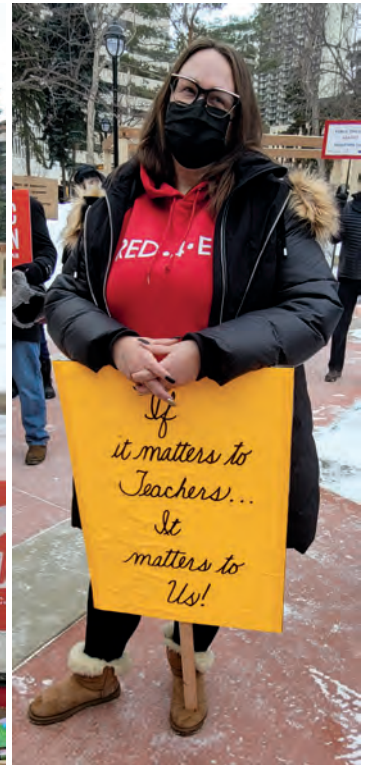




# ATA NEWS

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## Rally for education



SUPPLIED

Parents and other supporters of public education gathered in Calgary on Dec. 18 to express concerns about issues like the draft curriculum, funding cuts and the government's handling of the Covid pandemic. Read Jason Schilling's Off Script article on page 7 for more details.

### Weapons of orchestrated distraction

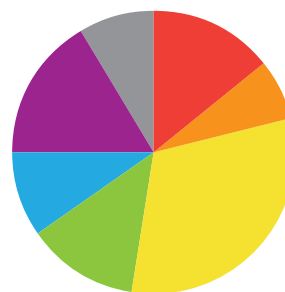
Government focus on teacher discipline a politically motivated attack.

Read Jonathan Teghtmeyer's editorial on page 2.

### No plan

Return to school lacks thorough safety measures, says ATA president

See story on page 4.



### Exit strategy

Latest pulse survey shows nearly one-third of teachers plan to leave the profession by next year.

See story on page 4.



### Can AIMCo be fixed?

Study into public sector fund manager reveals significant problems.

See story on page 7.

## Gov't has deployed weapons of orchestrated distraction



### EDITORIAL

Jonathan Teghtmeyer  
ATA News Editor-in-Chief

Let's recap the timeline from last month.

#### Dec. 8, 2:57 a.m. (technically Dec. 7 on the legislature calendar)

The house adjourns after passing controversial Bill 81, which would dramatically inhibit the ability of some groups, including the ATA, to speak out against government decisions. Three government MLAs break ranks and vote against third reading of the bill.

#### Dec. 9, early morning

An article appears online announcing that Education Minister Adriana LaGrange plans to remove professional discipline functions from the ATA. A 9:33 a.m. news release from LaGrange confirms the news story, stating that she has directed staff to draft legislation for the spring.

#### Dec. 13, 1:17 p.m.

LaGrange announces that changes are being made to the controversial draft K-6 curriculum, but that implementation

will proceed in September for English language arts, mathematics, and physical education and wellness, which remain largely unchanged.

#### Dec. 15, 5:03 p.m.

The government releases a number of orders in council (cabinet decisions) that include new requirements for the ATA to report teacher discipline complaints to the minister and regulations for Bill 32, a union-busting bill passed in the summer of 2020.

While the minister wants people to believe that her attack on the Association over professional discipline is simply a reaction to a specific case, it is clear that it is actually a politically motivated attack designed to punish those who dare to speak out against her.

It was no coincidence that these major developments on items of critical importance to the ATA and the teaching profession were stacked together for release all within days of each other.

It is no coincidence that responding to these developments will require the Association to devote significant energy, attention, resources and work hours from staff and leaders — work that will occupy time and energy into the next three months and beyond.

Nope, that was all planned. These

items and their strategic release are intended to inundate and overwhelm the Association in order to impede our ability to represent and advance the interests of teachers.

Now, consider this aspect of the timeline.

On Dec. 15, 2022, Alberta reported just over 4,000 active cases of COVID-19. As I write this, Alberta is reporting nearly 40,000 active cases (a record high), with untold more cases existing unverified by PCR testing. Positivity was at four per cent then and is at 37 per cent now.

Rather than take advantage of the input and influence of teachers and the Association to battle Covid, the government has specifically chosen to distract us with their other ideological and politically motivated interests.

Rather than allow teachers to focus on two primary things: the safety of schools and the education of students, the government wants to distract, divide and debilitate the profession.

I am struck by the notion that the premier is actually using this attack on teachers and unions as a way to shore up an extremist base that he will use to pass his upcoming leadership review. It's cynical yet entirely plausible.

Now we have a teaching profession,

and frankly a government, that is distracted from something that should be its sole priority right now: fighting COVID-19, including the safe operation of schools.

The truth is we would have a much better, safer response on the matter of Covid in schools if everyone was vigilant and focused on managing it. It would be better if we had all parties working together and collaborating on this issue. But that is not how this government seems to operate.

Just like when they picked fights with doctors and nurses at the start of the pandemic, they can't seem to help themselves from approaching issues in ways that are divisive and destructive rather than collaborative and constructive. That isn't what leadership looks like.

It is time that the government stops getting distracted from Covid and its risks to individual and collective health and safety. It is time for the government to stop distracting teachers and the system's education partners from this goal and from the fundamentals of delivering strong public education.

It is time to fight Covid, not teachers. ■

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

## Government sets the stage for a debacle-rich new year



### Q & A

Dennis Theobald  
ATA Executive Secretary

**Question:** Happy new year Dennis! How are things shaping up for 2022?

**Answer:** The shape of things to come in 2022, at least as of the outset of the year, was established by a series of government announcements in the latter part of 2021, some in the last few days of December.

The announcement that will have the most immediate effect on teachers and schools concerns the government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic announced on Dec. 30. Over the last 22 months, the Association has been consulting with independent experts and has on numerous occasions offered advice concerning steps that should be taken to ensure the safe and continued operation of schools. Unfortunately, much of this advice has been rejected, and now we are in a situation where, in most areas of the province, the return to class has been delayed, but will still take place before self-administered rapid antigen tests or better quality masks are available in sufficient numbers for use in schools.

Similarly, improvements to ventilation,

tracing and reporting, and provisions to better accommodate increased staff absences by placing substitute teachers on contract were not made during the fall. So schools, teachers, staff and communities will have to manage as best they can as 2022 gets underway and likely throughout the remainder of the year.

There has been some speculation that the Omicron variant of COVID-19, which is currently dominant, will have a less severe impact on infected people and that, once it has burned itself out, will, together with the cumulative effect of mass vaccination, leave the population with a relatively high-level of immunity that will reduce COVID-19 to an annoying but unexceptional, endemic and cyclical illness. Let's hope so.

The problem is that it's not clear that the virus has gotten the memo and is prepared to co-operate. As long as there are significant populations at home and abroad that remain largely unvaccinated and unprotected, there is a distinct possibility of the emergence of yet more virulent strains of COVID-19 that will affect schools, communities, and the economy collectively and all of us individually.

The minister of education announced Dec. 13 that she was delaying the introduction of a new draft of elementary school curriculum in social studies, French immersion and francophone language arts, science and fine arts,

and pushing back the introduction of a new curriculum for junior and senior high grades. This belated development was greeted by teachers with a small sigh of relief, but elementary teachers across the province will still be forced to implement the untested and untried K-6 English language arts, math, and physical education and wellness programs of studies in September 2022.

The new curriculum, which has been developed in secret and shared with only a small number of teachers, all of whom were subject to a gag order, will be a major source of stress for teachers and a continuing concern for parents and engaged citizens. (I'll note here that the Northwest Territories announced in December its decision to abandon the Alberta curriculum in favour of BC's.) The curriculum debacle will continue through the year ahead.

Also in December, Minister LaGrange announced that she would be introducing legislation in the spring 2022 session of the legislature to strip the Association of its professional regulatory functions. The disingenuous representations that LaGrange has used to justify this have been thoroughly debunked in this column previously, and I will not revisit them here. In the same time frame, the government approved regulations that are intended to undermine democratic governance of the Association by interfering in its ability to collect and

allocate member fees, particularly for charity, issues education and advocacy work. Both these efforts amount to ill-informed, malicious and ultimately counterproductive attacks on teachers' professionalism, autonomy and collective rights, which will serve only to heighten tension in the education sector. So I suppose they are right on brand for this government.

