

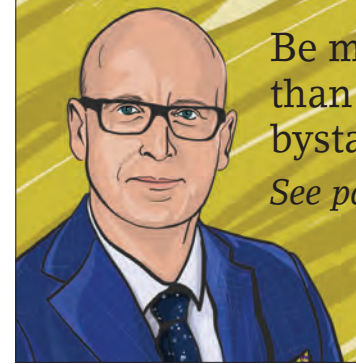


Students show support for Ukraine

See Tale End on page 12.

Off Script

with ATA President Jason Schilling



Be more than a bystander. See page 7.

ATA NEWS

April 5, 2022 | Volume 56, Number 11

News Publication of The Alberta Teachers' Association

Stop Bill 15



Colleagues

Recently, Minister of Education Adriana LaGrange tabled Bill 15, the *Education (Reforming Teacher Profession Discipline) Amendment Act*.

Make no mistake: this bill is an attack on teachers and your profession.

Accompanying this bill were myths, misinformation and unfounded allegations of your Association protecting bad teachers. I am asking you to stand vigilant in the face of this flurry of falsehoods.

The Association takes great pride in a fair but firm process that has been used effectively for over 85 years to ensure that high standards of conduct are upheld. **This legislation is completely unnecessary and is only being introduced as retribution toward you and your Association, which has not allowed this government's disastrous decisions to go unchallenged.**

The premier is embroiled in scandals and an unprecedented challenge to his leadership.

The minister faces non-stop criticism for her complete mismanagement of one of the top education systems in the world.

The whole government needs desperately to change the channel and cause distraction. So they do what they have always done — they lash out at their scapegoats. This is nothing new.

The coming days and weeks may get ugly. **But now, more than ever, we need solidarity in the face of this threat.**

We need to come together as [One Profession United](#), to defend ourselves, our profession and public education.

Please visit www.oneprofessionunited.ca to send an email to your MLA now, to express your opposition to Bill 15.

Stay tuned for more.

Yours in public education.


Jason Schilling, ATA President

New bill to remove professional regulatory functions

Minister to have unilateral power over discipline function.

See story on page 4.

Curriculum and discipline issues are closely linked

Province wants teachers to be content shovellers.

Read Jonathan Teghtmeyer's editorial on page 2.

It's about payback and diminishing the profession

Putting pesky teachers in their place.

See Viewpoints on page 3.

Curriculum and discipline issues closely linked



EDITORIAL

Jonathan Teghtmeyer
ATA News Editor-in-Chief

At first glance, the issues of the curriculum and the policing of teacher conduct seem quite far apart.

The former is something that directly impacts every teacher on every day. The latter is something that most teachers will never be directly involved in.

I recall being a young teacher in 2003 – another time when this issue of splitting the ATA was a real threat – thinking, “Why should I care about this? I’m never going to be involved in a conduct discipline matter.”

But it is very important that we recognize these threats, and these two seemingly disparate policy positions, as part of a bigger playbook and an overarching ideology about the role of teachers.

In the curriculum debate, it’s easy to get caught up in specific bits of content. Climate change, consent, reconciliation and LGBTQ2S+ inclusion are important issues. But even if those bits of content get resolved, this draft curriculum will

not be saved. There are fundamental flaws.

The problem with the curriculum is a problem with how its creators view the work of teachers and, frankly, the role of public education. This curriculum prescribes a long list of basic facts and knowledge that teachers will diligently and dutifully pour into the brains of children.

There is no room for teachers to instill creativity into how they instruct. There is no room to find depth in the content matter. There is no room to ensure that children engage meaningfully in the content to achieve mastery and to help ensure deeper understanding, critical thought and long-term retention. There is no room to help the students who struggle with that content.

Just teach the facts and move on to the next ones.

The role of the teacher is to shovel content. We are labourers.

This also explains how the public discourse is evolving on this. When teachers – and, moreover, the teachers’ association – voice their concerns, the response is that teachers should not have a say in what is taught, just teach it and do as you’re told (I’ve seen this repeatedly on our Facebook

comments). Or worse, teachers – and again, moreover, the teachers’ union – are accused of only caring about what’s in the curriculum because they want to brainwash children with woke ideas, or even worse, communism.

