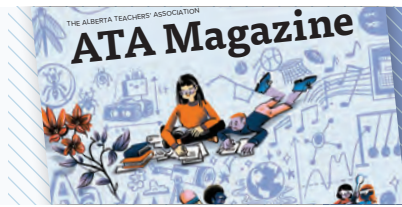
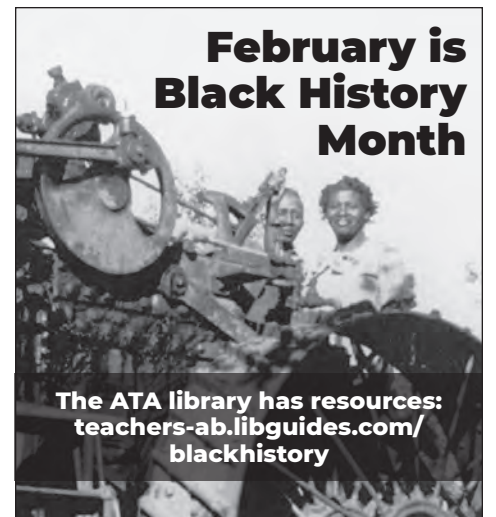


**Feature:** What does it look like when new curriculum is done well?



Winter issue available in schools in early February.

Digital version at [www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca) > News and Info > ATA Magazine



# ATA NEWS

February 1, 2022 | Volume 56, Number 8

News Publication of The Alberta Teachers' Association

## 'When we fight, we win'



CORY HARE-SCREEN CAPTURE

Carmen Glossop, district representative for Edmonton McMurray, delivers a call to action to conclude a Member Information Meeting (MIM) held via Zoom on Monday, Jan. 24. A series of MIMs throughout the week informed members of the potential dangers of the government's plan to take the teacher discipline function away from the ATA. Read more on page 5.

### A special case

Alberta's public education system has special qualities that we must protect.

Read Jonathan Teghtmeyer's editorial on page 2.

### Teacher = professional

Government's plan for teacher discipline is a serious mistake.

See Viewpoints on page 3.

### Pitfalls and Precautions

For teachers, a criminal conviction equals unprofessional conduct.

See story on page 13.



### 20 years later

A look back at the provincewide teacher strike of 2002.

See story on page 7.



### ATA named a top employer

Work atmosphere and pandemic response help put Association on list of top places to work in Alberta.

See story on page 11.



## We need to protect the qualities that make us special



### EDITORIAL

Jonathan Teghtmeyer  
ATA News Editor-in-Chief

I received a really interesting phone call just the other day.

It was from a school superintendent in Oklahoma who had questions about teacher attrition. He was going to be advising the government there on this issue.

Our conversation ended up roaming into a whole bunch of other areas regarding the way education systems are organized and operated. But, consistently, I found myself explaining how Alberta's system is different than many other jurisdictions in North America.

"Is it virtually impossible to get rid of bad teachers there, like it is here?" he asked.

"Funny you should ask," I replied.

I explained to him how we use a professional model for teacher growth, supervision and evaluation, how teachers are required to demonstrate continuous growth and improvement and how principals provide ongoing supervision of teachers. A principal can order an evaluation at any point when they believe that a teacher is no longer meeting the Teacher Quality Standard and, if the evaluation demonstrates

that improvement is needed, then the teacher can be placed on a program of improvement.

Here is where I told him that our principals are members of our professional association and union. As a result, when our principals are dealing with matters of teacher performance, they will often give us a call. We will provide advice to the principal that helps ensure that the process is followed and that teacher rights are being respected.

*"... it is these exact differences that make Alberta an outlier, which results in us being a high-performing jurisdiction."*

We have a process that is fair, consistent and clearly outlined in provincial regulation and, as a result, we actually tend not to have processes for dismissal written into our collective agreements. We tend not to have very many grievances here, generally.

In Alberta, I explained, our Association functions as both a professional association and as a union.

He was intrigued.

This dual function requires us to look

at a lot of issues through a professional lens and not solely through the lens of teacher self-interest. Our culture and behaviour is different than that of most other teacher unions. Sure, we want to make sure that teachers' rights are respected and that processes are fair, but we also want to ensure that high standards for the profession are upheld.

The conversation turned to the conduct of teachers.

Being seen to be doing something about teachers who behave poorly

He quickly understood how this would be a problem.

We spent a great deal of time talking about the importance of public education and about how politicians there, like politicians here, have a whole set of similar ideas that would threaten the interests of public education. He knew that Alberta tended to be a high global performer in education and asked me why that was.

I told him what I had heard repeatedly from international experts who come to Alberta to study our system. They have said that, generally speaking, there is a high level of respect for teachers and the profession and that there are high degrees of collaboration — that the profession is engaged by the province, by school boards and by other stakeholders in a constructive way to help to continually improve the system.

It is interesting that now the government makes the argument that they need to remove our professional functions to make us more like other provinces.

The conclusion I have, that I relayed to this American educator, is very different: it is these exact differences that make Alberta an outlier, which results in us being a high-performing jurisdiction.

We need to protect these differences; they are qualities that make us special. ■

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

## Here's the truth about Bill 32



### Q & A

Dennis Theobald  
ATA Executive Secretary

**Question:** I hear that with Bill 32, I'll get to choose whether to pay my Association dues? Is that right?

**Answer:** Like so much that emanates from the provincial government these days, the Bill 32 story begins and ends with a lie, with not a whole lot of truth in between.

The lie at the beginning is captured in the name of the legislation, *"The Restoring Balance in Alberta Workplaces Act,"* which suggests that the province's workplaces are out of balance, mainly because union bosses were deciding unilaterally to use the fees paid by their poor unsuspecting members to fund the New Democratic Party and radical social causes much despised by the party in government.

In fact, unions are extraordinarily democratic in their structure and practices and, in any event, are already

precluded by other provincial laws from contributing to political parties as well as being severely curtailed in their ability to undertake "political" advertising for causes that might be supported or opposed by any candidate or political party. Realistically, there is no imbalance to restore.

*"The Bill 32 story begins and ends with a lie, with not a whole lot of truth in between."*

The lie at the end is that Bill 32 will enable union members to elect whether or not to pay some substantial portion of their fees that would otherwise be used for inappropriate purposes. While some ideologues were promised that the bill would be a significant step toward establishing Alberta as a "right-to-work" jurisdiction, the fact is that the protections for organized labour in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms severely curtail

the province's ability to pre-emptively constrain union activities.

And so, in an effort to pass something that might stand some dubious chance of surviving a court challenge, the government has enacted measures that will have little practical impact, but which would potentially create

significant administrative burdens for unions and potentially employers as well.

In fact, if the bill were to be accurately renamed, it might be styled *"The Imposing Useless, Annoying and Expensive Red Tape on People We Don't Like Act."*

So what will this legislation, and its associated regulations, actually mean for teachers? Bill 32 amends the *Public Education Collective Bargaining Act*

(PECBA) to create three categories of Association activity:

#### Category 1

This category includes so-called "non-core" activities such as advocacy on broad social issues and support for charities, non-governmental organizations and/or political parties.

#### Category 2

This covers professional development and governance.

#### Category 3

This encompasses all other union functions, including bargaining, member representation, lobbying and advocacy, and operations.

Activities deemed to fall into category one can only be paid from fees that members voluntarily elect to contribute. Although all of these derive from the legislated objects of the Association set out in section four of the *Teaching Profession Act*, were the Association to fund these category one activities from fees, provision would have to be

**Q&A: HERE'S THE TRUTH**  
continued on page 13





# Teachers must always view themselves as professionals



## VIEWPOINTS

**David King**  
Former Education Minister

The minister of education has announced the government's intention to strip the ATA of professional discipline roles, leaving it as an exclusively "union" organization.

