invested significantly to support school boards and administrators to keep their kids safe and that less than a small fraction of one per cent of the 700,000 students in Alberta have been affected by in-classroom or in-school transmission. ■

# New executive staff officer joins TES

ATA News Staff

Former Elk Island principal Tanya Thiessen will join the Teacher Employment Services program area as the ATA's newest executive staff officer.

Thiessen joins the Association from Our Lady of Mount Pleasant Catholic School in the Elk Island Catholic School District, where she served as principal. She had previously been principal of St. Mary's Catholic High School, and has held a variety of school leadership and teaching positions at the secondary level.



Thiessen also brings some international flair to the ATA: she returned to Elk Island last July after serving for three years as the principal and assistant principal of the Canadian International School of Guangzhou.

Thiessen holds a bachelor of education as well as a masters degree in school counselling. She has been active in the executive of ATA Local No. 21, serving as the chair of professional development and as a member of the Professional Conduct Committee. She is fluent in French, and is proud of her Metis identity.

For Thiessen, her new role means being able to give back to her colleagues across Alberta.

"I am very excited to be able to work alongside educators from across Alberta and to know their stories, learn from them and to be their advocate," she says. "Healthy, happy and supported teachers create happy, healthy students that are ready to learn."

Thiessen begins her role April 29. ■

## 6 MORE THINGS about Tanya

### Who or what inspired you to be a teacher?

Growing up I often found myself in a "teacher role." I assisted with children's liturgy at my church, I volunteered to teach drama to young students with Stage Polaris Academy and I was a French tutor. I'm not sure if I really chose teaching or if teaching chose me. I certainly view education as my vocation and it has never really felt like a job. I can also say I had quite a few very memorable and impactful teachers growing up in Beaumont — teachers who were kind, passionate about the subjects they taught and truly enjoyed being with young people every day. I am sure that many of them helped plant the seeds of my future career path.

### What makes you the most excited to start work at the ATA?

I think it is an honour to be able to work for all teachers across the province. I am also excited to learn from my new colleagues at the ATA. Everyone has been very welcoming and friendly via email and I look forward to meeting them face-to-face.

### Knowing what you know now, what advice would you give yourself in your first year as a teacher?

This is a tough question. I was very fortunate to have strong mentorship and support as a first-year and beginning teacher. I started my career at Archbishop Jordan Catholic High School with a whole group of other first-year teachers and so I had a ready-made support system to share in the joys and failures of being a beginning teacher. Maybe that is the one bit of advice I would want to give to all first-year teachers: find your marigolds, believe in mentorship and forgive yourself when things do not go as planned.

### What is the greatest life lesson teaching has taught you?

Believe in all the things you ask your students to believe. It is OK to make mistakes, say sorry when you are wrong, be kind, be curious, try again ... all the little tidbits we give to our students we also need to remind ourselves. Laugh, find joy, be silly, play and have naps when needed ... ha ha.

### What is your favourite song to put you in a good mood?

I have very eclectic taste when it comes to music. It really depends on the day. I have always had a commute to work, and I think one of the reasons it has never bothered me is because I really enjoy singing in my car. I do not sing well but that does not stop me. I can say that my go-to songs for karaoke are often Disney classics.

### Favourite COVID-safe activity

My husband and I added a puppy to our family in October 2020. I love taking her for walks or to visit different dog parks in our area.



## to support your mental health

You've likely heard 'it takes a village to raise a child'. But it also takes a village to support you or your family through life's ups-and-downs. As part of your village, ASEBP provides health benefits to help you reset and care for yourself.

Lean on your village for support, connection and hope, finding safe spaces to say, "I'm not okay." Visit [asebp.ca/mentalhealth](https://asebp.ca/mentalhealth) for more information.

#THINKSHAREHEAL #YOURASEBP



The ATA is partnering with the Alberta School Employee Benefit Plan on It Takes a Village, a year-long campaign to support education workers in their mental health.



# Panic attacks prompt call for help

Teacher shares story of reaching out due to COVID stress

## COMMENTARY

*Editor's note: The following article was written by an Alberta teacher whose identity we've agreed to conceal.*

I need help. It is a simple phrase that carries a lot of weight. It took a pandemic filled with numerous panic attacks for me to be able to admit this to myself. When I finally sought out the help I needed, it was more difficult to find than I anticipated.

I had my first panic attack shortly after the declaration of the pandemic. I was anxious about my infant son contracting the virus and had difficulty coping with being unable to visit family. My husband cautiously suggested I seek help, but I resisted. I had a nagging voice in the back of my head telling me, "You're fine. You can do this. Just keep going."