In that world view, teachers are not professionals expressing a professional concern. Teachers are labourers, now getting uppity and not doing what they are told. In that world view, the teachers’ association is not a professional association that is representing the legitimate professional concerns of teachers. No, this is the teachers’ union trying to maintain its tight grip on power over what happens in state-run schools (again, I’ve actually read this in the comments).

So why on earth would you have the self-interested teachers’ union – a labour union with the sole purpose of negotiating salary and working conditions – involved in a role that looks at the conduct of bad teachers? In that world view, it’s the role of management to punish bad teachers, acting in opposition to the union that protects them. It makes sense, in that world view, to see that as a conflict of interest.

The alternative – professional – view is that teachers as a profession

have an interest that coincides with the public interest, to ensure that their colleagues are held to high standards and do not diminish the standing of the profession. In this view, the role of professional discipline can be handled only by the profession.

The move to remove the professional discipline function is not a simple administrative or governance switch. It is a move to deprofessionalize teachers and teaching. Splitting the ATA by removing its professional functions and leaving it as just a union is a way to continue to diminish their standing and to undermine their voice as professionals.

In this regard, we should all be concerned. Whether or not you think you will ever set foot in a disciplinary hearing, this decision will have a long-term impact on you as a professional.

We need to push back on it. Please visit www.oneprofessionunited.ca and advocate for your standing as a professional. ■

Thanks and credit to my colleague Gordon Thomas, whose writing in Viewpoints, opposite, helped inspire this column.

I welcome your comments. Contact me at jonathan.teghtmeyer@ata.ab.ca.

Moving from Interim to Permanent? Spring is here



Q & A

Dennis Theobald
ATA Executive Secretary

Question: I’ve been working as a teacher with an Interim Professional Certificate for almost two years now. When do I qualify for a Permanent Professional Certificate? What do I have to do to receive one?

Answer: Spring is the time when teachers who are teaching with an Interim Professional Certificate (IPC) should take stock of their teaching experience and consider whether they are eligible to receive a Permanent Professional Certificate (PPC). All eligibility details are laid out in Alberta Education’s Certification of Teachers and Teacher Leaders regulation. In a nutshell, if by the end of the school year, you will have completed the equivalent of two school years’ worth of full-time teaching with an IPC in an Alberta school or its equivalent, and you have been deemed through two successful formal evaluations of your teaching practice by your principal to be meeting the Teaching Quality Standard, you qualify for a PPC. You

also must be a Canadian citizen or be lawfully permitted to work in Canada before the PPC will be issued to you.

The two years of teaching experience mentioned above includes remote emergency teaching that occurred during the pandemic. Teaching experience does not have to be continuous in one school or school jurisdiction. It may consist of several assignments, full time or a fraction thereof, in more than one school or school jurisdiction. Days spent substitute teaching may also be factored into the two-school year requirement, depending on your collective agreement. The two years of teaching experience must have taken place in a school or schools in Alberta, or in a school or schools operated or approved by the minister. Experience gained in post-secondary institutions or other related professional experience may also qualify. Experience gained in registered private schools (as opposed to accredited private schools) does not count in this instance as they are not required to teach the Alberta Program of Studies, nor are they required to hire Alberta certificated teachers.

If you believe you qualify for a PPC, your first step should be to gather up evidence of your teaching experience. This would include documentation

of the number of days taught while working with an IPC and copies of evaluations of your teaching practice. Your second step is to contact your school division’s human resources department to share your evidence and to ensure that they will recommend to the registrar’s office that you are eligible for a PPC.

You should provide your school division with the required documentation to support your request for a PPC. They, in turn, will provide the registrar at Alberta Education with the documentation and a recommendation to issue the PPC. You should receive your PPC card sometime towards the end of August. If you do not receive your PPC before school starts in September, you’ll want to make your principal aware of that and request that they investigate the delay. Hopefully, you’ll have it in your possession before your IPC expires.