I contend that this would be a serious mistake, with a multitude of unintended negative consequences and no material upside.

I served as minister of education in Alberta for seven years and I, too, wrestled with this issue. I chaired the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, and also had responsibilities related to other professions and occupations in Alberta. I understood what was done for other professions here and for teachers elsewhere. In fact, I moved twice to change the functions of the ATA.

Alberta is relatively unique in having a single organization that represents both the professional and economic interests of teachers. My experience tells me that this is a significant contributor to Alberta's long-standing and well-deserved reputation for excellent education.

First, the ATA has a very solid process in dealing with complaints. I won't detail the errors and omissions made recently in commentary from some other former ministers, but the substance of the process is solid, and separation will not result in any material improvement. There can, and should, be incremental improvements to the process, but real improvement will come from more faithful adherence – by administrators, trustees and department officials – to the process already in place. I have personal knowledge of discipline failures that resulted from inaction or inappropriate action by police, system administrators and others.

But discipline is a red herring, and I want to raise another issue that, in my experience, is more important and immediate.

The ATA is different from other professional associations with these dual, apparently conflicting roles, but it is unique because teaching is a unique vocation. Doctors, lawyers, accountants and nurses are not entirely employed

“ The ATA has a very solid process in dealing with complaints ... separation will not result in any material improvement. ”

by a local government and they do not stand *in loco parentis* to those they serve. The government must do everything in its power to maintain the emphasis of teachers on their professional role. Their economic interests are entirely legitimate, but as a public we want those interests to be secondary to professional interests.

For years, teachers have served on curriculum advisory committees with enthusiasm, energy, valuable knowledge and experience, and good motivation. They organize annual professional development conventions for all the teachers

in the province. For many years, the ATA has paid more attention to the future of education than the government of Alberta has. The ATA has also done more than other educational institutions to foster connections with educators in other parts of the world.

When I was minister, it was virtually forbidden to refer to the ATA as a "union," although economic interests were (and are) a legitimate part of its role. Sometimes, the economic interest did dominate, in a specific situation, for a brief period of time. But more commonly, it was the professional interest that dominated and I found, as minister, it was always helpful for me to be able to call the ATA back to professional grounds when the economic-interest grounds got tough. The ATA could never act solely on economic-interest grounds because they felt their professional obligations too strongly.

There are Canadian provinces that have separated the professional role from the economic-interest role. I feel confident in saying there is probably no minister of education, in any other province, who would say the outcome of separation has been good for education.

It is far better to encourage teachers, always, to think of themselves as professionals, and have the government and the public hold them to that standard, than to give free rein and emphasis to the economic interest and marginalize the professional development and maintenance role.

What the government is proposing may accomplish partisan goals, but only at the expense of much broader and more important and enduring issues in the field of education. ■

*David King was Alberta's minister of education from 1979 to 1986. He was also the minister responsible for implementing the province's policies regarding professions and occupations, and is a past chair of the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada.*

## YOUR VIEWS

### FACEBOOK FEEDBACK

**On the ATA's survey results showing up to one third of Alberta teachers expect to leave the profession by next year**

**Eileen Virani**

I have to constantly remind myself how very much I loved my job just a couple of years ago. A government change and a pandemic at the same time has been soul crushing. I am trying so hard to stay optimistic for what is hopefully to come in the next year or two. If not, I can't see how I can sustain this much longer.

**Katherine Sorenson**

I'll be teaching next year. I enjoy my kids and the courses I teach, and I'm hopeful we will be reaching the end of the Covid mess by then. So hopeful. But I absolutely think the government has zero respect for us and our profession, and I don't judge anyone at all who is cutting their losses and leaving. I'm trying not to focus on that.

**Lucien Celene**

Isn't it sad that they question the validity of a survey for only including a few thousand teachers. But when they look at the curriculum they ignore the majority of teachers and hand pick a couple of token representatives, then even legally gag them from expressing an opinion.

**Bev Lefebvre Smith**

I will be one of them. I am able to retire and the new curriculum and the treatment by the government only contributed to my decision.

**On the minister's plan to remove the disciplinary function from the ATA**

**Andrea Willman**

Working conditions are learning conditions. I want the best learning conditions for my kids as well as for all of the kids in Alberta. The professionals who have multiple degrees and extensive and specialized experience in their industry deserve the opposite of toxic working conditions so they can help our kids succeed.

### ON TWITTER

**Kevin McBean @kmcbean**

Today seems like a good day to remind @AdrianaLaGrange that she could do a lot to help the mental health of students and teachers. Start by meeting with @albertateachers and listening to what they say. The well-being of education in AB depends on it.

**Gina D @GinaSock**

Posting this sitting in my car outside the school, about to go in for "Mental Health First Aid" training to better prepare me to meet the needs of students. I arrive exhausted. Stress and hopelessness walk with me. We are not OK.



### FOR THE RECORD

“  
United we stand  
”

– This slogan was used in 2002 when 24,000 Alberta teachers went on strike to protest funding cuts, the erosion of public education and an overall tone of disrespect on the part of the government.

Read about it on page 7.



# Curriculum efforts fall short - ATA president

Cory Hare  
ATA News Managing Editor

The government's latest steps to consult on new K-6 curriculum are intentionally restrictive and are aimed at gathering compliments rather than meaningful feedback, says ATA president Jason Schilling.

In recent weeks, Education Minister Adriana LaGrange has announced a new curriculum implementation advisory group and a series of virtual consultation sessions, but both initiatives fall short, Schilling says, as they've been devised without consulting the teaching profession and will gather feedback from just a narrow cross-section of the population.

"This government is quick to say that they have consulted with teachers, but that engagement has lacked authenticity and the advice is routinely ignored," Schilling said. "They're not looking for meaningful critique, they're looking for kudos."

Schilling noted that, of its 17 members, the curriculum implementation advisory group contains only three teachers (hand-picked by the minister) while containing representatives from the Alberta School Boards Association, College of Alberta School Superintendents, five government officials and two superintendents.

"School boards don't implement curriculum. Superintendents don't

implement curriculum. Teachers implement curriculum and need to be meaningfully involved in its development," Schilling said.

The advisory group will help chart a course for the implementation of new curriculum in September 2022. It will focus on English language arts, math, and physical education and wellness.

"We are committed to taking a measured and thoughtful approach to ensure curriculum piloting and implementation timelines are manageable for teachers and students," LaGrange said.

## Virtual engagement

The other initiative will involve at least 44 virtual consultation sessions held from Jan. 31 to Feb. 28 across the province.

Each session will be limited to 120 attendees and will include focused, small group conversations facilitated by independent engagement specialists. During each session, the draft K-6 social studies design blueprint or one draft K-6 subject will be considered and discussed so Albertans can provide feedback.

While it's important to seek feedback from the public, the restrictive numbers are a concern, Schilling said. Also, the government is missing an opportunity to tap into the expertise that's available through the ATA's specialist councils, which have hundreds of subject specialists around the province.

"These experts have been instrumental in providing support for curriculum development in the past but they've been completely excluded from this process to date," Schilling said. "This is a completely missed opportunity."

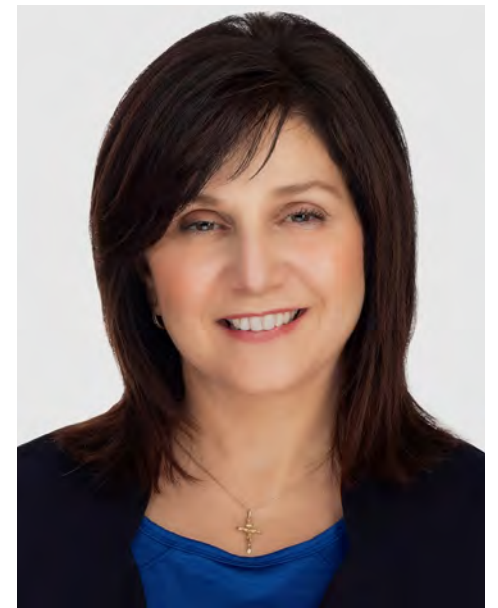
Schilling is also concerned about the transparency shown by the government around curriculum consultations in the past.