Is there anything to look forward to in 2022? Well, on Dec. 31, 2022, the province will be five months away from a general election. Perhaps by then the government, and whoever might be in the roles of premier and/or minister of education at the time, will realize that Albertans do not appreciate their previous efforts to attack teachers, foment conflict and disrupt the cultural processes and institutions that had previously helped to create what, by many internationally recognized measures, was one of the best education systems in the world. If, out of some sense of enlightened self-interest, the government then genuinely wants to make things better or at least to foster "peace in the valley," the Alberta Teachers' Association will, as always, be prepared to work with them. ■

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



# Where's the collaboration?

*Past successes show alternatives to government's current path of destruction*



## VIEWPOINTS

**Frank Bruseker**  
Former ATA president

I had the privilege of serving as president of the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) from 2003 to 2009. I also served as a vice-president of the Canadian Teachers' Federation, and I attended three World Congress meetings of Education International with representation from 172 countries around the globe. I mention all of these because, over the years, I have had the opportunity to speak with many teacher leaders about their organizations and then compare those organizations to the ATA.

teachers and, when necessary, the discipline of its members. All of these are outlined in the *Teaching Profession Act (TPA)* which was first passed in 1935. During my tenure as president, the ATA effectively fulfilled its responsibilities outlined in the TPA.

The ATA's effectiveness has come about through hard work between government and the ATA. Just as when buying a diamond, one looks for the four important "Cs," so too in building a strong relationship with government,

between the government and the ATA that, by the end of January 2008, produced a five-year agreement that resulted in major fiscal savings for the government and labour peace with teachers for the term of the agreement. Four days after this agreement was achieved, then premier Ed Stelmach called a general election that resulted in a 72-seat majority government for the PCs.

Contrast that process with the current government, which doesn't employ any of the four Cs with teachers, but rather guts their pension plan and moves the money from a highly effective management/investment organization to one that is less effective. This is success? Now we have a minister of education talking about unilaterally making amendments to the *Teaching Profession Act* that would make the Association a less effective organization than it is currently. All this without any consultation with the ATA.

During my eight years as an MLA, I learned that the role of an MLA is to represent their constituents in the legislature. To do that, MLAs need to speak with their constituents regarding their concerns.

True representative government is providing leadership for the people. It is not imposing unwarranted legislation on the people. One of the first ways to ensure that MLAs have a clear understanding of the needs of Albertans is by open, honest and clear communication with the people they represent. This government could learn from the successes of the Stelmach government and employ those strategies to build an even better education system and a much better relationship with the ATA, rather than continue on the destructive path it seems intent on following. ■

“ True representative government is providing leadership for the people. It is not imposing unwarranted legislation on the people. ”

Those comparisons lead me to conclude that the ATA is one of the best organized and most effective teacher organizations in the world.

What makes the ATA such an effective organization? Simply, it is a unified professional association. All teachers who work in public schools in Alberta must be members of the ATA. The ATA is also responsible for professional development and bargaining for

the ATA has used four important Cs: communication, consultation, co-operation and collaboration.

It is important to note that these are all two-way characteristics that help both the Association and government. During my time as ATA president, I worked with four different ministers of education through regularly scheduled, face-to-face meetings, to discuss the issues of the day. This process built a positive working relationship

## YOUR VIEWS

### ON TWITTER

**Sally Rudakoff @Srudakoff**

I am concerned about the tidbit regarding tutors for AB families in today's presser. Why are we not supporting the professionals in the classrooms? Those are \$\$ that could be used to support AB students in public schools.

**CGouef @Cgouef**

As a junior high music teacher, I rely on schools being safe and open so I can properly do my job. @AdrianaLaGrange must take steps to ensure that schools will be safe and that students and staff are properly equipped to safely do what we need to do.

### FACEBOOK FEEDBACK

**On the minister walking back on the draft curriculum**

**Sarah Bara**

Here, here!! A modified victory. English and math can't be allowed to go forward. We have them on the back heel. Time to redouble efforts. No quarter can be given.

**On the government's return to school plan**

**Dave Martel**

Basically, I work on a system where I expect the worst and most unorganized scenario. Then, if it turns out not to be a complete mess, I'm pleasantly surprised.

**Elaine Hoekstra**

An update about Grade 9 PATs at the end of January would be helpful. They lose a week of learning new concepts too.

**Susanna Mauro Kaup**

Let's wait until everything is shut down so parents can't make arrangements for their kids. Let's wait so teachers and schools have to jump through hoops to make arrangements. This government has shown time and time again that families and education are not priorities. Let's make sure we remember that loud and clear at the next election.

**Michelle Fatica**

I'm not opposed to going back into the classroom on Tuesday (I teach kindergarten). Online for the littles just isn't fun, nor is it healthy or full of meaningful learning. I just wish there was better direction from the top, with time for the school boards to react and then make decisions that meet the best interests of staff and students. There is no easy answer no matter which side you are on (back to school or online).

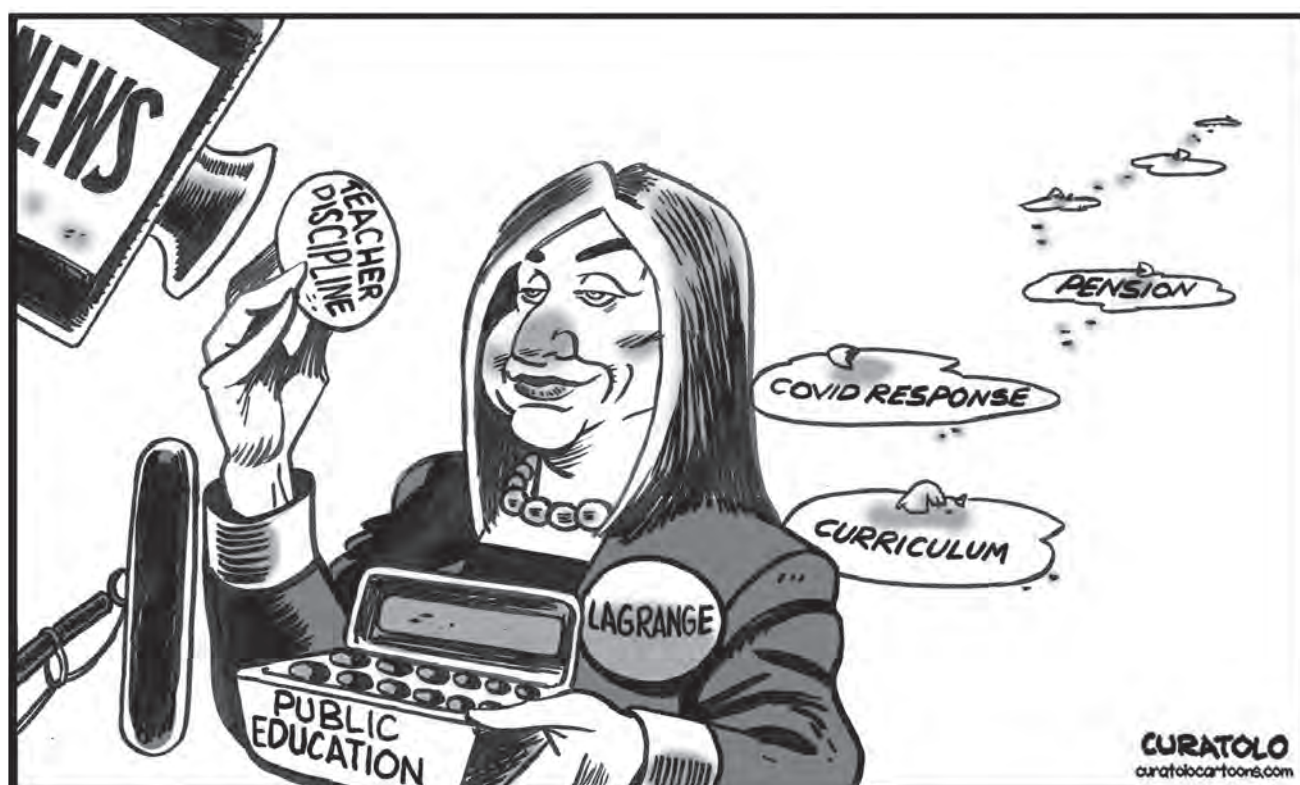
**Corey Lee**

I've come to expect this from the UCP. Not surprising at all and it's still frustrating to say the least.