If you have had only one evaluation, you will want to schedule a second one for the purpose of obtaining a PPC as outlined in your school jurisdiction’s Teacher Growth, Supervision and Evaluation Policy. Any discussion about initiating an evaluation should be held at the beginning of the school year and followed up with your formal request in writing and should clearly state that you are making the request

for the purpose of obtaining a PPC. It is always good practice to document conversations about these sorts of things in case you need to follow up on something later.

An IPC’s expiry date is typically August 31st, in the third year after it was issued. It can be extended beyond its term or reissued if time has lapsed since it expired. Make sure you are aware of when your IPC expires, as it is a requirement in Alberta to possess a valid teaching authority when practising as a teacher.

On a final note, you’ll be pleased to know that PPCs do not expire like IPCs. Once issued to you, it will remain current for the duration of your teaching career and beyond if you wish to do some substitute teaching in your retirement. PPCs, like IPCs, can be suspended or cancelled by the minister for reasons of professional misconduct or for failure to meet the Teaching Quality Standard.

For additional information about IPCs or PPCs, or if you have been denied a PPC, please contact Teacher Employment Services or Professional Development at 1-800-232-7208. ■

Questions for consideration in this column are welcome. Please address them to Dennis Theobald at dennis.theobald@ata.ab.ca.



It's all about payback and diminishing the profession



VIEWPOINTS

Gordon R. Thomas
Former ATA executive secretary

When it began life as the Alberta Teachers' Alliance in 1917, the ATA had as one of its first policy objectives that the teaching profession should be fully self-regulating. The profession itself, through its professional organization, should set the requirements for certification, issue teaching certificates, and set professional conduct and practice standards. In 1936, the William Aberhart government amended the *Teaching Profession Act* to grant the ATA legislative and regulatory authority for professional discipline, and these provisions have been revised, strengthened and expanded by the legislative assembly on multiple occasions since that time.

So why has Education Minister Adriana LaGrange now introduced legislation in Bill 15 to remove the Association's responsibility to establish and police professional conduct standards?

It's all about payback and diminishing the role of teachers and the teaching profession. In the minister's view, teachers can't be trusted with these responsibilities. The minister does not see teachers as self-actualized professionals who are skilled practitioners and who maintain high standards. Teachers are technicians who need to be managed by their superiors. (Expect principals down the road to be removed from the Association – they are managers, and management can't be members of the bargaining unit.) The education system should rely not on teachers but on management, which will direct the teacher technicians. And what are the views of teachers, who work every day with their students? The minister isn't interested in what

teachers think; management will tell the government what is best. For that matter, lessons can be created by management and distributed to teacher technicians to teach.

By diminishing the profession, the minister will destroy the collegial culture in schools. With the Association converted from a professional association to a full trade union, and with principals eventually removed from the union since they are management, the profession will be recharacterized as management and labour, rather than the collegial structure that exists today.

“The minister's plans are not about protecting the public interest and they are not neutral.”

Professional decisions normally made by colleagues will now be management-labour issues. Principals will become managers of grievances, not instructional leaders. The minister, not the profession, will set conduct and competence standards, in conjunction with management, and compliance will be mandated. Management will be rewarded for the results its teacher technicians achieve, and the expectations for those results will, of course, be set by the minister.

In sum, diminish the profession by removing its professional functions and by refusing to listen to the profession. Remove principals from the Association because they are managers, not instructional leaders. Recharacterize the profession in the context of management and labour, and empower management to direct its teacher technicians. For the minister, management becomes the voice of the profession. And with respect to the union (the remaining functions of the ATA), use government authority to restrict bargaining rights, cap funding and force strikes. Attack pay, benefits and security of tenure. The Association becomes the big, bad, self-interested union.

The minister's plans are not about protecting the public interest and they are not neutral. Together, these actions will destroy what's left of what was once the world's top English-speaking education system. A professional collegial culture, where teachers are supported in their work, will be replaced with a management-labour culture where teacher technicians are directed.