"The minister loves to say that they have the most transparent process for curriculum development ever, yet they haven't released the findings of a single one of any of the engagements they have conducted so far."

The Alberta government website on curriculum states that they are "committed to a transparent curriculum development and review process." Schilling says teachers will be suspicious of how their feedback is being used, but that teachers should participate nonetheless.

"There have been numerous surveys done and two days with a curriculum working group of teachers, but we don't know what feedback was given," said Schilling. "We know full well that teachers and parents were outspoken in opposition to the drafts, but this government won't release the data. I suspect they are too embarrassed."

Schilling reiterated the call for a moratorium on curriculum implementation until the content is vastly improved. He notes that the government continues to change the



Education Minister Adriana LaGrange has announced two curriculum consultation initiatives in recent weeks, but the efforts are bypassing the teaching profession says ATA president Jason Schilling.

curriculum on the fly, has not responded to teachers' concerns, and is moving too quickly to implementation without an appropriate phase of piloting.

"We do not even have a final draft of the curriculum and what has been put forward does not enjoy the broad support of teachers or the public," he said. "I'm very concerned that the needs of teachers are being ignored when this government is moving so fast to implementation." ■

## New items added to initial proposal

ATA News Staff

Central table bargaining between the Central Table Bargaining Committee (CTBC) and the Teachers' Employer Bargaining Association (TEBA) continued in January, with CTBC adding some new items to the initial proposal.

Heather McCaig, member of CTBC and district representative for South East, says two of the new items were added in response to the minister's threat to remove the Association's professional discipline functions.

"We are able to add these completely new issues to the table after the start of bargaining because Bill 85 has changed the context of your work in a way that has bargainable impacts," she said.

CTBC also tabled a number of proposals focusing on the supports needed by substitute teachers for them to provide their best possible professional service. McCaig says the CTBC is sharing the details of this proposal on the Bargaining Updates pages of the members-only section of the Association's website.

In response to news that both AUPE and UNA recently settled their collective agreements with the Government of Alberta and Alberta Health Services, McCaig cautioned that although teachers could be cautiously optimistic, it was important not to get too far ahead of the process.

"Teachers should be mindful that these agreements were not possible without the assistance of a mediator," she said. "Currently, we are focusing our discussions with TEBA on issues of shared interest and finding solutions where possible. We should anticipate that we may need the help of a mediator ourselves to facilitate an agreement in the end stages."

Members can see addendums to the initial proposal on the Association website, in the Bargaining Update section of the Member's Only area. Teachers are also encouraged to reach out to their local Teacher Welfare Committee member if they have questions. ■



## NOTICE

On Oct. 1, 2021, a hearing committee of the Professional Conduct Committee established under the *Teaching Profession Act* found that Jentry Jack Salmon engaged in unprofessional conduct. The hearing committee ordered that Salmon be ineligible for membership in the Association for a period of two years beginning Oct. 1, 2021.



## Anyone else feeling déjà vu?

I often connect with former ATA presidents, many of whom have been great mentors and sounding boards as we navigate these tumultuous times.

Recently, I was able to sit down and talk with Larry Booi, who was Association president from 1999 to 2003. We talked primarily about the circumstances that led to the job action by thousands of teachers in 2002. Many of the issues that were of great concern then are of concern today: class size and composition, learning conditions, and the disrespectful treatment of teachers by the politicians of the day.

Larry, as elegant and animated as ever, talked about how the teachers of the day rallied to work together to push back on the attempts to deprofessionalize teachers and their work. We recalled what led to the job action, what it was like during the strike and after teachers were ordered back to work. I recall those days clearly, as I was a young teacher volunteering on my local's negotiating subcommittee. They were not easy days. But like Larry, I remembered how the profession united and worked together to see improvements to learning conditions. The teachers in 2002 united for what they believed in.

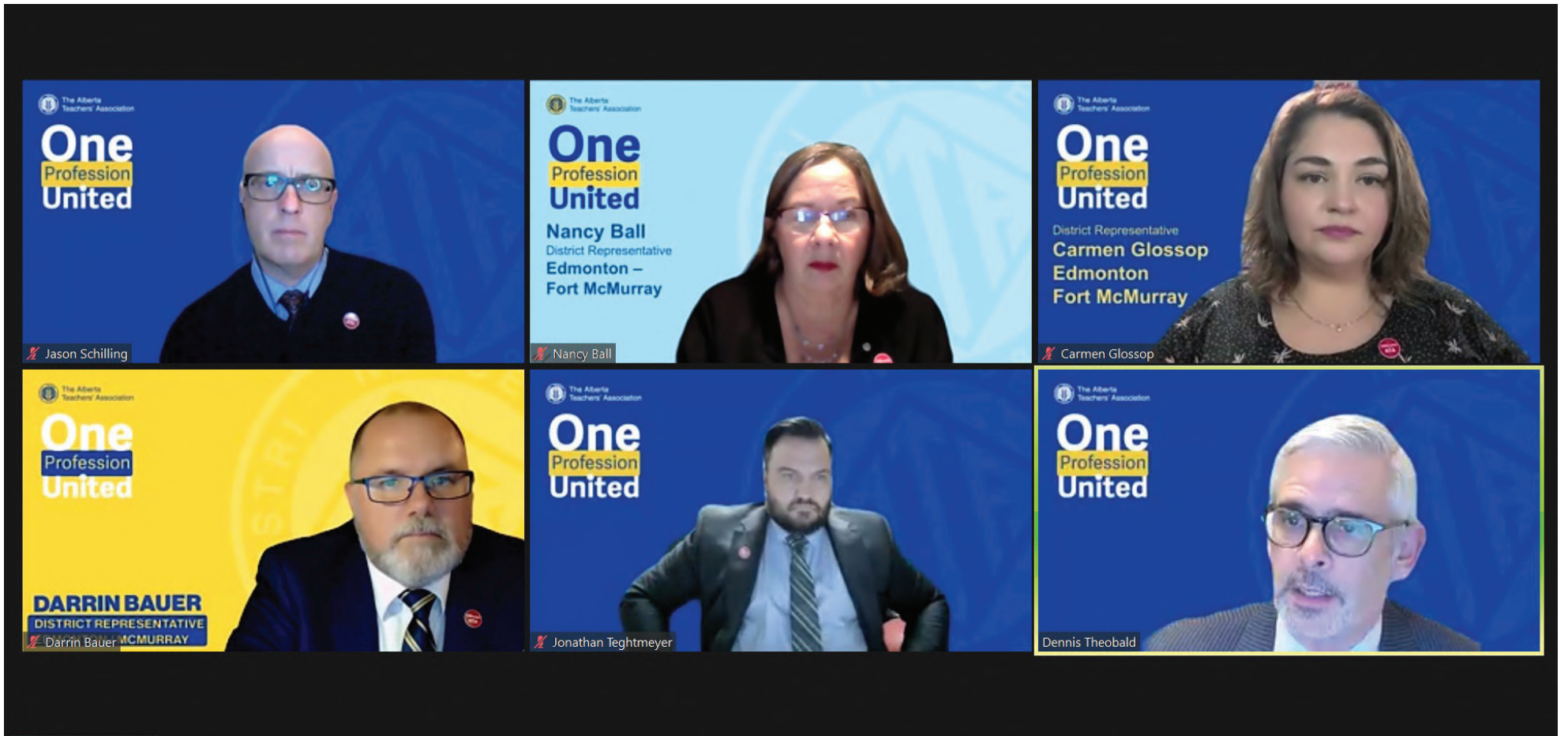
As we wrapped up our conversation, Larry noted that teachers today are dealing with challenges that they've never faced before, from the pandemic and how that has affected our classrooms, to the government's approach and attitude toward the profession and public education. Though the issues in 2002 and today are similar, the tone from government is entirely different - it's more aggressive now.