### FOR THE RECORD

“ Next to getting vaccinated, the most critical thing we can do is stay home when we're sick, even with the mildest of symptoms. ”

– Dr. Deena Hinshaw speaking about the province's plan for a return to in-school learning



# Nearly a third of Alberta teachers expect to leave profession next year

*Stress and frustration levels remain high, survey finds*

## EXECUTIVE REPORT

Philip McRae  
ATA Associate Co-ordinator,  
Research

The Alberta Teachers' Association completed its sixth pandemic pulse study at the end of November 2021 with responses from a random sample of more than 1,300 K-12 Alberta teachers and school leaders. Here is a summary of some of the most noteworthy findings.

### 1. Teacher attrition

Over one-third (37%) of respondents reported that they likely won't be teaching in Alberta next year. The proportion of respondents reporting that they will leave the teaching profession for another occupation has doubled since the annual Member Opinion Survey was conducted in March 2021. Retirement data remains similar.

#### Highlights:

- 16% will have retired
- 14% will leave the profession for another occupation
- 7% will leave the province of Alberta to teach in another location

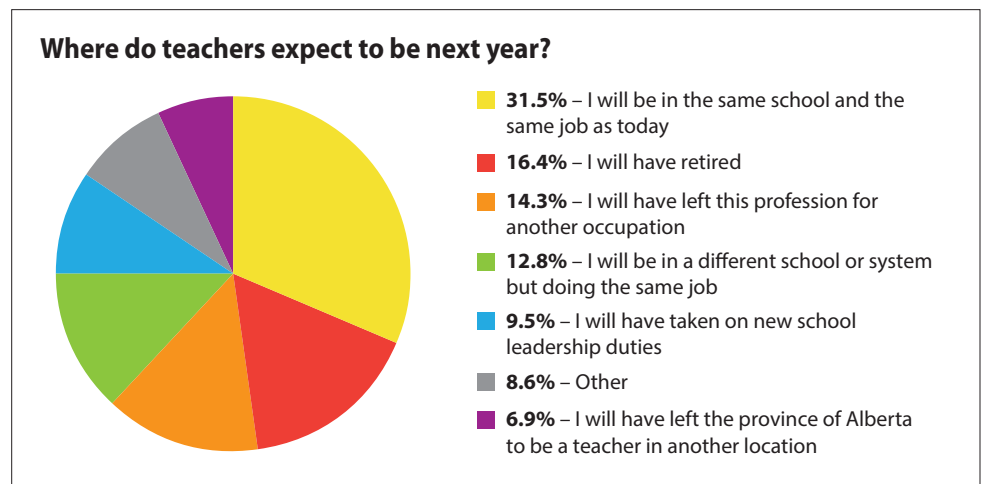
### 2. Well-being

**Stress** continues to be very high for teachers, at 88% within the overall sample, breaking down to 54% strongly agreeing and 34% in general agreement with the statement "I feel stressed."

**Fatigue** is also extreme at 92% within the overall sample, breaking down to 69% strongly agreeing and 23% in general agreement with the statement "I feel exhausted by the end of the day."

**Anxiety** remains at levels seen in the spring 2021 sample, with 51% overall reporting they are "feeling nervous, anxious or on edge" more than half of the days of the week (22%) or nearly every day (29%).

**Depression** also remains at levels seen in the spring 2021 sample, with 36% overall reporting they are "feeling



down, depressed or hopeless" more than half of the days of the week (18%) or nearly every day (18%).

Of significant concern is that "hopelessness" sits at 45% within the overall sample, breaking down to 13% strongly disagreeing and 32% in general disagreement with the statement "I feel hopeful."

When asked, "What is one word that describes how you are feeling at this moment?" participant responses clustered around the following words: tired, overwhelmed, disappointed.

### 3. Class size and composition

Class composition is an issue for 85% of the respondents when compared to last year. Specifically, class complexity and diversity of student needs (e.g., socio-economic, linguistic, behavioural, cognitive, social/emotional) has significantly increased (52%) and somewhat increased (33%) from last year. We note that 27% of respondents indicate that their class sizes are more than 30 students.

### 4. Contact tracing

Over 80% of the school leaders in the sample reported that they have had to directly contact (trace) families as part of a COVID-19 exposure. Only 22% report they are comfortable doing this work. The other 78% report varying levels of discomfort, with 21% saying they are extremely uncomfortable doing this work.

## FACT

This rapid research study provides a highly representative sample of over 1,000 teachers and 200 school leaders with a margin of error sitting at +/-2.5% (19 times out of 20) on all the questions posed.

The full report is posted on the pandemic pulse website: [www.teachers.ab.ca > COVID-19 > 2020/21 Pandemic Research and Reports > Teacher Pandemic Pulse Survey Results](http://www.teachers.ab.ca > COVID-19 > 2020/21 Pandemic Research and Reports > Teacher Pandemic Pulse Survey Results).

# Return to classes lacks planning, says ATA president

Mark Milne  
ATA News Staff

Many teachers are feeling like they're performing a high-wire act without a net as they head back to the classroom after winter break, according to Alberta Teachers' Association president Jason Schilling, who has been hearing from members as in-person learning resumes amid growing case numbers of the Omicron variant.

"Let me be clear, teachers want to be in the classroom. They know face-to-face instruction is the best environment for learning," said Schilling, "but it needs to take place in a setting that is safe for both the teacher and student. We don't have that and there doesn't seem to be any significant movement from the ministry to achieve it."

On Dec. 30, with just one day left in many teachers' winter break, Education Minister Adriana LaGrange announced a provincewide extension of the holiday for all K-12 students. Less than a week later, the minister updated her plan by announcing that in-person instruction would commence for all grade levels when learning resumed on Jan. 10.

"I, myself, have heard overwhelmingly from families that learning in person is best for children," said LaGrange. "This is why Alberta's government has placed such a high priority on safe in-classroom instruction and making sure our schools have the tools that they need."

LaGrange said the 8.6 million rapid-test kits and 16.5 million medical grade



During a Jan. 5 news conference, Education Minister Adriana LaGrange provides an update on the province's plan for a return to schools on Jan. 10.

masks that had been earmarked for distribution to schools would begin rolling out on Jan. 7, and all schools should receive their first shipment no later than Jan. 14.

Schilling pointed out that many schools could potentially be back in person for nearly a week with absolutely no additional safety measures than they had before winter break.

LaGrange said Alberta's schools have always provided a safe environment for their staff and students.

"Our schools were safe before the pandemic," she said. "They were safe the last two years, during the pandemic, with all of the measures we put in place. And with these additional measures, they will continue to be safe."

Schilling said the winter break extension and additional test kits were initially a step in the right direction, but the ministry's plan still falls short of the leadership parents, teachers and educational staff expect from their government. He said the province's plan is short of substance on masking protocols, improved air filtration, funding for substitutes or school-based vaccination clinics.

"I am frustrated beyond words," Schilling said, "when I hear our government leaders saying 'We are doing everything we possibly can to ensure our schools and our staff are safe. I don't buy it! I don't buy it for a minute when they say this publicly and then follow through with the bare minimum.'"

## NOTICE

On June 23, 2021, a hearing committee of the Professional Conduct Committee established under the Teaching Profession Act found that Corey Nicholas Conroy engaged in unprofessional conduct. The hearing committee ordered that Conroy be ineligible for membership in the Association for a period of two years beginning June 23, 2021.

On Sept. 27, 2021, a hearing committee of the Professional Conduct Committee established under the Teaching Profession Act found that KL engaged in unprofessional conduct. The hearing committee ordered that KL be permanently ineligible for membership in the Association.

*Note: The decision and teacher name in this hearing are anonymized due to a court ordered publication ban.*



## 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](mailto:cory.hare@ata.ab.ca).

# Planned discipline changes prompt ATA battle cry

*Teachers, get ready for a fight like you've never seen, says ATA president*

**Cory Hare**  
ATA News Managing Editor

The Alberta Teachers' Association is launching a comprehensive pushback effort following a government announcement that it intends to take the teacher disciplinary process away from the ATA.

Education Minister Adriana LaGrange announced on Dec. 9 that she has directed her staff to begin drafting legislation, to be introduced in the spring, that "will separate the teacher disciplinary process from the ATA's mandate and functions."

Such a move would strip the Association of many of its core professional roles, leaving it to act primarily as a union, said ATA president Jason Schilling.

He described LaGrange's effort as a politically motivated attack aimed at distracting the media and the public from the government's mishandling of several issues in the public education sphere, such as a draft K-6 curriculum, teacher pensions, funding cuts and the COVID-19 pandemic.

"What is galling is that, in an attempt to distract from its own successive failures, the government is attacking the teaching profession," he said.

When announcing the initiative, LaGrange said the ATA has mishandled the discipline process and that change is needed to ensure children are protected from predatory teachers.