The professional association with a strong commitment to professionalism, as exists now, will be transformed into a union with a role limited to the members' interest and collective bargaining. And the minister and her government, fed up with having to listen to teachers criticize their new curriculum, critique their ongoing funding reductions, expose their preference and priority for privatization, and question their plans (or lack thereof) to manage COVID-19 in schools, will have the satisfaction of putting those pesky teachers in their place. ■

A teacher for well over four decades, Dr. Gordon Thomas served on the ATA's executive staff from 1984 to 2018, and from 2003 to 2018 as its chief executive.

YOUR VIEWS

ON TWITTER

Kevin McBeath @mcbeatke

@Alberta_UCP needs desperately to change the channel & cause distraction. Be vigilant against the myths, misinformation & unfounded allegations against @albertateachers in their flurry of falsehoods. Make no mistake #Bill15 is an attack on teachers.

Kimberly Collis @thekimberlyiest

The fact that the children in our province will be forced into a brutal curriculum that was never fully piloted by ANYONE is egregious, flawed, and malicious on the part of the UCP.

FACEBOOK FEEDBACK

On the draft curriculum

Sandra Tedeschini

Has Adrianna LaGrange ever been in the classroom? Does she have an education background? Nevertheless, her knowledge of what kids should and should not learn is debatable; does she think that teachers want to change parts of the curriculum? Especially after the last 2 years! Very unfair Ms. LaGrange! Shame on you!

On Richard Rand's discipline opinion article

Daniel Nelles

An EXCELLENT article from someone who's actually been immersed in the world of professional discipline for many years. It's these sort of experts that should be informing legislative decisions, not uninformed speculation motivated solely by political point-scoring instead of the best interests of students and the public.

On education funding

Stephen Moses

Only a raise to make up for years of 0% will be sufficient. When are we going to stand up for ourselves and what we deserve as professionals? Eliminate the War Room and 30% wage increases for Kenney's cronies and stand up against rollbacks for health care workers or we will be next. We have had too many years of doing great with less, now they want even more with even less.

FOR THE RECORD

“

Mr. Speaker, rather than treating teachers as the enemy, this government should support them in their mission to help kids succeed. The government should show teachers the respect that they so rightfully deserve, and if they won't, the UCP will be held accountable in the next election by teachers and by all Albertans who care about education.

”

- Sarah Hoffman, MLA
Edmonton-Glenora



New bill would remove professional regulatory functions from ATA

Bill 15 would create a teaching profession commissioner leaving the ATA to act as a union

ATA News Staff

Education Minister Adriana LaGrange has introduced legislation that would reroute complaints on teacher conduct and competence through a newly established Alberta Teaching Profession Commissioner, appointed by the minister.

LaGrange unveiled Bill 15, the *Education (Reforming Teacher Profession Discipline) Amendment Act*, at an embargoed news conference on March 31. The Association was not permitted to participate in the briefing, nor did it receive any information concerning the bill prior to its tabling in the Legislature.



FILE
Adrianna LaGrange,
Alberta Education Minister

LaGrange said the new legislation aims to improve student safety, but ATA president Jason Schilling said the move is punitive.

"This is designed to punish the teaching profession for standing up to the minister's poor handling of the education file," he said. "It's a crass, insensitive bid to undermine public confidence in teachers and the ATA."

LaGrange said the changes will not impact the role of the ATA in "member-focused advocacy or services" or collective bargaining. "The ATA would have you believe that this is an attack on teachers. Nothing, but nothing could be further from the truth," said LaGrange.

But Schilling disagrees. He said the minister's goal is to weaken the profession, and it will have far-reaching effects on teachers, schools and public education. Whereas a united Association can focus on viewing issues through a professional lens and not just through teachers' interest and union responsibilities, Schilling said LaGrange's legislation will force the ATA to act as a labour union only, with a narrow view on teachers' interests first. The move will introduce more management-labour conflicts into schools, displacing the collaborative, collegial environment that has been a hallmark of Alberta's public education system.

Schilling says that the minister is introducing a system that consolidates and concentrates power in her hands. The minister will have unilateral powers to hire and fire the teaching profession commissioner, appoint both teachers and public members to sit on hearing committees, and establish the Code of Professional Conduct. Even then, the minister has no obligation to respect the outcomes of the process. She would be able to dismiss complaints, issue reprimands and even cancel certificates, "whether or not it is the recommendation of the hearing (or appeal) committee."