After the interview, I thought about the parallels between the current efforts by government to remove our professional functions and our circumstances 20 years ago. In 2002, teachers united to defend public education; we need to do the same thing in 2022.

This fight needs our attention, every single one of us. This is a fight for our very profession. If the removal of our professional function starts, we could see further damaging erosion to the profession. If they weaken our Association and our profession, we lose our voice to advocate for what we believe in: our students.

We are teachers; we are the ATA - one profession, united. ■





CORY HARE-SCREEN CAPTURE

ATA executive secretary Dennis Theobald speaks during a Member Information Meeting held via Zoom on Monday, Jan. 24. A series of the meetings was held throughout the week to inform members about the potential consequences of the government's plan to remove teacher discipline from the ATA.

# 'This is a fight for our profession'

## *Teacher discipline the focus of ATA's Member Information Meetings*

**Cory Hare**  
ATA News Managing Editor

Teachers need to rise up in large numbers and fight back against a government attack on their professionalism.

That was the main message shared during a series of Member Information Meetings that took place from Jan. 24 to 27. Referred to as MIMs, the meetings attracted more than 2,900 total attendees.

The meeting agenda focused mainly on the potential dangers of the government's plan to remove the discipline function from the ATA.

"It is a radical plan, a departure from historical norms and its full consequences for teachers and for the culture of public education in this province are uncertain," said ATA executive secretary Dennis Theobald.

"What is clear, though, is that if the government succeeds in this radical plan, we teachers will be diminished as a profession and our focus and our role in public education will be fundamentally altered."

Theobald urged classroom teachers to ask themselves, if teachers don't regulate themselves, who will regulate them?

"The fact of the matter is we'll be regulated by others and those others will not necessarily be motivated by a larger concern for public education or informed by an understanding of the lived realities of teachers in the classroom," Theobald said.

He went on to note that, in other provinces where teacher discipline has been separated from the teaching profession, the move has been part of larger changes that he described as a "constellation of destructive ideas."

These have usually included removing principals, school leaders and central office staff from membership in the respective teachers' organization. Such moves are based on an ideology that teachers are not really professionals and don't have the capacity for self-direction, he said.

In Alberta, removing the discipline function could

be the first domino to fall and possibly teachers' last chance to deter government from other policies that would be even more destructive to teachers' professional status, dignity and quality of life.

"That's why we have to fight back," Theobald said. "This is a fight for our profession and for the culture of public education ... It is a fight that we must win; otherwise, the consequences will be delivered to you in your working lives wherever you may be."

Some attendees asked whether teachers could fight back by going on strike. They learned that strikes are only legal when they result from an impasse in negotiating a collective agreement, whereas the planned change to the ATA's regulatory capacity is a matter of legislation rather than collective agreements.

### Three actions

ATA associate co-ordinator of communications Jonathan Teghtmeyer outlined three actions the Association is asking members to undertake: educate, advocate and stay engaged.

This begins with teachers educating themselves and their colleagues on this issue, then putting as much pressure as they can on MLAs throughout the province.

"We need to help them understand that this is a very bad decision for public education," Teghtmeyer said.

ATA president Jason Schilling emphasized that, as much as he and other leaders are active in advocating for the profession, the ATA's most powerful weapon is its 46,000 members.

"If they weaken our association and our profession, then we lose our voice in what matters and what matters the most is our students, each other and public education," he said. "I'll just ask you to do what you can. Do the best that you can right now."

Carmen Glossop, a district representative for Edmonton McMurray, spoke during one of the meetings and urged teachers to help educate their colleagues and to fight relentlessly.

"I am pandemic tired and I know if I am, then so are you," Glossop said. "This is a big deal, my friends. We are in a fight and on multiple avenues, but together, as one profession united, we have the ability to fight them off if we have to because we are tough and we can do tough things."

She noted that relentless pressure from teachers prompted the government to backtrack from its original position on taking over teachers' pensions.

"Remember: when we fight, we win," she said, "because we are ATA." ■

## Minister pitches national registry of bad teachers

While the ATA was holding member meetings to discuss its teacher discipline process, the CBC reported that Education Minister Adriana LaGrange is spearheading an effort to create a national registry of teachers who've had their credentials revoked by their provincial regulator, thus making it difficult or impossible for them to teach in another province or territory.

The CBC reported that, in March 2020, LaGrange wrote her provincial counterparts urging them to support her efforts to get the Council of

Ministers of Education, Canada, to address teacher discipline. As a result, the council tasked a committee to research the creation of a national registry of teachers who had been disciplined or lost their licence. The committee will release its recommendations soon, LaGrange said.

The ATA issued a statement indicating that such a registry would be welcome.

"The ATA has no interest in protecting teachers whose certificates have been suspended or cancelled for misconduct," it said.



### 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).





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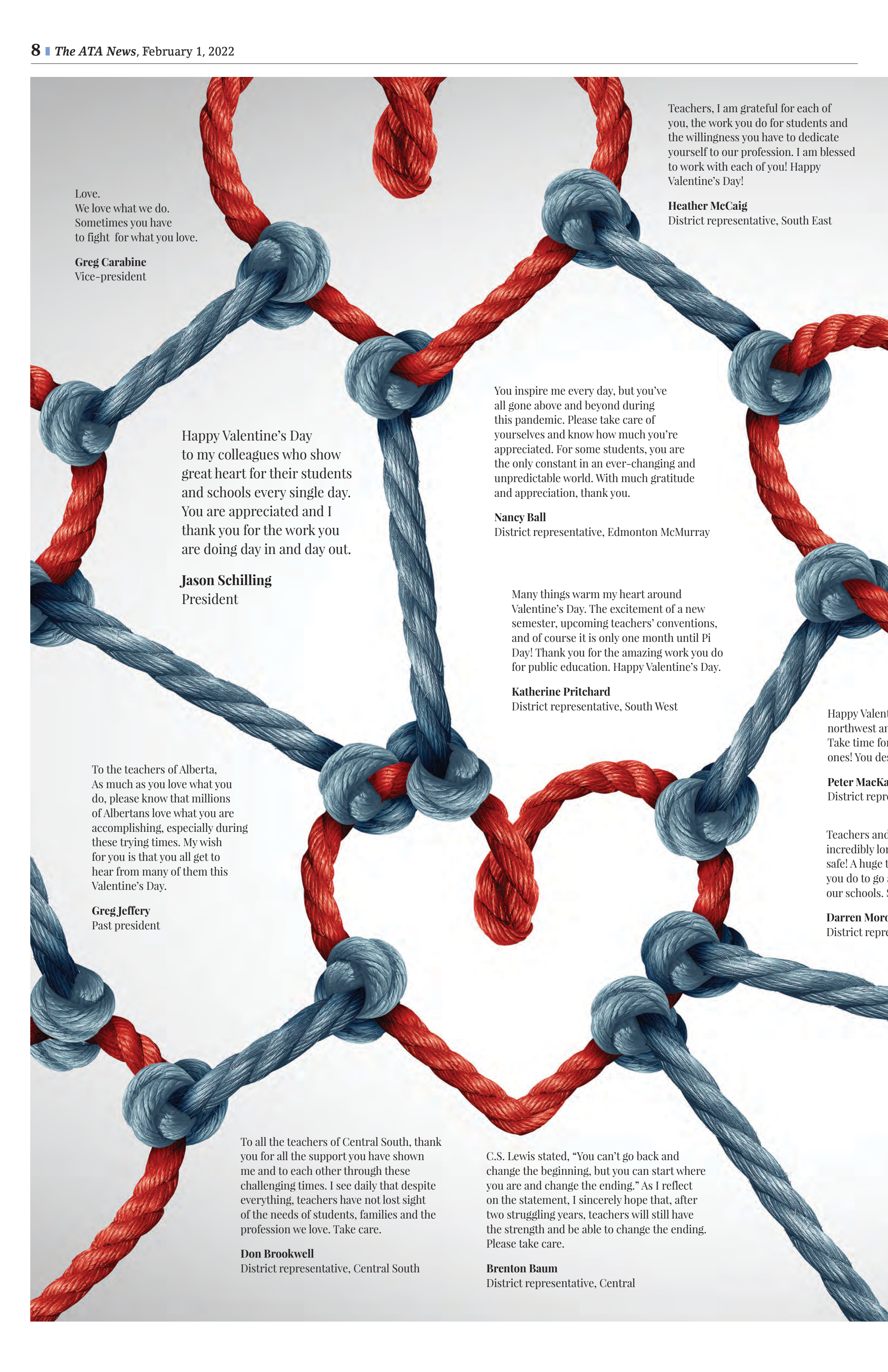