"I consider it my moral obligation to do everything in my power to fix the broken system that has let our children and their families down for so long," she said.

LaGrange cited the case of a former Calgary Board of Education teacher who received a two-year suspension for "admitted child abuse."

While LaGrange didn't mention the teacher by name, Schilling said she was obviously referring to the case of Michael Gregory, who was the subject of an ATA disciplinary hearing in 2006. Gregory was charged with unprofessional conduct and a hearing committee found him guilty and recommended a two-year suspension, which effectively ended his teaching career.

Years later, after the ATA disciplinary process had taken place and Gregory had been removed from the profession, police charged him with sexual offences against former students. After he was charged, Gregory died by suicide, and a class action lawsuit was recently brought against the Calgary Board of Education alleging that the board failed to take appropriate action against Gregory.

Schilling said the 2006 case heard by the ATA did not include the sexual offences with which Gregory was more recently charged. He accused LaGrange of purposefully misrepresenting the facts for political gain.

"To draw a connection between the two unrelated matters is nothing more than gaslighting," Schilling said. "This is why teachers and an increasing number of ordinary Albertans just have no trust in this minister and the government's agenda for education."

## Former ministers speak out

LaGrange's announcement prompted two former education ministers to express support through opinion pieces published by various Alberta media outlets. Former minister Jeff Johnson, who created a task force in 2014 that recommended a similar change to the teacher discipline process, wrote that

LaGrange was to be commended for bringing the idea forward and that such a conversation is overdue.

"The ATA is in an impossible position. They are tasked with defending teachers and protecting children at the same time," he wrote. "Other provinces have modernized their teacher investigation processes and it's time Alberta did the same."

In an op-ed piece written to counter Johnson's, Schilling pointed out that the former minister included multiple mistruths about the ATA's process. Schilling wrote that article 32 of the *Teaching Profession Act* stipulates that the ATA does not defend or represent an investigated teacher at a professional conduct hearing. The investigated teacher may hire their own counsel to present their case, if they wish.

In a separate op-ed piece, former minister Lyle Oberg suggested that other professions like doctors and nurses are more dedicated than teachers when it comes to protecting the public interest through governance of their members.

"It is time for the ATA to realize that bad actors in their profession bring the whole profession down and that perception is reality," he wrote.

Schilling countered that the ATA investigates all complaints of teacher unprofessional conduct, and that hearings and their subsequent reports are open to the public. He reiterated that LaGrange is focusing on teacher discipline as a way to distract attention from her own failings.

"I see no sense in scrapping a system that has worked well for over 100 years, only to start from scratch just because politicians are trying to distract from their own incompetence," he wrote.

Schilling is calling for teachers to prepare for a vigilant defense of public education like they have not seen before. ■



SCREEN CAPTURE

President Jason Schilling explains the Association's position on a government plan to remove the teacher discipline process from the ATA during a virtual media availability on Dec. 9

**One  
Profession  
United**

## EXTRA! EXTRA!

More information on this topic will be available in a special issue of the *ATA News* that will be published in the coming weeks.

# Teachers embrace roles as new trustees

*Challenges include draft curriculum and Covid response*

**Kate Toogood**  
ATA News Staff

An exhausting pandemic and a divisive draft curriculum are among the main challenges facing three teachers who have recently taken on a new role — school board trustee.

Gary Hansen, Laura Hack and Brian Callaghan were all elected as first-time trustees during the municipal elections held in October. As they continue to settle into their new roles, the teachers-turned-board members say they are up to the challenges that lie ahead.

As a newly elected trustee for Black Gold School District, Hansen says his goal is to find ways to continually improve the education provided to students.

"Managing issues that have been thrust onto trustee laps by the province has made this goal more difficult to achieve," Hansen says. "Curriculum development and implementation, managing COVID-19 in schools, COVID-19-related learning gaps and mental health, and funding are just a few of these issues that will be challenges for trustees."

According to Hack, trustee for wards three and four with the Calgary Board of Education, the draft curriculum was an issue that brought many Albertans to the polls.

"It was a huge factor. The draft curriculum brought out more than just parents to vote for trustees this election. Parents and citizens were extremely concerned about the content of the draft, the order in which it appeared and the fact that it is extremely Eurocentric," Hack said.

Hansen says that he heard concern for the



Gary Hansen



Laura Hack



Brian Callaghan

curriculum from all voters, and not just those with children.

"I received a predominance of emails asking about my position on the curriculum draft," he says. "Citizens were motivated to hear trustee positions and said they would be voting according to what they heard from candidates."

Another issue resonating with voters was how children were being affected by COVID-19, online learning and the government's response to the pandemic in terms of education.

"Many individuals, especially parents, expressed their frustration with lack of safety protocols that were/are being implemented to keep their children safe from airborne COVID-19," says Hack.

For Hansen, many of the concerns he heard centered around how the pandemic was affecting mental health.

"Parents pointed out that, with online learning, students are missing learning experiences, they are missing the social interaction that they get at school and mental health concerns among students have increased."

A fourth concern was issues around supports for students with complex needs. Parents who have children needing specialized supports are upset by the reduction of them. The reduction of PUF

funding by the government was one example that was mentioned.

According to Callaghan, trustee within Canadian Rockies Public Schools, the issue underpinning both the curriculum and the COVID-19 response is the erosion of trust between the general public and levels of government.

"People said they were frustrated by a government that was not listening to their voices" he says. "There are just too many political distractions from our core mission."

However, all of the trustees believe that their experience as teachers will be critical to their roles as advocates as they bridge the divide between Albertans and the provincial government.

"I have a passion for supporting a public education system that provides students with high-quality and relevant educational opportunities to achieve their best," Hansen says. "As a recently retired teacher with over 40 years of experience, including time spent as a teacher leader, I ran because I believe that I have some knowledge and skills that may be useful as a trustee."

Like his colleagues, Callaghan, who has served as a teacher, principal, superintendent and consultant for 40 years, finds hope in the role of trustees.

"Boards can be such a force for good in the lives of students and staff," he says. "I am motivated by what is good in what we do."

For Hack, this is what led her to run.

"I care about students. Being a teacher myself and now having kids in the public school system, I arguably care more on a personal level now. I believe in public education, being a public school graduate myself, and I know how important it is to the progress of society as a whole." ■



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# Called by Love, Called to Love

## Teaching opportunities in a Hong Kong Christian School

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- English Language Arts Teacher (High School)
- Mathematics Teacher (High School)
- Physical Education Teacher (Primary)
- Primary Homeroom Teacher
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- Science Teacher (General Science) (High School)
- Learning Support Specialist Teacher