Schilling calls this an expansive power grab by a minister that enjoys very little public trust and no confidence from teachers.

"This minister is asking Albertans to give her a great deal of trust to oversee the teaching profession. After the gross mishandling of curriculum — including very questionable appointments — and other education issues, it is hard to imagine how Albertans could extend that level of trust to this government," says Schilling. "When it comes to ethics and integrity, I don't think this government should be trusted right now with more powers and more authority."

Schilling says the ATA is the group that teachers and the public trust more to uphold teacher standards.

"The process that the ATA has established [for discipline] is transparent and accountable," he said. "It stands in stark contrast to the secretive and unaccountable process that the minister has maintained in place for private and charter school teachers and superintendents who have been regulated directly by the government — this hardly inspires confidence in a process that will be run by the government and answerable only to the minister."



ATA President Jason Schilling responds to the tabled legislation at the Legislature building.

ELISSA CORSI

“The move will introduce more management-labour conflicts into schools, displacing the collaborative, collegial environment that has been a hallmark of Alberta’s public education system.”

"The minister is taking the fumbling and bumbling approach we've seen on curriculum reform and applied it to regulatory reform," says Schilling.

The new proposed disciplinary model set out under the direction of the Alberta Teaching Profession Commissioner would come into force on January 1, 2023.

Regulations will need to be provided by government to address how current complaints will be transitioned

from the Association and the registrar's office to the new commissioner. LaGrange said that regulatory work for transitional provisions, as well as remaining details for the proposed model, would begin later this spring.

Bill 15 was tabled shortly before the deadline for the publication of this article. Additional details and further analysis of the 250-page bill will be featured in future communications from the Association. ■

It's time to turn up the pressure



Send an email to your MLA

Instead of supporting and fostering public education, the government has delivered non-stop attacks intended to weaken and destabilize it.

Now, the minister has introduced Bill 15, which will remove the ATA's responsibilities to uphold teacher conduct.

This is a sad effort to distract from the government's own inability to handle the education file.

The education minister's plans will destabilize the system and destroy the culture that has made Alberta's one of the best performing public education systems in the world.

We cannot allow her to do that.

Email your MLA and demand that the government back off its plan to dismantle Alberta's teaching profession.

www.oneprofessionunited.ca



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(Grades 4-6)

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(Grades 7-9)

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DIVISION 4
(Grades 10-12)

Build a fun and innovative amusement park ride



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Challenge submission deadline:
May 19, 2022

Register now to get started on your challenge!

*Challenges will be released to registrants upon registration. Register early to have more time to complete your prototype!



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The Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of Alberta

Are charter schools public?



EXECUTIVE REPORT

Lisa Everitt
ATA Executive Staff
Officer

Alberta is the only province with charter schools in Canada. The ability to apply for and open a charter school in Alberta has been available since the early 1990s. At that time, the politicians of the day touted charter schools as providing parental choice in education and as examples of innovation for the public system, claiming they would become key centres for educational research. When charter schools were founded, there was a sense that once their five-year charters were concluded, the schools would either be absorbed into the public education system or closed. However, this did not happen, and charter schools remain part of the education landscape in Alberta.

As an ATA staff officer and as a part of my doctoral work, I have met many charter school teachers, school leaders and system leaders, many of whom also had experience in the public, separate or francophone school systems. I have been impressed with the dedication and expertise shown by these professional teachers and leaders to their school

communities. In addition, I have visited charter schools and found that while the specific focus for the school may be obvious at the school, there is little to distinguish charter schools from public schools. In both public and charter schools, staff, including teachers and school leaders, work hard to provide meaningful education experiences for the students and build vibrant school communities.

Given the apparent lack of distinction between charter schools and public schools in terms of lived experience, the analysis of the differences between charter schools and public schools must be done at a philosophical and policy level. Philosophically, public schools were created to provide education to all children in Alberta regardless of their race, socio-economic status, ability, gender or family background. On the other hand, charter schools are designed to address particular interests within a parent or corporate community. Historically, charter schools have been able to refuse students with exceptional needs from attending.