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Love.  
We love what we do.  
Sometimes you have  
to fight for what you love.

**Greg Carabine**  
Vice-president

Teachers, I am grateful for each of you, the work you do for students and the willingness you have to dedicate yourself to our profession. I am blessed to work with each of you! Happy Valentine's Day!

**Heather McCaig**  
District representative, South East

Happy Valentine's Day to my colleagues who show great heart for their students and schools every single day. You are appreciated and I thank you for the work you are doing day in and day out.

**Jason Schilling**  
President

You inspire me every day, but you've all gone above and beyond during this pandemic. Please take care of yourselves and know how much you're appreciated. For some students, you are the only constant in an ever-changing and unpredictable world. With much gratitude and appreciation, thank you.

**Nancy Ball**  
District representative, Edmonton McMurray

Many things warm my heart around Valentine's Day. The excitement of a new semester, upcoming teachers' conventions, and of course it is only one month until Pi Day! Thank you for the amazing work you do for public education. Happy Valentine's Day.

**Katherine Pritchard**  
District representative, South West

To the teachers of Alberta, As much as you love what you do, please know that millions of Albertans love what you are accomplishing, especially during these trying times. My wish for you is that you all get to hear from many of them this Valentine's Day.

**Greg Jeffery**  
Past president

Happy Valentine's Day to my colleagues in the northwest area. Take time for yourselves and your families! You deserve it!

**Peter Mackay**  
District representative, Northwest

Teachers and students are doing so well! Teachers are incredibly loving and caring. Students are safe! A huge thank you to all the teachers who do so much for our schools. Happy Valentine's Day!

**Darren Morrison**  
District representative, Northwest

To all the teachers of Central South, thank you for all the support you have shown me and to each other through these challenging times. I see daily that despite everything, teachers have not lost sight of the needs of students, families and the profession we love. Take care.

**Don Brookwell**  
District representative, Central South

C.S. Lewis stated, "You can't go back and change the beginning, but you can start where you are and change the ending." As I reflect on the statement, I sincerely hope that, after two struggling years, teachers will still have the strength and be able to change the ending. Please take care.

**Brenton Baum**  
District representative, Central



A teacher takes a hand,  
opens a mind and touches  
a heart. Know that you  
are loved! Stay awesome!  
Happy Valentine's Day.

**Carmen Glossop**  
District representative,  
Edmonton McMurray

Thank you for your kindness,  
patience, dedication, joy and  
unceasing love for your students,  
colleagues, and profession. I wish  
you a happy Valentine's Day and that  
the joy and love you feel continues to  
fill your heart and soul throughout  
the year.

**Murray Lalonde**  
District representative,  
Central East

# From the heart

With Valentine's Day on the horizon, we asked members of the ATA's Provincial Executive Council to share messages of support for the teachers they represent.

I would like to wish the hard-working teachers of Calgary City a happy Valentine's Day. Two years of a pandemic have proven the very heart and soul of the teachers in Calgary Catholic and Calgary public schools. Teachers, you deserve to be recognized and celebrated.

**Kathy Hoehn**  
District representative,  
Calgary City

Valentine's Day to the teachers of the  
and to every teacher in Alberta!  
for yourself and for your loved  
serve it and so do they!

**...**  
representative, North West

...substitutes continue to work  
...ing hours to keep our students  
...thank you to you all for everything  
...above and beyond for others in  
...Stay safe and be well!

**...**  
representative, Calgary City

Teachers are the heartbeat of public education. Our efforts pulse through the system, keeping it functioning, even when faced with difficulties and darkness. As we struggle through the adversities currently facing us, we hold fast to the knowledge that we are stronger when we work together, supporting one another with kindness and compassion.

**Karen Nakaska**  
District representative,  
Calgary District

I would like to thank all of the executives, committee members, volunteers and teachers in the Edmonton District for your hard work, dedication and commitment to publicly funded education in the province of Alberta. I am blessed to work with you. Happy Valentine's Day. Hug your family and call your close friends to say hi.

**Paul Froese**  
District representative, Edmonton District





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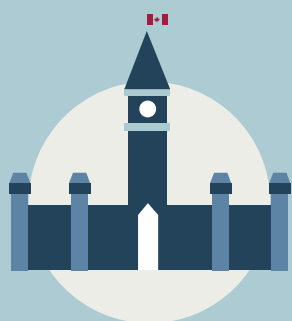


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# ATA named a top employer

## ATA News Staff

The Alberta Teachers' Association has been named one of Alberta's top 75 employers of 2022.

Alberta's Top Employers is a competition organized by Canada's Top 100 Employers. The competition recognizes Alberta employers that lead their industries in offering exceptional places to work. Entrant employers are judged using criteria such as work atmosphere, vacation, performance management and community involvement.

Association executive secretary Dennis Theobald says the award

confirms what he has personally known to be true for the 21 years he has been an ATA employee.

"Our staff believe in public education, and they work very hard to serve Alberta's teachers. It's imperative that we, as an employer, set a high bar not only to show our gratitude for their work, but to set an example for how we want Alberta's teachers to be treated."

Canada's Top Employers acknowledged that this year's competition attracted significantly more entries than previous years.

Canada's Top Employers score on eight different categories, including

physical workspace; work atmosphere and social; health, financial and family benefits; training and skills development; and community involvement. The ATA was also recognized for its paid sick-day policy of up to 20 days per year and its maternity and parental top-up.

The organization's pandemic response also earned high marks. The award program recognized the ATA's internal staff committees that offer programs to support health and wellness and continually launch initiatives to ensure employees stay connected to the organization

and their colleagues while working remotely.

"It is a testament to the Association and the commitment of our staff to be recognized while navigating through such uncertain times," Theobald said.

He said the Association is honoured to be named one of Alberta's top employers.

"I believe the members would want to join with me in celebrating this accomplishment and the hard work of the staff who made it possible," he said, "just as we Association staff would want to express our appreciation for the support we receive from Alberta teachers, who we serve every day." ■



More information is available at the Canada's Top Employers website: [www.canadastop100.com](http://www.canadastop100.com).

# New co-ordinator for TES

*Long-time SARO staff officer Keith Hadden moves into new role*

## ATA News Staff

The ATA's new co-ordinator of Teacher Employment Services (TES) will be a familiar face to many in southern Alberta.