But I wasn't fine. I went back to work before my son reached one year of age. While this alleviated my need for adult interaction, it brought on an overwhelming amount of anxiety that I did not anticipate. I felt a heavy burden on my shoulders as I worried about unknowingly having the virus and passing it to my students or family. This led to my second panic attack.

The panic attacks kept growing in frequency and duration. It took me nearly a year to speak the words, "I need help."

My husband and I began looking at our benefits through the My ASEBP app. We were very familiar with the app, as we had used it countless times before. When we looked into counseling, it seemed as though I needed a clinical diagnosis to qualify for coverage. As I was at the end of my rope, I was determined to

jump through all the necessary hoops to get the help I so desperately needed.

One day at work I decided to look through an issue of the ATA News. I happened upon a blurb about mental health with a corresponding website. I decided to visit the website and found a wealth of information. What I was surprised to find was free counseling services through Homewood Health. I asked myself, "How did I miss this?" I felt like I had understood my benefit plan, since my husband and I had used it so often.

During teachers' convention, I attended a session on mental health. I asked where I could find more information on my benefits since, clearly, I was missing something. The overwhelming response I received was to use the app I was already too familiar with: My ASEBP. ■

# Looking beyond the critical challenges

Self-care is a key part of the mental health conversation



## EXECUTIVE REPORT

**Lisa Everitt**  
ATA Executive Staff Officer

I delivered the presentation entitled "Compassion Fatigue, Teacher Burnout and Emotional Labour" at the teachers' convention mentioned in the above article, so when the question was asked "Where do we go to find information about mental health support?" I was the one who fielded it.

As a long-serving staff officer with the Alberta Teachers' Association, I had worked in the area of teacher benefits, including benefits plan design and assisting teachers and school leaders to access resources when facing mental health challenges. The quick answer to the above question was to visit ASEBP's website or the My ASEBP app to find the needed information. However, as I was giving this response, I knew I wasn't providing the entire picture.

I pondered the question later that day while walking my dog. I realized that, in my time in the teaching profession, now in its 27th year, I had never really experienced an organizational conversation around teacher mental health as it related to my own well-being as a teacher. Yes, in my professional role as a staff officer with the Association, I'd had numerous conversations about the importance of teacher and school leader mental health, but these conversations were always focused on helping those who were experiencing mental health challenges rather than strategies for self-care

that everyone could employ to foster and maintain good mental health. It occurred to me that, in my own professional life, strategies for self-care were not discussed very openly, and when they were mentioned, it was not a high priority organizationally — there was always something more important.

The teaching profession is built around developing caring relationships with students and their families. Relational approaches require emotional labour and, therefore, teachers and school leaders are inherently at more risk for exposure to mental health challenges. Through a compassion fatigue study we're conducting in partnership with ASEBP and the University of Calgary, the Association is learning more about the effects that education workers experience as a result of their emotional labour.

Our research has affirmed that teachers and school leaders work in complex school environments and are diligent about supporting students and families in their communities. It is a complex and challenging profession that focuses on helping others. As such, if teachers or school leaders begin to suffer in their mental health, they simply "chin up" and get on with it. By the time a teacher or school leader realizes they need support for their mental health, as the author above pointed out, it is often a solitary and confusing journey to figure out what resources might be available.

When considering the question "where do we go to find information about mental health support," I wondered if part of the answer is simply recognizing and acknowledging that it is normal to face mental health challenges as teachers and school leaders. After all, the phase one report of our study, *Compassion Fatigue, Emotional Labour, and Educator Burnout*, indicates that educators should plan to face mental

health challenges over the course of their careers as a result of the emotional labour they provide.

Statistics Canada reported on the state of Canadians' mental health in late 2020 and found that all Canadians were experiencing a decline in mental health since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Given that mental health is a challenge for many people at this time, the COVID-19 pandemic may be a perfect opportunity to say to each other, "you matter, your mental health matters and here is where you might go to get help."

Perhaps this is a message we should consider starting off with at the beginning of every school year. Imagine taking the time at the first staff meetings of the year to do mental health self-care plans and, within those plans, identify resources and strategies available to help with mental health.

However, one proviso should be observed in this conversation at school. Opening the conversation about maintaining positive mental health among school staff does not mean that staff members should feel compelled to disclose the nature of their own mental health challenges. This is intensely personal, and it is important to protect your medical privacy at work. There is also still considerable stigma around mental illness societally; there is work to be done to bring the issue of mental health out of the dark.