At a policy level, charter schools and public schools have different systems of governance. Public schools are governed by school board trustees elected by the public, while charter schools are governed by either a corporate board or a board elected from the parent body of the

school. The key distinction between the governance structures is one of public and democratic accountability for policy decisions. Charter school advocates point out that they, like public schools, must report to Alberta Education on their financial activities, education plan and other accountability measures. They further point out that charter schools must achieve the terms set out within their charter, and this review is done by Alberta Education every five years or 15 years. While the accountability structures for public and charter schools are similar in terms of accountability to the Alberta government, the governance structures are fundamentally distinct.

The philosophical and policy differences between public and charter schools are what give rise to the concerns the ATA has about charter schools. First, the ATA's policy advocates for a well-funded and universally accessible education system. While charter schools are not as exclusive as private schools, they can refuse some students access. In addition, the differences in governance structures lead to concerns about public accountability, including contemplation of how schools serve entire communities, not just part of a community. Finally, over the years, successive governments have loosened the requirements to open new charter schools, and now charter schools will

receive infrastructure money. Given that charter schools are not publicly accountable, what happens to the infrastructure if a charter school is dissolved? In the absence of public and democratic accountability for charter school governors, this is a significant issue. A cautionary tale can be found in the United States, which allows for-profit charter schools, where hundreds of millions of dollars of public money have been siphoned off to [private for-profit charter school operators](#).

While charter schools in Alberta have been, until recently, a tightly regulated and controlled education experiment, there are signals this could change. The cap on the number of charter schools in Alberta was lifted, and in the more recent past, at least four new charter schools were given permission to open in Alberta. In addition, the 2022/23 funding manual has allocated start-up and infrastructure money to be made available for charter schools. Proportionally, in this year's education budget, charter schools, which serve only 1.5 per cent* of the student body compared to public schools, have clearly been advantaged. The fragmentation of the public school system by the creation of charter schools only serves to advance private interests and because of that, the public interest is left behind, and that is why charter schools are not truly public. ■

Mazzotta excited to step into new executive role

New ATA Associate Executive Secretary brings plenty of experience

Mark Milne
ATA News Staff

Maintaining momentum will be the driving force behind the Alberta Teachers' Association's (ATA) newest associate executive secretary. Robert



Robert Mazzotta

Mazzotta will soon step into the shoes of Brian Andrais, who is retiring this May. "The executive secretaries have introduced a lot of positive changes over the last couple of years," said Mazzotta,

"and I would really like to see that energy carried forward."

With about 15 years of Association experience under his belt, Mazzotta says he will bring his own brand of knowledge, education and professional experience to the position. He says the new role suits him.

"When I was a school administrator, I enjoyed the responsibilities associated with the general running of the school," said Mazzotta, "and the challenge to keep things going in a forward direction."

That's good news for Andrais. He's proud of the influence he and co-associate executive secretary Joni Turville have had on the culture within the building. "I am very pleased that I was part of the team that achieved our

designation as one of Alberta's 75 Top Employers," said Andrais. "It was one of my goals, and it feels good that I was able to see it become a reality while I was here."

This is the second time Mazzotta has moved into a role previously held by Andrais. In 2017, he replaced Andrais as the coordinator for Member Services (now known as Teacher Employment Services). "Brian has been a great mentor," said Mazzotta. "I've always really appreciated his guidance, his honesty and his openness to ideas. He helped me tremendously when moving into my current role as coordinator and has really helped me get ready for my new position as associate executive secretary."

Andrais says some of the main qualities needed for the position are patience and the ability to make the hard decisions when needed. "You have to make the tough calls that are in the best interest of the organization and staff," said Andrais, "and sometimes that won't please everyone."

Those challenges are exactly what drew Mazzotta to the position. He knows he will need to hit the ground running as he is assuming the office just as Barnett House is fully opening back up to the staff and general public. "As the start date approaches, I'm beginning to realize exactly how daunting this role actually is."