Staff officer Keith Hadden has been named the new co-ordinator of the ATA's Teacher Employment Services program area.

Keith Hadden, who started as a staff officer 11 years ago in the Southern Alberta Regional Office (SARO), will begin his new role on March 1.

Hadden says the top priority of his work will be to continue helping teachers respond to the difficult conditions created by the government, a job that he says will be made easier through the work of his very talented TES colleagues.

"Leading the TES team is both exciting and humbling at the same time," he said. "I'm looking forward to working more closely with staff across all program areas to ensure that we are as effective and efficient as possible in responding to members' needs."

When asked what is the most important part of leading a team, he said it comes down to respect for all colleagues.

"Everyone on the team has a voice, is valued, and is provided the opportunity to contribute and grow," he said.

Before coming to the ATA, Hadden had been a school principal for 15 years as well as having served in secondments to division office and to the University of Lethbridge. ■

## 5 MORE THINGS

### about Keith

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

I had so many inspiring teachers who made a real difference in my life. I still remember Mrs. Miller, my Grade 1 teacher at RB Bennett School in Calgary, who taught me how to read; Ms. Howard, my Grade 6 teacher, who made a trophy for me after I scored the only goal I have ever scored in a soccer game; Mr. Checkley, my high school physics teacher, who was able to reach me and every other kid in class in a way that's almost indescribable; and so many other outstanding teachers who cared and recognized and reached out and helped construct who I am.

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

There are great days and tough days. It gets easier. Be kind to yourself. Reach out and find a good mentor.

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

Everybody matters. Everybody.

#### Favourite song to put you in a good mood

Well, there are lots — I love music. Supertramp's still the best, but I'm going to be honest. What's better than "Dancing Queen"?

#### Favourite COVID-safe activity

Dinner with Judi, my wife, at our little white table by the window.





## We're Here to Help

Book your personal, online appointment with one of our pension counsellors today.

Go to [ATRF.com](http://ATRF.com) and register for MyPension, or log in to your account, and select MyAppointment.

Appointments are available Monday to Friday between 8:30 and 4:30.



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



## Apply now

for an ATA Fellowship or Scholarship

*Applications are now being accepted for the following:*

**ATA Doctoral Fellowships in Education**

- Two awards of \$15,000
- For members entering or in first year of a doctoral program in education

**Nadene M Thomas Graduate Research Bursary**

- One award of \$5,000
- For a member enrolled in a graduate program in education
- A research focus on teacher health issues and/or teachers' working conditions

**John Mazurek Memorial—Morgex Insurance Scholarship**

- One award of \$2,500
- For members who pursue relevant professional development