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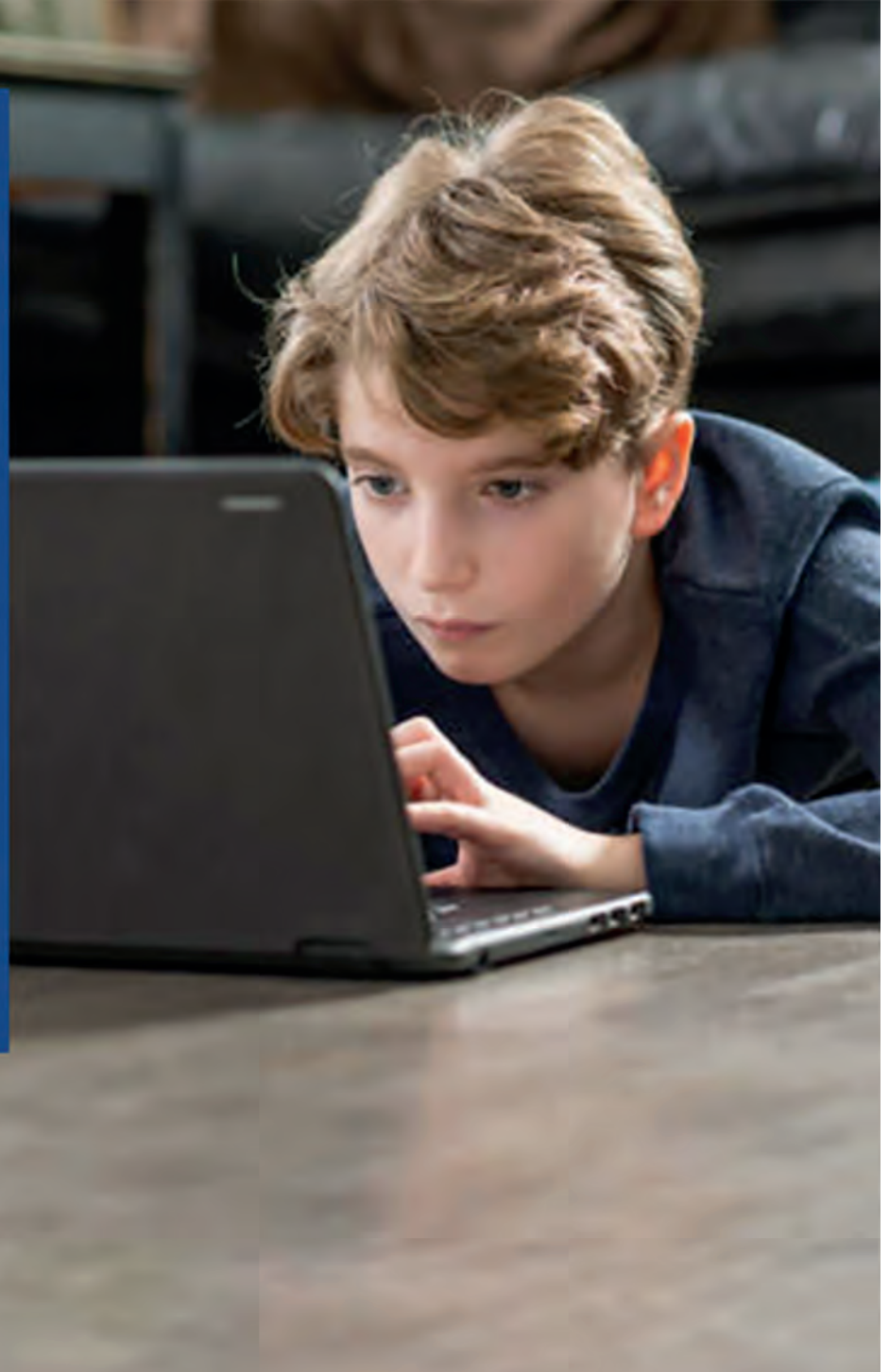


## PROTECT CHILDREN FROM HARMFUL ONLINE CONTENT

We are inviting professionals from across the globe to join us for the "Stronger Together" virtual summit. Our goal is to develop research-based best practices that protect children from the neurological harms associated with accessing violent pornography.

**FEBRUARY 16-18, 2022**

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# Report finds issues with AIMCo

## COMMENTARY

Bob Ascah  
Special to the ATA News

In December, the Parkland Institute released a [study](#) I wrote about the Alberta Investment Management Corporation (AIMCo). The pension security of more than 460,000 Alberta workers and retirees depends on the investment management performance of AIMCo. AIMCo is one of the most financially significant agencies of the Alberta government, managing the investments of the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund, various government accounts and five major public sector pension funds, including the Alberta Teachers' Retirement Fund (ATRF).

Trust in the governance of pension plans and in the investment management done on behalf of pension plan members and beneficiaries is critical to the pension arrangement. Since a pension is intended to provide financial security in retirement, any behaviour by government, the asset manager or pension boards that undermines security creates uncertainty.

However, in October 2019, out of the blue and without consultation, Travis Toews announced teachers' pension investments would be managed by AIMCo and not by the ATRF investment management team. This idea was never mentioned in the UCP's spring 2019 election platform. Teachers were obviously perplexed. How could the government do this? Weren't these pension funds untouchable by the government? Then, in late 2020, AIMCo – acting through

the UCP government – also attempted to remove the discretion of pension boards to set investment policies.

This report shows that AIMCo's investment management performance overall has been less than satisfactory for its clients when compared to most of its peers. Key research findings include the following:

- AIMCo's five-year performance against its own benchmarks was minus 0.7 per cent, meaning AIMCo as the investment manager failed to meet its own performance expectations.
- The formerly independent ATRF had a four-year performance that was more than one percentage point above that of AIMCo, and AIMCo has not outperformed ATRF since 2017. An ATRF report to the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) found that, had AIMCo managed ATRF's investments over the past seven years, \$1.3 billion of value would have been lost.
- In recent years, AIMCo was not a top performer compared to other major public pension fund managers based in British Columbia, Ontario and Québec. Over a 10-year period, AIMCo outperformed its four main peers once, nine years ago in 2012/13, when AIMCo's value-add equalled that produced by the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan.

The report makes the following key recommendations to improve the damaged relationship between AIMCo, plan members and Albertans:

- Rethink AIMCo's board of directors and ownership structure in light of the troubling actions of the UCP government.
- Eliminate the Crown's sole ownership of AIMCo and implement

## Can AIMCo Be Fixed?



PARKLAND INSTITUTE | Robert L. (Bob) Ascah

### Read the report

The full report is available here: [www.parklandinstitute.ca/can\\_aimco\\_be\\_fixed](http://www.parklandinstitute.ca/can_aimco_be_fixed).

a new ownership structure, with the government holding a minority position, to prevent governments from using AIMCo funds for their own political purposes.

- Allocate representation on AIMCo's board based on the percentage of investments contributed.
- Define the qualifications or skills required in a refurbished *AIMCo Act* to make it difficult for the government to change these details for political reasons.
- Give plan participants and owners the option to give two years' notice of departure after AIMCo has managed their funds for eight years.

Actions, not words, are required from AIMCo and the government to repair the damaged trust of the past two years. Ultimately, AIMCo needs to serve citizens, not ideology.

The above recommendations are fundamentally important to all teachers. The ATA did a great job of mobilizing members with the "Hands off Our Pensions" campaign. It is particularly important that before the May 2023 general election, members inform themselves about their pensions and make their views known to their MLAs. ■

Bob Ascah is a research fellow at the Parkland Institute. His blog is [Abpolecon.ca](http://Abpolecon.ca).



## Public support eases government-induced anger

The last few weeks have been a whirlwind. After the shock of the education minister announcing her intentions to remove the discipline function from the ATA, the anger set in – anger at the blatant disrespect toward teachers and their professional association.

Teachers care deeply about their students and who teaches them. We do this in many ways. The ATA works with preservice programs across the province, instilling in our newest teachers the importance of professional competency and conduct. I have also sat through many enjoyable induction ceremonies that also focus on the high standards of teachers within their schools and communities.

As I processed this anger I was carrying, while getting some exercise on a treadmill, I realized that I have been angry for a while, not just that day or for those five hilly treadmill miles, but for months. The attack on the ATA on Dec. 9 was just another slap in the face to the caring professionals who are doing their best every day to keep public education afloat during a pandemic.

Teachers I have spoken to over the

last few months are also carrying anger. But it's not only teachers who are angry. Parents, academics and everyday Albertans are also angry with the way the government is treating public education and teachers.

That is why I was more than happy to attend and speak at a Dec. 18 rally in Calgary to support public education and teachers. It was a chilly day, not the kind of cold that hurts your face like the weather we have been having lately, but chilly enough. The group at the rally was small but mighty, and the great thing about it was it was mostly parents in attendance. The rally was organized by parents who care about their children and their children's teachers. They expressed concerns about the draft K-6 curriculum, funding cuts to classrooms and special needs programming, and to the way the government has handled the pandemic.

As tired as I was that day, I noted I was a little less angry. There is tremendous support for teachers among the public, though that may not always be obvious on social media. It's there and, given that public education is facing several uphill battles, I, for one, am grateful for that. ■

## Be mindful of student athletes' personal space

### PITFALLS AND PRECAUTIONS

Chris Gibbon  
ATA Secretary to Professional Conduct Committees

*Pitfalls and Precautions is a series that aims to educate teachers on professional conduct issues by highlighting situations addressed by the ATA Professional Conduct Committee.*

In a recent decision of the hearing committee of the professional conduct committee, a member was found guilty of unprofessional conduct for touching players and displaying poor physical boundaries during practice for school sports. While coaching is a very detail-orientated activity, teacher-coaches must always be mindful when directing players or teaching them how to position themselves. Physical boundaries should always be respected when working with young student athletes so they feel comfortable in practice and game situations.

By positioning parts of their body against a student to show proper positioning technique, the teacher-coach made the student(s) feel

uncomfortable. Further, the power imbalance that existed between the teacher and students made it difficult for them to raise concerns with their coach. To make matters even worse, this same teacher-coach was also critical of the players, using condescending remarks in an attempt to motivate them to play better.

In both instances, the teacher-coach failed to maintain section four of the Code of Professional Conduct in that they did not treat the pupils (students) with dignity and respect and be considerate of their circumstances. As a result of their actions, the teacher was found guilty on multiple charges and was required to pay a substantial fine.