Andrais's words of advice for Mazzotta are to exercise patience and take time to listen. "You work with good people. Trust the people you work with." ■



Be more than a bystander

Staying engaged is difficult but worthwhile

Former Mayor of Calgary Naheed Nenshi spoke recently about service to one's community at the ATA's Political Engagement Seminar. He elegantly explained how public services such as public education, health, libraries, community supports and public transit helped shape him as a young man because the community around him wanted him to succeed. Teachers can easily relate to this, as seeing our students succeed is one of the many joys of teaching. Mr. Nenshi continued to talk about his service, particularly his endeavours in politics and how, after encouraging others to get involved, he decided to take the plunge himself. As he said, "if not me then who?"

This reminded me of a conversation I had with a good friend a few weeks before. We were talking about the invasion of Ukraine, the limitless drama of Alberta politics and other newsworthy issues. My friend commented that she no longer watched the news or social media. It was too difficult and it seemed hopeless to try to make change. I understand where she was coming from. I think

for many of us, the state of the world is overwhelming. However, my counter to this, which was also echoed by Mr. Nenshi, was that we can't be bystanders in our world. We can't feel hope if we act as bystanders. We need to engage in the world around us.

Teachers sometimes ask me about a lack of member engagement around issues like collective bargaining and the removal of the discipline function of the ATA. Never in my career have I seen so many ways for teachers to be engaged in their Association. The *News Magazine*, website, social media, locals, conventions and specialist councils are just a few ways we can stay connected and engaged. I also know that never in my career have I seen people so exhausted, professionally and personally. But as Mr. Nenshi also said, in tough times, it's easy to lose hope, and we need to dig deeper into our reserves because the fight is worth it. These words resonated with me as I often say we fight for what we believe in and value. It may be easier to disengage, and there are days when we just want to turn it all off and watch *House Hunters*, but we don't because it's worth it. ■

I welcome your comments. Contact me at jason.schilling@ata.ab.ca.

2022 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, 2021, and May 15, 2022, are eligible.
- 4 Please email photos to cory.hare@ata.ab.ca. Entries must be received by 5 p.m. on May 16, 2022.
- 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!

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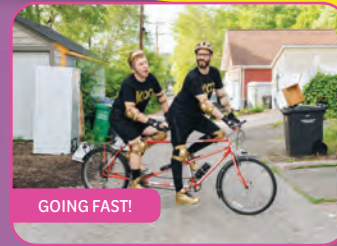
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Water testing kits promote engaging science education

Sandra Bit
ATA News

Alberta classrooms are about to get a few more resources for hands-on science education, as a pair of Edmontonians recently donated 20 water testing kits to the ATA library.

The water testing kits were procured and donated by Edmonton teacher Christopher Klune and friend Peter Chung Wai Ip.

Klune feels that "teachers are creators, drivers of knowledge and changemakers in their communities." They just need good quality resources to empower them to deliver engaging and meaningful education.

While Klune's main teaching background is in the humanities rather than the sciences, both he and Ip have a passion for conservation and environmental science. They came up with the idea of water testing kits because they wanted to give teachers more resources to help them deliver engaging science education projects connected to water conservation.

The donation also stems from a project the pair worked on as part of a youth program called Ocean Bridge, run by the non-profit conservation organization Ocean Wise (<https://ocean.org>).

Ocean Bridge accepts Canadian youth and young professionals aged 18 to 30, empowering them to take action for ocean and water conservation. As part of this program, Klune and Ip had to create and deliver a service project involving waterways in their home communities.

This led them to the Safe Drinking Water Foundation (SDWF), a non-profit organization based in Saskatchewan dedicated to promoting safe drinking water and water education. Grants that helped cover the cost of the kits were provided Ocean Wise Canada, TakingITGlobal, the Canadian Service Corps and the Government of Canada.

SDWF executive director Nicole Hancock, a teacher herself, collaborated with Klune and Ip by providing moral support and supplying the water testing kits. Klune noted that acquiring the kits now was especially timely because there are many Alberta schools on a wait list to receive them.