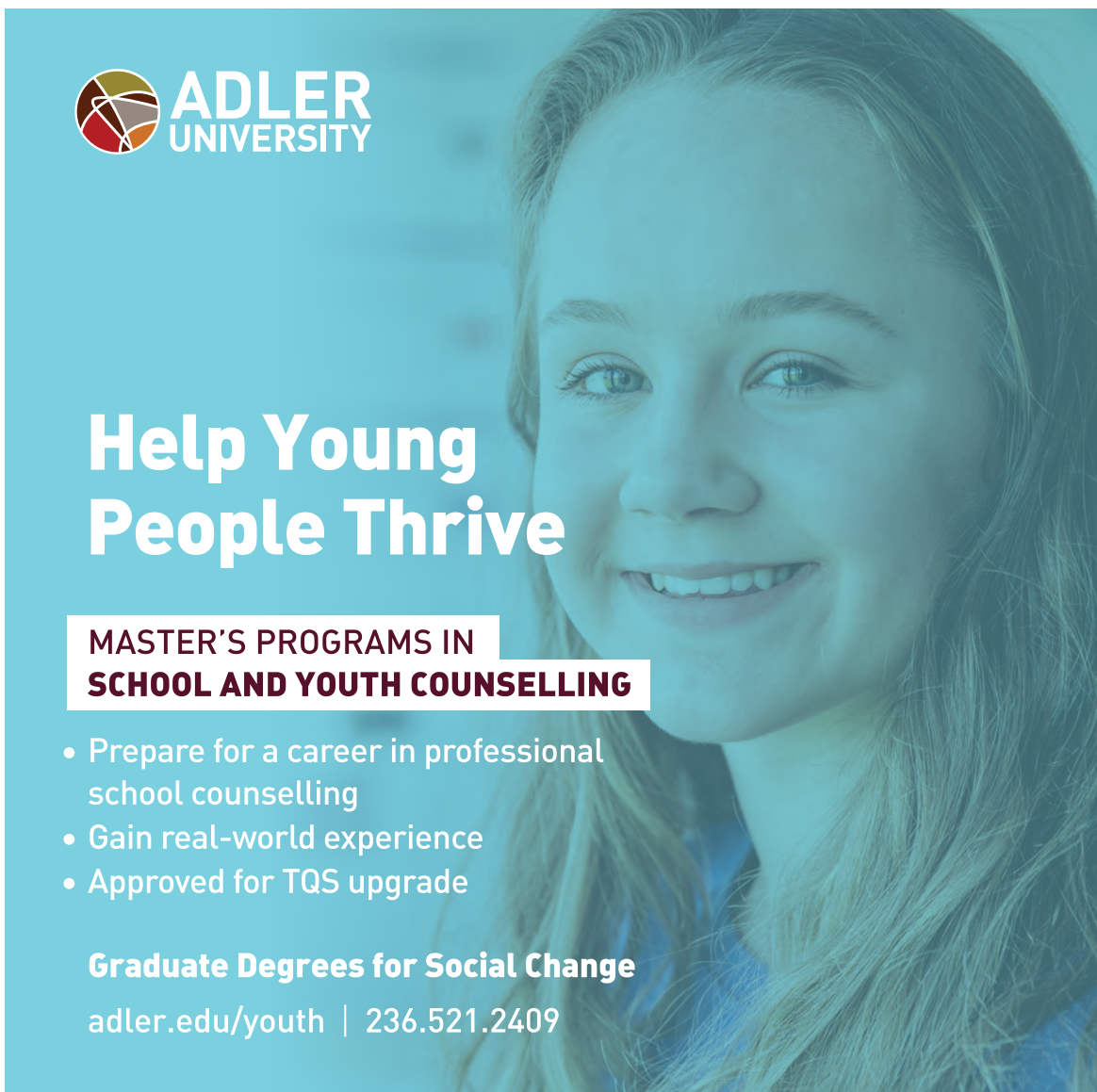

**For more information and to apply**

- 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



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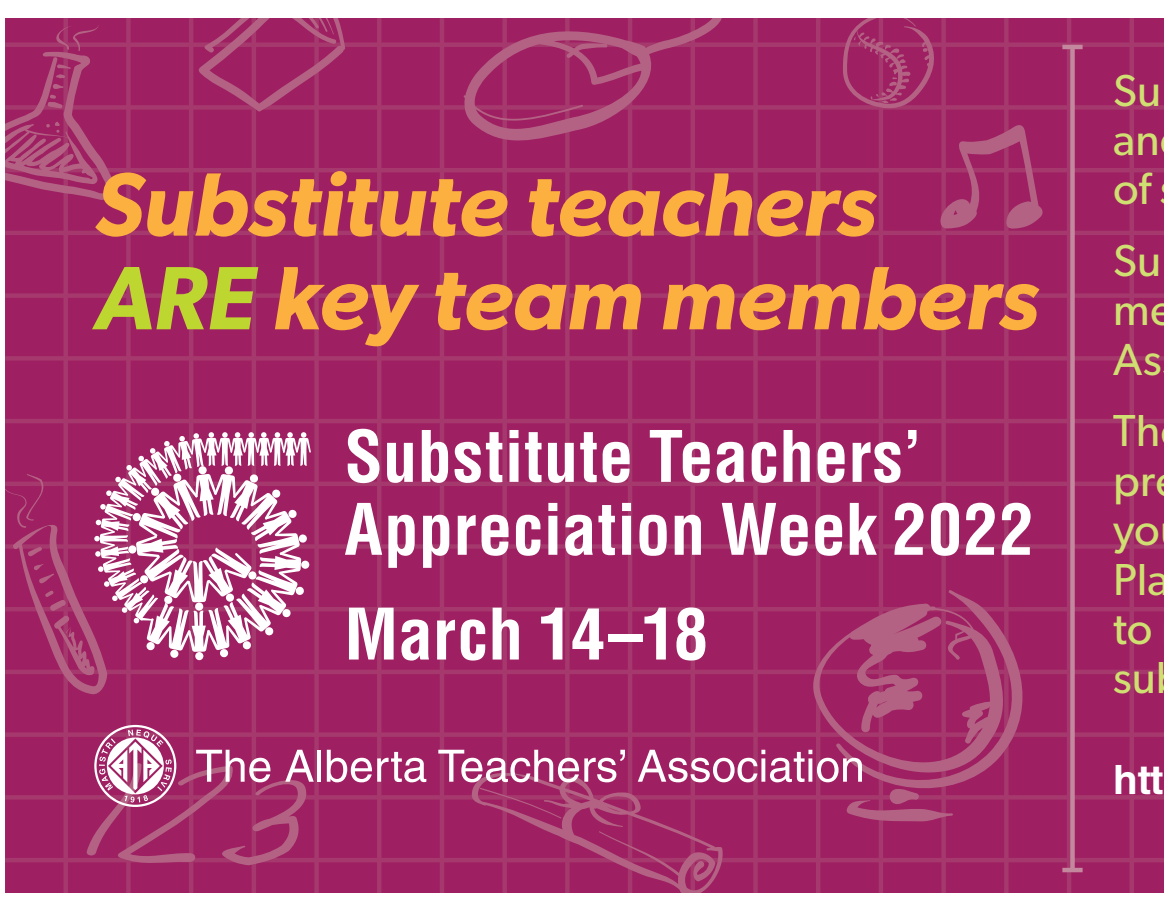


## DIGITAL NEWS

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


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

<http://bit.ly/ATAeNews>



## Substitute teachers ARE key team members

**Substitute Teachers' Appreciation Week 2022**  
**March 14–18**




The Alberta Teachers' Association

Substitute teachers are necessary and valuable and an important part of school staffs.

Substitute teachers are full and active members of the Alberta Teachers' Association.

The 2020 and 2021 school years have presented unique challenges for your substitute teaching colleagues. Plan now to organize safe ways to recognize the contributions of substitute teachers.

<https://bit.ly/3J4qmvJ>





# Criminal conviction equals unprofessional conduct



## PITFALLS & PRECAUTIONS

Dan Grassick  
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.*

**24-7-365.** At some point during their bachelor of education programs, I'm sure every Alberta teacher was told that certificated teachers are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner that is consistent with the Code of Professional Conduct and *Teaching Profession Act (TPA)* even after the dismissal bell has sounded at the end of the school day. That means teachers remain *professionally* accountable for their behaviour during their *personal* time – on evenings, weekends and vacations.

Every year, the Association is asked to investigate a few members for potentially unprofessional

after-hours conduct that is unrelated to their work as teachers or school leaders. Recently, the Professional Conduct Committee heard the case of a teacher whose volunteer activities resulted in both criminal and professional conduct charges and convictions.

The investigated member volunteered with a community not-for-profit organization and, eventually, was elected to serve as the organization's treasurer. In this role, over a two-year period, the member issued more than three dozen fraudulent payments to themselves from the organization's accounts. They made these payments through a combination of PayPal transfers and organization cheques (on which they forged the signature of another signing officer).

The member's illicit activities were uncovered during an audit of the organization's casino account conducted by the Alberta Gaming, Liquor and Cannabis Commission. This audit prompted a police investigation. Ultimately, the member was found to have defrauded the organization of more than \$75,000. They were convicted of an indictable offence, ordered to pay restitution payments and sentenced to six months in prison.

The member was investigated, charged and convicted *criminally* for their off-work activities, but they were still accountable *professionally* for their conduct.

Section 23(2) of the *TPA* explains that any member who is convicted of an indictable offence (a major crime including theft over \$5,000, assault, break and enter, and homicide) is *automatically guilty* of unprofessional conduct. When the hearing committee convened to hear the member's case, they imposed a penalty that included ineligibility in the Association for a period of two years, and a recommendation to the minister to suspend the member's teaching certificate for two years.

As many of you know, only once in the Association's history has a suspended membership been restored. In effect, members who are suspended from the Association never teach in Alberta again.

This member's case provides a cautionary tale for two groups of individuals:

1. All members need to be aware that they must conduct themselves professionally 24-7-365. The same conduct can lead to multiple investigations (and penalties) by employers, the profession and the justice system.

2. Any members who are signing officers in an ATA subgroup or a community organization must ensure that their treasurer is providing them with regular detailed financial reports about money collected and dispersed. If the treasurer's report is them saying, "Everything is fine!" this is a huge red flag. ■



The Alberta Teachers' Association

# One Profession United

**A united Association establishes  
a culture of professionalism and  
collegiality that focused on what's  
best for both students and teachers.**

Learn all about proposed teacher discipline changes at [www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca) > Newsroom > Issues > One Profession United: Proposed Teacher Discipline Process Changes

## Q&A: HERE'S THE TRUTH

continued from page 2

made for every teacher to voluntarily elect to pay the portion of their fee designated for this purpose and for school boards to adjust fee deductions on an individual basis depending on each teacher's choice.

Category two and three activities can be paid for by fees collected from members in the usual fashion.

While the Association budget for 2022/23 and the annual member fees will ultimately be determined by the Annual Representative Assembly (ARA) on the Victoria Day weekend, as things stand now, less than one per cent of the Association's budget would be directed toward category one activities.

As the Association is by policy non-partisan, no funds are directed to political parties or candidates. What would be affected are contributions to and support of charities and broader social issues. For example, funds we donated to the Canadian Teachers' Association Trust are currently being used to assist teachers in Haiti in the aftermath of a devastating hurricane and directed, through Education International, to help leaders of teachers' unions and women who were teaching girls in Afghanistan to escape the Taliban regime.

The small amount we provide to the Alberta School Councils' Association to assist with their continuing operating expenses after the minister of education cut funding to the organization for being uppity also would be subject to member election, as would funds provided by the Association to support groups that undertake research and advocacy to advance public education and other public services that benefit all Albertans.

After reviewing the situation and considering the small amount of money involved, Provincial Executive Council has decided, on a go-forward basis, to maintain support for these worthy causes and activities, but not to use member fees to do so. Instead, category one activities approved by ARA would be funded from non-fee revenue and legacy funds. As a result, opting into category one contributions will not be necessary in 2022/23.

For those who would want to defund category one activities and are disappointed that they do not have the option to exercise their personal prerogative, there is a democratic option open to them. Become involved in your Association, and run for office at the local or the provincial level. Either spend the May long weekend as an elected delegate to ARA or share your views with your ARA representative or district representative so that your perspective can be heard, debated and ultimately voted on. That is real democracy and it's how your Association works.

More information about Bill 32 and how it applies to the Association is posted on the Association website. ■

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).





The Alberta Teachers' Association



The **winter** **issue** of the *ATA Magazine* has landed!

## Feature

What does it look like when new curriculum is done well?