Teachers who are in a supervisory role over community coaches in the school also have an obligation to protect their students and remind their community coaches of what is appropriate behaviour. While also acting in a volunteer capacity, community coaches are not governed by the code and, thus, it is important for teacher supervisors to be diligent and aware of what is happening during practices. Parents across the province entrust their children to coaches, and it is up to those coaches to make each student athlete feel safe, dignified and respected. ■

We asked teachers to send in pictures of their pets along with an explanation of how the animal helps them in their profession.

## SCOUT



Scout is named after the main character in *To Kill a Mockingbird*, a favourite of mine. The main character is feisty, intelligent, sassy, brave and devoted to her family. My Scout has these qualities. Last summer, Scout traveled with me by air to the Yukon. We hiked several challenging trails together!

Some days in the profession can be challenging and mentally exhausting. Scout is waiting for me when I get home and we walk almost daily. Every person we meet along the way stops to chat and comment on Scout's amazing ears! My office is surrounded with photos of us together. My students will come to the office, and we will share stories about our pets. It's an amazing relationship-builder.

Scout's happy demeanour and love of squeaky toys helps me in my profession because shouldn't we all be reminded to be happy and play every day?

*Alva Holliday*  
Principal  
West Country Outreach School, Rimbey



# TEACHER'S PET

*Animals light up teachers' lives and help them through isolation*

## RUSTY BEAR

Rusty gives me kisses, cuddles and love whenever I'm with him and is the best companion. He comes on runs and hikes mountains with me.

Rusty helps with my wellness. I always feel happy when he's by my side. Just walking in the door to my house and being greeted by him is the best way to come home and instantly helps me feel better. Life has definitely improved since he came into my life just at the start of COVID-19, and I can't imagine a life without him.

*Adriana Klassen*  
Vice-principal  
St. Timothy School, Cochrane



## PRIMROSE



Primrose is a cancer survivor. She has a unique patch of white fur on her back caused by radiation treatment and she wears it proudly. She was diagnosed with feline fibrosarcoma in October 2020 and was given one to three years to live. The doctors did not believe they would be able to fully remove her tumour, but we are so thankful that after 18 radiation treatments and an additional surgery, there are no cancer cells left in her body!

Prim keeps me calm during long evenings spent at my computer doing lesson planning and report cards. Her favourite chair is my office chair. When I have to move her so that I can sit there, she jumps back up and curls up on my lap, purring while I do my work. Sometimes she even sits right on my laptop! I can't imagine life without her.

*Melissa Tran*  
Grade 1  
Citadel Park School, Calgary





My two dogs Jax and Roxy are both rescues that came from a high-kill shelter in Texas. They were a bonded pair when we adopted them two years ago and have added such joy and positive energy to our family's life. They certainly help with physical and mental wellness, as we are out walking them a couple times a day after some of those long, tiring days at school.

*Leslie Zydek  
Assistant principal/Grade 4 teacher  
St. Vincent School, Edmonton*

Beaker has the biggest heart, most hopeful eyes and is always seeking improvement. He brings us his best bones every day when we get home from a long day of teaching and learning. He isn't satisfied with OK — he is always seeking to bring bigger, better and more bones. Currently, his record is four big bones at once, but he has recently decided to push himself out of the box and is now bringing us balls and bones together.

Beaker is an example, to me, of a positive can-do attitude, and he provides me anxiety relief, humour and a reminder to get outside for a walk.

*Christy Haggarty  
Grade 9, social studies and language arts  
Prescott Learning Centre, Spruce Grove*

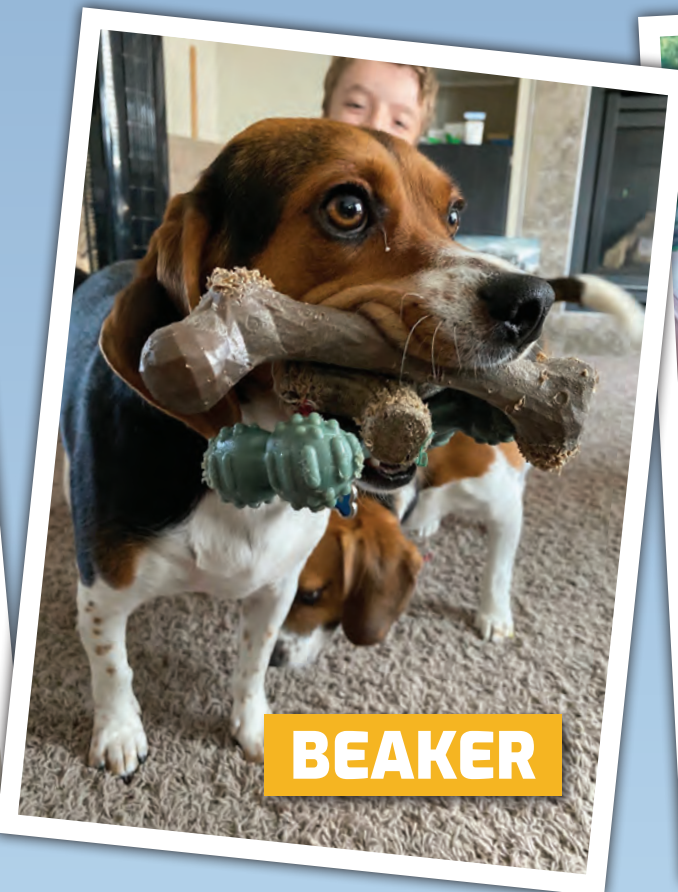


My dog is special because she always brings me a toy when I get home. She helps me to exercise and get fresh air when I walk her every day, and she makes me laugh.

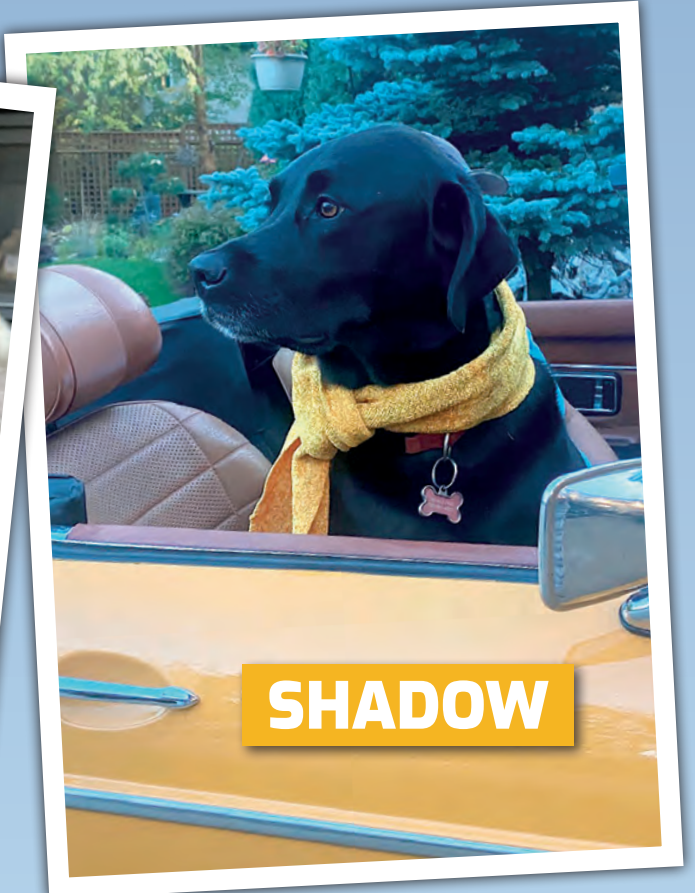
*Vicky Hovdebo  
Grade 1-4, physical education and literacy  
Parkland Village School, Spruce Grove*



**ROXY**



**BEAKER**



**SHADOW**



**HELEN**



**LUNA**



**SOPHIE**

Helen is special because she thinks she is a person and she is helpful as she brings the laughter needed after stressful days at work.

*Stephani Clements  
Complex needs strategist  
Calgary Board of Education*

Luna is our first family dog and she's great with every family member. She gets us outside more frequently. She helps me because, every day when I get home from work, she is happy to see me — it instantly makes my day better!

*Andreas Berko  
Consultant for fine and performing arts  
St. Paul Centre, Calgary*

Sophie is special because she's always near me and knows when I need her support. In this photo you can see her "helping" me puzzle, which I enjoy in order to unwind from the craziness of school.