The kits available from the ATA library are suitable for students in grades nine to twelve and, according to the SDWF website, "can be used to test local water and four other water samples (including control water samples) for thirteen different components: alkalinity, ammonia, arsenic, colour, copper, heterotrophic plate count, iron, manganese, nitrate, pH, sulphate, total chlorine and total hardness." Several kits suited to younger students were also donated to the Science Council for distribution to science teachers.

Teachers who use these testing kits can input their results on a tracking form, and results are displayed on a map on the SDWF website. In addition to water testing kits, the SDWF also offers lesson plans and other water education teaching resources. For more information, visit www.safewater.org.

Klune is hopeful that the kits will be used by teachers to create fun and interesting learning opportunities for students. He also believes that they will help lead to broader conversations about ecology and local and global water conservation. ■

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FIRST!

The ATA's Science and Fine Arts Councils are seeking registration and administrative support for their upcoming conference in Banff on October 20-22, 2022.

Proposals from interested individuals and firms will be accepted until April 22, 2022.

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NOTICES AND EVENTS

Indigenous Youth Engagement Program goes online

The department of anthropology and archaeology at the University of Calgary has expanded its Indigenous Youth Engagement Program to provide online learning for students in grades 7–12 who are unable to attend the program in person.

There are six available lessons, each focused on a single archaeological topic. Harnessing online resources and activities, these lessons teach students about important aspects of archaeology and Indigenous heritage, tying into Alberta's social studies and science curricula. Each lesson is provided as a standalone unit, which can be educator led or worked through independently by students.

Currently available lessons include

- 1) Alberta Geography: Territories, Treaties and Languages — Decolonizing Archaeology
- 2) Alberta Prehistory: Bison, Faunal Analysis and Taphonomy
- 3) Alberta Prehistory: To the Point! Projectile Points in Alberta
- 4) Alberta Prehistory: Exploring Rock Art
- 5) Artifact Analysis: Ceramics
- 6) Excavation Techniques: Mapping Units

More information is available at <https://arts.ucalgary.ca/anthropology-archaeology>.



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www.teachers.ab.ca > My ATA > Programs and Services > Grants, Awards and Scholarships > ATA Educational Trust

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Students show support for Ukraine

We asked teachers to submit photos and stories of the activities taking place in their schools to help show support for the citizens of Ukraine.



When the war in Ukraine broke out, I wanted to do a project that would show our support for our Ukrainian community — staff and students. I decided that I would assign all my students to the same task. They were to take the national flower of Ukraine (sunflower) and create a composition using the flower as a starting point. I told them they could use whatever medium they were most comfortable with, and that their individuality in the direction the composition took was really important.

We discussed how art can create a sense of hope in the people who view the pieces. We discussed how even though we are all different, we can all be united in our hope for a better, more peaceful world. One of my students still has family in Ukraine, so this hit really close to home for her, and she was so appreciative that we were acknowledging her culture in this way. We live in a small rural area, but I think that this display has had a very BIG impact.

Katrina Zack

My Grade 1 music students explored Mussorgsky's "The Great Gate of Kiev" and created a movement piece with scarves and ribbons to the music.

Grace Gadon

My grade 3 class brainstormed things we could do to raise money for Ukraine. They made posters, wrote an announcement and made a banner. We had a book sale with books donated by families in our school, had a bottle drive and a bucket donation drive. We went class to class collecting cash donations, in a bucket marked with lines, with prizes like Show & Tell Day, Glow Stick Dance Party, PJ/Stuffie day and iPad party. The classes whose donations reached the line earned that prize.

We made \$990 from the bottle drive and \$1600 from the book sale and bucket drive, for a total donation of just under \$2700 to the Red Cross effort in Ukraine!

My students were so proud of themselves and felt good for doing something for the people in Ukraine. We had been learning about Ukraine in social studies, so what is happening felt more "real" to them.

Sacha Reanne



I have Ukrainian heritage, so I decided to share one of my favourite Easter traditions with my grade 2/3 students — making pysanky!

Cheyenne Kopinsky