Talking at work about strategies for mental health can bring focus to this important issue, help school staff identify potential resources and help convey a message that mental health matters for everyone. It is my sincere hope that creating self-care plans at the beginning of each year will allow teachers to identify the resources that will help them to protect and maintain good mental health. ■



## IN FOCUS: A CSC Virtual Conference

April 30 – May 1, 2021 • Free for CSC Members

SIGN UP NOW: [tinyurl.com/CSCInFocus](https://tinyurl.com/CSCInFocus)



# VIRTUAL EVENT



Take your learning beyond the classroom with the virtual APEGA Science Olympics. Tackle engineering and geoscience hands-on challenges from the comfort of your home or classroom!

## DIVISION 1 (GRADES 1-3)

Develop a floating home for water birds facing habitat loss

## DIVISION 2 (GRADES 4-6)

Design a hands-free handwashing station for community use

## DIVISION 3 (GRADES 7-9)

Make a seismic source prototype to collect geophysical data

## DIVISION 4 (GRADES 10-12)

Devise a contactless delivery device powered by potential and/or kinetic energy

## REGISTER NOW

[apega.ca/science-olympics](https://apega.ca/science-olympics)

**Deadline: April 29\***

\*All challenge submissions are due by May 20, 2021, regardless of when you register. Register today to maximize your timeframe!

   Follow us on social media!

 The Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of Alberta

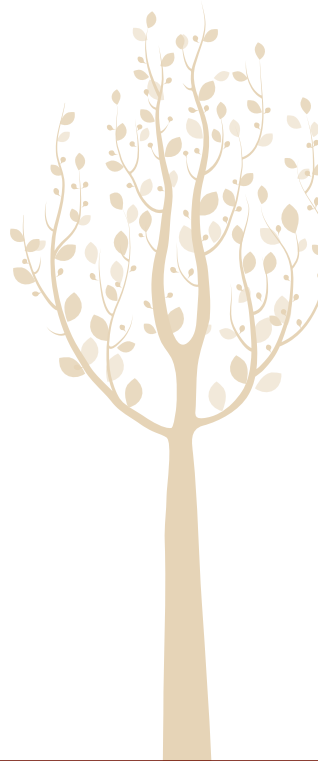


## The ATA Educational Trust

The ATA Educational Trust is a charitable organization that has been supporting public education and providing grants to advance teaching practices in Alberta for over 30 years.

Apply for a **\$700 Dr B T Keeler Continuing Education Bursaries** for teachers wishing to advance their knowledge and teaching skills in a subject area through taking courses.

Application deadline:  
**May 1, 4:00 PM**



[www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca) > My ATA > Programs and Services > Grants, Awards and Scholarships > ATA Educational Trust

AR-ETF 30a 2020-08

## Pension Webinars

Our Steps to Retirement webinar is now available online, from the comfort of your home. Hosted by ATRF pension counsellors, these sessions tell you everything you need to know about your pension as you start to think about retiring.

Simply sign in to your MyPension online portal at [ATRF.com](http://ATRF.com) to register. More webinars will be added throughout the year on various topics so sign in to your secure portal often to stay informed.



Visit:  
[ATRF.com](http://ATRF.com)



## Every child wants to learn.



Do you need more **STRATEGIES** to help the **1 IN 5** students with **LEARNING & ATTENTION ISSUES** succeed?

Inside Learning Disabilities for Educators

Inside ADHD for Educators

- \* 10-module online courses for educators
- \* Built on current brain-based research & evidence-based practices
- \* Accessible from anywhere at any time
- \* New sessions begin Spring, Summer, Fall & Winter



**FOOTHILLS ACADEMY SOCIETY**  
Professional Development Services

[www.foothillsacademy.org](http://www.foothillsacademy.org)  
A Leader in Learning Disabilities since 1979

## DIGITAL NEWS



The **ATA News** is available in a digital format.

For the latest issue, visit [www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca) > News and Info > ATA News. Subscribe to receive an email when a new issue is available.

<http://bit.ly/ATAeNews>

## BRINGING ART TO THE CLASSROOM.

ALBERTA FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS TRAVELLING EXHIBITION PROGRAM  
REGION 3 | TREX SOUTHWEST

EXHIBITION BOOKINGS OPEN MAY 2021!  
JOIN OUR MAILING LIST!

Email: [trex@albertasocietyofartists.com](mailto:trex@albertasocietyofartists.com) [albertasocietyofartists.com/trex-southwest/](http://albertasocietyofartists.com/trex-southwest/)



## ADVERTISING IN ATANEWS

For advertising information, contact Trevor Battyie at Trevor Battyie Advertising Sales 1-778-773-9397 [trevor@tbasales.ca](mailto:trevor@tbasales.ca)

**Next deadline**  
Thursday, April 15, 2021, 4 p.m.  
(Publication date April 27, 2021)  
Advertisers are encouraged to book early – space is limited.