*Irene Blackburn  
Grade 2  
Ecole Notre Dame, Leduc*





# The APEGA Science Olympics are back for 2022!

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For more information, contact us at [outreach@apega.ca](mailto:outreach@apega.ca).

Calgary Catholic Teachers, Local 55 of the Alberta Teachers' Association invites applications for the position of

## Executive Assistant

### DUTIES

Under the direction of the Local President, the Executive Assistant will work with the Executive Committee of the Calgary Catholic Teachers' ATA Local 55 and the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) in providing advice and assistance to members of Local 55. Duties of the position include, but are not limited to:

- Provide full-cycle advice and assistance to members by responding to inquiries, informing members of their rights and obligations,
- Contribute to the development of local bargaining strategies, goals and objectives.
- Support the President and Executive Committee with implementing the Local 55 strategic plan.

The job requires a considerable number of evening meetings along with some work on weekends and holidays. Duties would commence on a mutually-agreed upon date.

### QUALIFICATIONS

- Applicants must have a Bachelor's Degree in Education and a valid teaching certificate in Alberta. A related Master's degree or additional education and work on local TWC or NSC would be an asset.

For a more detailed job description and qualifications, please go to [www.atalocal55.ca](http://www.atalocal55.ca)

### APPLICATIONS

Resumes and reference letters must be received in the Local's office no later than 4:00 pm February 18, 2022 and should be addressed to: Allison McCaffrey, President, ATA Local 55, 6815 - 8th Street NE, Suite 340, Calgary, AB. T2E 7H7  
President@ataloc55.ab.ca



# Council to explore new award program

## PEC POINTS

Audrey Dutka  
ATA News Staff

### Highlights of the Provincial Executive Council meeting held Dec. 2-3, 2021, via virtual platform.

1. Authorized staff to investigate award practices of comparable organizations and return for Provincial Executive Council's consideration proposals for the creation of new awards to recognize meritorious service to the Association and/or teaching profession.
2. Authorized staff to prepare, for consideration by Provincial Executive Council, a revised appeal process for members whose grievances staff has decided not to pursue that would be suitable for registering with the Labour Relations Board.
3. Approved that the competition for the position of co-ordinator, Teacher Employment Services, be restricted to current members of executive staff; set the proposed timelines for recruitment of the position; and appointed three members of Council to serve on the staff selection committee to fill the position.
4. Authorized up to \$181,000, allocated from the Beginning Teachers' Conference budget line, to create four additional videos for beginning teachers and other members and to provide funding for translation and re-animation to create a French version of all videos.
5. Authorized the Association to initiate a review of the Professional Code of Conduct.
6. In accordance with section 31(2) of the *Teaching Profession Act*, extended the deadline for the commencement of three hearings of the Professional Conduct Committee.
7. Received the report of a hearing committee that found a teacher guilty of one charge of unprofessional conduct for engaging in an inappropriate relationship with a student. The hearing committee imposed the penalty of a declaration that the teacher is ineligible for membership in the Alberta Teachers' Association for a period of two years and a recommendation to the minister of education to suspend the teacher's teaching certificate for a period of two years.
8. Received the report of a hearing committee that found a teacher guilty of one charge of unprofessional conduct for having an inappropriate relationship with a student. Subsequently, the teacher was charged with a summary offense under the Criminal Code of Canada. The committee imposed a penalty of permanent ineligibility as a member of the Alberta Teachers' Association and a recommendation to the minister of education that the teacher be permanently ineligible for a teaching certificate because the teacher currently does not hold a teaching certificate.
9. Received the report of a hearing committee that found a teacher guilty of one charge of unprofessional conduct for writing a letter to the teacher's principal that was inappropriate and made disparaging allegations against the principal and an educational assistant. The hearing committee imposed a penalty of a letter of reprimand and a fine of \$400.
10. Received the report of a hearing committee that found a teacher guilty of one charge of unprofessional conduct for falsifying benefit claims. The committee ordered a penalty of a letter of severe reprimand and \$500 fine.
11. Received the report of a hearing committee that found a teacher guilty of two charges of unprofessional conduct for sharing private information in an email about a student and the student's family with no entitlement to that information and for failing to be considerate of the circumstances of a student when the teacher, in an email, was supportive of another person assisting the student. The hearing committee imposed the penalty of a letter of reprimand and a fine of \$250.
12. Authorized one additional member of Council, one local president and one local political engagement officer to be added to the Political Engagement Committee in anticipation of a spring 2023 provincial election, with the new members' terms commencing as soon as possible and ending on June 30, 2023.
13. In lieu of sending Christmas cards, approved a \$2,000 Christmas charity donation to the Alberta division of the Canadian Mental Health Association.
14. Amended Administrative Guidelines related to the number of staff entitled to attend Canadian Teachers' Federation conferences and seminars. ■

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**For more information and to apply**


- Visit [www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca) > My ATA > Programs and Services > Grants, Awards and Scholarships
- Contact Jessica Grayson, [jessica.grayson@ata.ab.ca](mailto:jessica.grayson@ata.ab.ca), 780-447-9499 (Edmonton area) or toll free 1-800-232-7208

**Application deadline:**  
March 1, 2022



The Alberta Teachers' Association

PD-9-9-2021 10



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**Application deadline:**  
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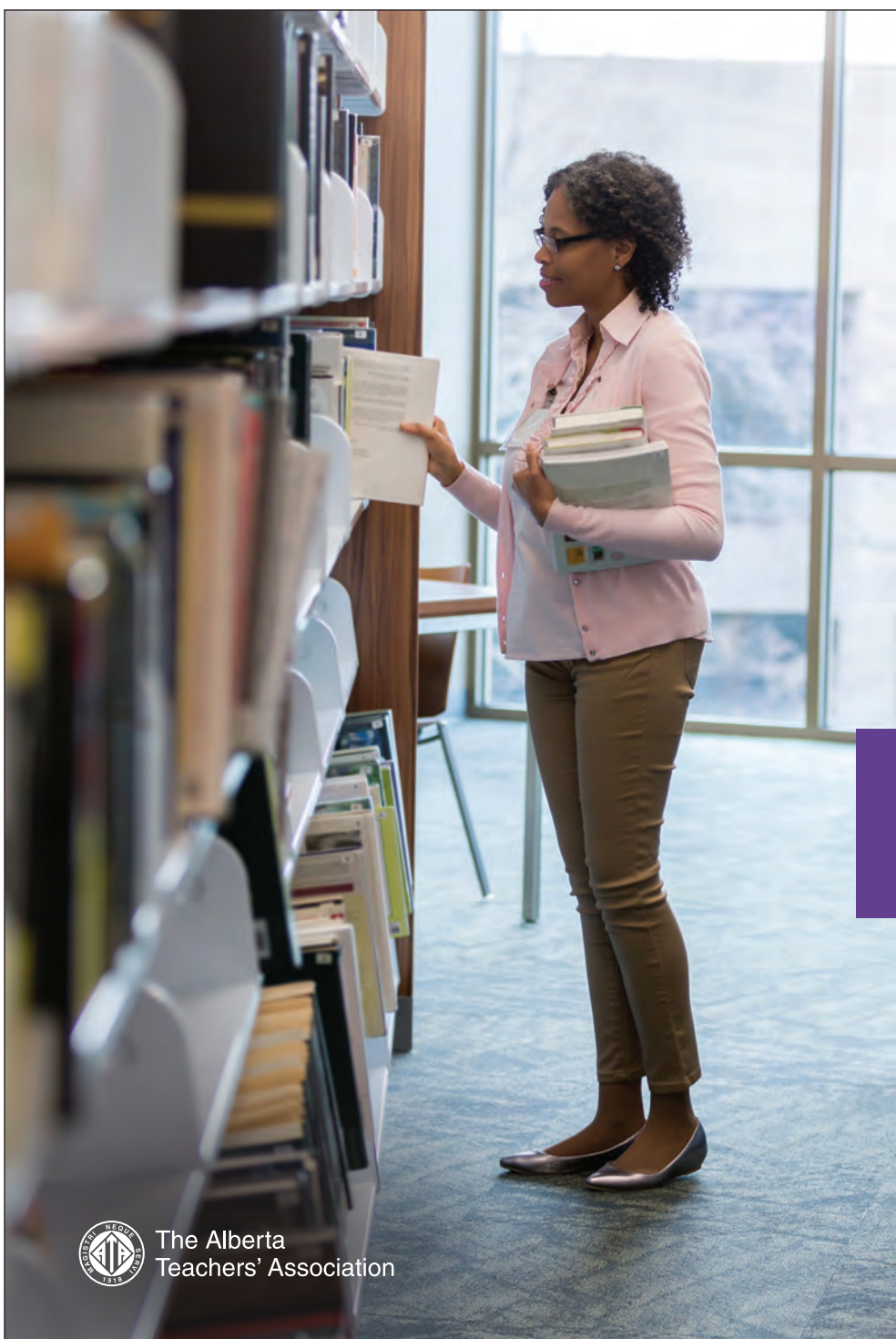


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Share with your colleagues what it's like to be part of a teaching family and why it's special to you.