Winter issue of the *ATA Magazine* available in schools in early February.

Digital version at [www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca) > News and Info > ATA Magazine

### ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

#### Diversity

It's time to reframe cancel culture.

#### In Profile

Search for identity brings Indigenous teacher to position of influence.

#### Your Commute

Teachers' daily travels provide diverse, spectacular views.

#### Kid Lit

Teachers share their favourite Robert Munsch titles.

#### Research Insights

Hope is essential to education.

#### Unsung Hero

Mary Michailides: From teacher to visionary child advocate.

#### Looking Abroad

Neoliberalism sweeps through Nova Scotia.



# Council proposes budget with no fee change

## PEC POINTS

Audrey Dutka  
ATA News Staff

### Highlights of the Provincial Executive Council meeting held Jan. 20–21, 2022, via Zoom.

1. Approved the 2022/23 proposed budget for presentation to locals.
2. Approved, for presentation to the 2022 Annual Representative Assembly (ARA), a resolution maintaining the annual fee payable by a full-time, active member at \$1,347, effective Sept. 1, 2022.
3. Approved, for presentation to the 2022 ARA, a resolution maintaining the annual fee payable by an associate member at \$202.05, effective Sept. 1, 2022.
4. Authorized that, for the period of Aug. 1, 2022 to Aug. 31, 2023, the Association not use annual members' fees collected during that time period for the purpose of funding any activities that fall under section 5.1(2)(a) of the *Public Education Collective Bargaining Act*.
5. Authorized that, for the period of Aug. 1, 2022 to Aug. 31, 2023, any funding required for activities under section 5.1(2)(a) of the *Public Education Collective Bargaining Act* for the period from Aug. 1, 2022 to Aug. 31, 2023 shall be from either financial reserves of the Association that existed prior to Aug. 1, 2022 or Association revenue that is generated from sources other than annual members' fees collected from Aug. 1, 2022 to Aug. 31, 2023.
6. Authorized the transfer of \$4,289,000 from current cash holdings to the Special Emergency Fund.
7. Approved the names of two recipients for honorary membership in the Association, which is reserved for members and other persons who have given

meritorious service to the teaching profession, to the Association or to the advancement of education.

8. Approved the names of two recipients to receive the Public Education Award at the 2022 ARA.
9. Approved in principle and referred to the Resolutions Committee for processing seven resolutions put forward by the Indigenous Education Committee.
10. Approved in principle and referred to the Resolutions Committee for processing three resolutions put forward by the School Leaders Issues and Concerns Committee.
11. Selected Keith Hadden to fill the position of co-ordinator, Teacher Employment Services.
12. Authorized a financial contribution of \$2,500 to the Education International Afghanistan Solidarity Fund, through the Canadian Teachers' Federation, to support relocation efforts and ongoing assistance for refugee teacher unionists and their families, ongoing assistance to member organizations in Afghanistan, and the monitoring of the human, teacher and trade union rights situation.
13. Approved amendments to the initial proposal for the 2020 round of central table bargaining between the Association and the Teacher Employer Bargaining Association.
14. In accordance with section 31(2) of the *Teaching Profession Act*, extended the deadline for the commencement of two hearings of the Professional Conduct Committee.
15. Received the report of a hearing committee that found a teacher guilty of one charge of unprofessional conduct for sending inappropriate Instagram messages to a student. The hearing committee imposed a penalty of a letter of severe reprimand, a declaration that the teacher is ineligible for membership in the Alberta Teachers' Association for one year, and a recommendation to the minister of education that the teacher's teaching certificate be suspended for one year.

16. Received the report of a hearing committee that found a teacher guilty of three charges of unprofessional conduct for making a disparaging remark about a female student to a male student, for making multiple comments about female breasts and male genitalia, and for allowing students to display a school presentation to classmates that showed women in bikinis and expressed approval for the presentation through comments made afterward. The hearing committee ordered penalties of a fine of \$300 and a letter of reprimand for charge one, a fine of \$200 and a letter of reprimand for charge two, and a fine of \$200 and a letter of reprimand for charge three.

17. Received the report of a hearing committee that found a teacher guilty of five charges of unprofessional conduct for shouting at students to manage or respond to their behaviour; for not using nonviolent crisis intervention holds and carrying students, on several separate occasions, by their wrists; for engaging in physical contact with students when neither the child nor others were in immediate danger; and for engaging in actions toward colleagues in a manner that was not consistent with professional responsibilities toward colleagues.

The hearing committee imposed the following penalties: the teacher is prohibited from presenting at any future professional development event that is sanctioned, organized or sponsored by the Association; two letters of severe reprimand; three one-year suspensions of the teacher's membership in the Association to be served consecutively, for a total of three years; recommendations to the minister of education to suspend the teacher's teaching certificate for a combined period of three years; and fines totalling \$14,500 for all five charges.

18. Approved dates of key Association-sponsored meetings and Council meetings for the 2024/25 school year.

19. Appointed field members and a Council member to serve on the Political Engagement Committee and approved amendments to the Finance Committee and Table Officers Committee frames of reference. ■



## The ATA Educational Trust

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

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

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

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

AR-ETF 30a 2020-08

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



## ADVERTISING IN ATANews

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## TAKING A COMPLIMENT CAN BE TOUGH FOR TEACHERS

### MOOT POINTS

Dan Hoch  
Special to the *ATA News*

I had just finished taking notes on "Carrie," one of my very keen but anxious student teachers. She was the quintessential newbie, wanting to lead the class but worried she might lose them all with her next utterance. It reminded me of my own experiences as a practicum teacher, that blend of nervousness and excitement. This would be worth sharing in our debrief.

After I made some notes, I slipped over to talk to the partner teacher. "Nikki" had a good 10 years under her belt and her classroom ran like a Swiss watch; kids were focused and on task, with ample time to explore new ideas. As we chatted, I commented how Carrie had adopted many of the positive characteristics that Nikki herself had demonstrated: great lesson hook, use of attention-getting strategies, respect for all. At that point, Nikki paused, her cheeks reddened, then she muttered, "Well, I try."

In the six years I have been a practicum supervisor, that teacher response has been all too common. Without exception, it is not a hard look to find partner teachers' imprints on student teachers, whether it's the classroom entry chit-chat, the instructional methodologies, the way to cast "that look" to keep a student focused, or the 30,000-foot view of the planning for the year. The connections are obvious.

In seeing that, my natural desire is to compliment the partner teachers on the positive influence they are having. You would think it would be an easy conversation, but it often isn't. Maybe it's the Canadian way to defer compliments, but it clearly is often the teacher way to either dismiss them or blush.

After all, we are doing what we are paid to do, right? It's the teacher's job to teach and to share with an up-and-comer who plans to join the profession. We want them to learn all the tricks of the trade so they will be successful.

All of that is absolutely true. The trick is to both acknowledge that expertise, then provide that wee bit of encouragement to reinforce that the teachers are doing good work that is so appreciated.

During this winter session of 2022, I'll continue observing my students and will have the same follow-up conversations with their partner teachers. I will also invariably see the proteges replicating the great things the partner teachers do. Hopefully, those mentors will accept my compliments and feel good about their work, knowing that it is valued and worthy of duplication.

Whether or not they blush will be up to them. ■

*Dan Hoch is a practicum supervisor working in the Calgary area.*

*Moot Points is your chance to write about a funny incident, a lesson learned or a poignant experience related to teaching. Please email articles to managing editor Cory Hare: [cory.hare@ata.ab.ca](mailto:cory.hare@ata.ab.ca).*

#### INFO ONLINE

The ATA has a field experience website dedicated to providing information for student teachers, co-operating teachers, faculty advisors and school leaders.

<https://fieldexperience.teachers.ab.ca>