**Circulation:** 38,000  
We accept Visa, Mastercard, cash or cheque.



The Alberta Teachers' Association

# THE HOMEWORK CONTEST

◆ 2021 ◆

**WE'RE PROUD TO BE IN YOUR CORNER.**

**REQUEST A HOME OR AUTO QUOTE FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN:**



**CALL 1-888-732-6751 OR VISIT WWW.MORGEX.COM**



**can we talk?**

Plus, as part of our Commitment to Teachers in Alberta, Morgex will make a donation of \$20 for every home or auto insurance quote to the "Can We Talk" campaign hosted in partnership by the ATA and the Canadian Mental Health Association-Alberta Chapter.\*\*

**Proudly Supporting Teachers for the Last 35 Years**

Morgex Insurance is a tradename of and a division of Johnson Inc. ("Johnson"), a licensed insurance intermediary. Home and car policies are primarily underwritten, and claims handled, by Unifund Assurance Company ("Unifund"). Described coverage and benefits applicable only to policies underwritten by Unifund. Car insurance not available in BC, SK or MB. Home and car insurance not available in NU. Johnson and Unifund share common ownership. \*AIR MILES® Reward Miles awarded only on regular home and car insurance policies underwritten by UAC. At the time the premium is paid, one (1) Mile is awarded for each \$20 in premium (including taxes). Miles are not available in SK or MB. \*\*Up to total \$20,000 (CAD) donation. Promotion open April 1, 2021 - June 30, 2021 ("Promotion Period") to legal residents of Alberta who are current ATA members ("Eligible Persons"). Eligible Persons must call Johnson during the Promotion Period and obtain a home or auto quote. Limit of one (1) donation per person and household. Offer subject to change. †NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. Open February 1, 2021 to May 31, 2021 to legal residents of Canada (excluding Quebec and Nunavut) who at the time of entry and prize fulfillment: (1) have reached the age of majority in their jurisdiction of residence and (2) are a member of the Alberta Teachers' Association with whom Johnson Inc. has an insurance agreement. Five (5) prizes available consisting of \$5,000 CAD. Odds of winning depend on the number of eligible entries received. Math skill test required. Rules: www.morgex.com/homework

# WHAT DOES THE Canadian Teachers' FEDERATION DO FOR US ?

## DID YOU KNOW?

The Canadian Teachers' Federation...

- ✔ was instrumental in advocating for the \$2 billion in support for provinces and territories through the Safe Return to Class Fund.
- ✔ has successfully advanced with the federal government the need to reduce the number of hours required to access employment insurance. (120hrs)
- ✔ advocates for gender equity and the empowerment of girls and women in Canada and abroad.
- ✔ is the only national organization in Canada promoting quality, inclusive, publicly funded public education.
- ✔ undertakes important research on topics that impact public education.
- ✔ Since 1964, Alberta teachers have collaborated with colleagues in developing countries through the CTF/FCE's Project Overseas (PO) to improve teaching and learning, and to promote equitable, high quality, publicly funded education for all.
- ✔ La FCE offre un soutien aux enseignants francophones en milieu minoritaire.

The Alberta Teachers' Association



### YOU TEACH TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE. SO DO WE.

Our fully online Post-Graduate Certificate in Special Education is coming in the fall of 2021. This post-graduate certificate is the first step in our Specialized Applied Graduate Experience (SAGE) program.

For more information, please visit [coursesforteachers.ca/ab](https://coursesforteachers.ca/ab) or follow us @queenscte on social media.

[coursesforteachers.ca/ab](https://coursesforteachers.ca/ab)

▶ Would you like to teach for us? To apply, visit our website.

# TALENTEND

April 6, 2021 | Volume 55, Number 11

## You know it's spring when...

... rubber boots replace snow boots.

*Heather Quinn*

... my students smell like sunshine and wet dog at the same time.

*Cherlyn Forth*

... my kindergarten friends go home covered in mud.

*Crissy Li*

... the Grade 9 kids leave their *Lord-of-the-Flies* stage and become part of human civilization again.

*Carolyn Dyck*

... my students leave little wet sock prints from the boot trays to the classroom.

*Cheryl Trachimowich*

... it snows three inches during the school day.

*Chris McLean-Sleger*

... mud fills the hallways.

*Stephanie Ritter*

... announcements include "please stay out of the large mud puddle in the field."

*Sherry Duncan*

... Lake (insert school name) returns to the parking lot.

*Michelle Holdway*

... students come to the office to call home for dry clothes after too much puddle play.

*Larry Irla*

... you are looking forward to spring break so you can mark essays for 10 days straight.

*Connie Carolan*