Please email submissions (up to 200 words) to managing editor Cory Hare: [cory.hare@ata.ab.ca](mailto:cory.hare@ata.ab.ca)

The Alberta Teachers' Association



Teacher Growth, Supervision and Evaluation Workshop

## TGSE WORKSHOP FOR SYSTEM AND SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

In accordance with the Teacher Growth, Supervision and Evaluation Policy

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January 27 and 28, 2022

9:30AM–3:30PM

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Registration deadline—January 20, 2022

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For more information, contact **Nikki Cloutier** in Teacher Employment Services at **780-447-9400** (in Edmonton), toll free **1-800-232-7208** or by email at [nikki.cloutier@ata.ab.ca](mailto:nikki.cloutier@ata.ab.ca).



The Alberta Teachers' Association

TES-MS-85-6-2021.12

# SLIP US A TIP!



**We want to hear about news in your school, district or local.**

Please email managing editor Cory Hare at [cory.hare@ata.ab.ca](mailto:cory.hare@ata.ab.ca).



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## Healthy eating is a form of self-kindness

Some tips for keeping up your health and strength in the face of a crazy teaching year



### COMMENTARY

Jody Kachkar  
Special to the ATA News

Like most of you (I'm guessing), I have eaten (and drunk!) my feelings since March 2020. However, as I've gained weight and stress (and stress-related health concerns), I've come to realize that I must do a little better.

Just recently, I read the book *The Self-Care Solution* by Jennifer Ashton. While not groundbreaking, her book is easy to read and doesn't feel as toxically positive as some can. Essentially, each month for an entire year, she picks one healthy habit to add to her life. Many are simple, and the goal is improvement and then reflection.

As a high school food studies teacher and home economist, I'm very aware of the connection between nutrition and health (and how I feel generally), but in the "crazy busy" stress of the last 18 months, it's something I've fallen away from. Unfortunately, both my health and my waistline show that.

First, it's important to remember that there is no "one way" of healthy eating. We know this as teachers working with students. We accept and recognize good effort and encourage them when they mis-step. We need to offer this kindness to ourselves. There may be days you have popcorn for dinner. I do as well. It's OK.

My approach to healthy eating comes from my days of raising a young person. As a step-parent, I wanted

to make it easier to grab the healthier choice and more difficult to grab a treat. I also wanted to step away from reduction and restriction as they don't offer me the kindness I need and deserve.

As a first step, try adding more water and fruit or vegetables into your day. I really struggle with drinking water and find it even more difficult with mask wearing. So just recently I decided that in between classes and before and after school, I would focus on drinking smaller glasses of water.

I'm lucky that in my foods lab at McNally High School, I have glassware, sinks, refrigerators and a dishwasher, so this was quite doable for me. For other teachers, it might be two or three smaller bottles of water or perhaps having a full and fresh water bottle in the car for the drive home.

I spent some time trying out different water types – cold, sparkling, tap, room temperature, slices of cucumber, lemon, etc. I discovered I prefer basic tap water, just a little cooler than room temperature with no ice or extras. It was fun to experiment, and my students, in watching, offered a few suggestions. (Just an FYI, cinnamon sticks are weird. I don't recommend them as an addition to water!)

I also told my family and my students what I was trying to accomplish. I didn't need anyone to chastise me, but I realized that their knowledge would hold me more accountable. In the last few days, I'm feeling less tired and dehydrated at the end of the day. That feels like a win!

As for making healthier choices a bit easier (and more likely), I do a little bit of meal preparation prior to the start of each workweek. I find the beautiful and terrifyingly organized meal prep plans on Pinterest, Instagram and Facebook just a little intimidating. I

can't give up an entire weekend afternoon to do meal prep, and I don't want to eat the same thing for lunch several days in a row. All I do is prepare some cut-up fruit and vegetable sticks. It usually takes me about 30 minutes. I make sure that I have two or three fruit choices per day and at least one vegetable choice. I line up my snack bags or containers in the fridge and feel virtuous. I also fill my fruit bowl and set it out on the counter.

Finally, know yourself. I have an entire mouth full of "sweet teeth" and, like my father, feel that no meal is complete without something sweet. You may not be that person, and if you don't like sweets or dessert, I admire your self-control. I usually bake a lunch-box treat every other week or so but try to make it as healthy as possible. I generally have a few ripe bananas, so a chocolate chip banana "mini" muffin is enough to give me the sweet I want.

Sometimes, though, nothing will do but chocolate cake. When that craving strikes me (as it did recently at 8 p.m.), I pull out a recipe that will make a single chocolate lava cake. I can mix the cake in the time it takes my oven to preheat, and it bakes in about 10 minutes. In 20 minutes, I have a cake to eat and enjoy!

The banana muffin recipe below is my grandmother's. I've adjusted it a little to make it a bit healthier and always add chocolate chips to it. They freeze well, and to make my life easier, I wrap them individually and store them frozen. If I put one in my lunch bag, it is thawed by lunchtime. The cake recipe comes from Joy the Baker, a food blogger and cookbook author (<https://joythebaker.com>).

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### Jodie's Grandma's Banana Muffins

#### Ingredients

- 2 large bananas (or 3 smaller ones)
- 2/3 cup (160 mL) white sugar
- 1 egg
- 1/4 cup (50 mL) canola oil
- 1 tsp (5 mL) baking soda
- 1 tsp (5 mL) baking powder
- 1/2 tsp (2.5 mL) salt
- 1-1/2 cups (375 mL) flour (sub in up to 3/4 cup whole wheat flour)
- 1/2 cup (125 mL) optional ingredient (chocolate chips, M&M's, dried cranberries, etc.)

#### Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 375°F.
2. Lightly spray muffin tin with cooking spray or use paper liners.
3. In a medium mixing bowl, combine the bananas and the sugar. Mash with a fork until smooth.
4. Add in the egg and oil and stir until smooth.
5. In a separate, large mixing bowl, combine the flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Stir to combine.
6. Make a well or crater in the dry ingredients.
7. Pour the liquid ingredients into the dry ingredients and stir 8 to 10 times. Add in the optional ingredient (if using) and stir until just mixed in.
8. Measure out 50 mL of muffin batter into each muffin cup for regular-sized muffins. If using a mini muffin pan, use about 2 tbsp of batter per mini muffin cup.
9. Bake for 15 to 18 minutes or until muffins spring back when poked lightly.
10. Cool before storing. Can be frozen.

### Joy the Baker's Single Molten Chocolate Cake



SUPPLIED

#### Ingredients

- 1/2 tsp butter for greasing baking dish, 1 tbsp butter for cake batter
- 1 tsp cocoa for dusting baking dish
- Heaping 1/4 cup chocolate chips (semi-sweet is best)
- 1 large egg
- 1 tbsp plus 1 tsp white sugar
- 1 tbsp peanut butter, optional (tahini might be a nice substitute but can be left out)
- Splash of bourbon, optional (I put in vanilla here)
- Pinch of salt
- 2 tsp all-purpose flour

#### Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F. Grease a 3/4 cup white ramekin (or very small 1 cup-sized baking dish). Dust with cocoa powder and dump excess powder out. Set dish aside.
2. Melt the 1 tbsp butter and chocolate chips together. Use your preferred method (the website gives you some options). I used the microwave, but watch you don't burn your chocolate!
3. Whisk in the egg, sugar and peanut butter (if using) into the chocolate mixture. Add the bourbon or vanilla if you like. Stir in the salt and flour until just combined. Pour batter into prepared ramekin.
4. Bake for 7–10 minutes for a molten centre (a 3/4 inch ring around the edge will look dull and baked) or 10–12 minutes for a soft centre (cake edge will puff slightly). Everyone's oven will bake differently, so watch carefully.
5. Let cake cool 2–3 minutes. Protecting hands with a towel or oven mitts, invert onto a plate or enjoy right out of the baking dish. Eat right away and enjoy warm.

<https://joythebaker.com/2020/04/a-single-molten-chocolate-cake>

Go to the link for more pictures of each step.