



# The Alberta Teachers' Association

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2025 06 19

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Honourable Demetrios Nicolaidis  
Minister of Education and Childcare  
228 Legislature Building  
10800 97 Avenue  
Edmonton AB T5K 2B6

Honourable Adriana LaGrange  
Minister of Primary and  
Preventative Health Services  
224 Legislature Building  
10800 97 Avenue  
Edmonton AB T5K 2B6

Dear Ministers

I am writing on behalf of Alberta's teachers to express deep concern over the recent decision of the government to make most Albertans pay out of pocket for COVID-19 vaccines starting this fall.

Working in our public schools means that teachers are in close proximity to students, colleagues and families on a daily basis. Classrooms are inherently crowded, high-contact environments, and we have witnessed first-hand how rapidly COVID-19 can spread in such settings. During the height of the pandemic, Alberta schools were closed for more than 110 days. These closures, initiated before the general availability of effective vaccines, were a direct response to the challenges of containing transmission in educational settings and, by extension, in the larger community. The resulting disruptions to learning, student well-being and staff safety were profound. Moreover, the long-term academic and psychological impacts of these closures are still being felt today.

Recently, the government passed Bill 27, which amended the *Education Act* to make school closures, due to an emergency, significantly more difficult. If it is the expectation of the government to have schools always remain open, then it is even more imperative that those working in and attending schools be encouraged to take preventative health measures and, to this end, have access to free vaccines.

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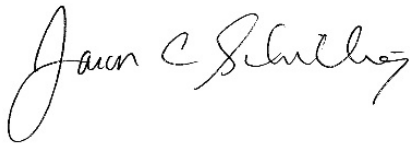
The Alberta Medical Association (AMA), United Nurses of Alberta and several health-care unions have already voiced their opposition to this policy, citing its failure to account for high-risk populations and its contradiction of national immunization guidelines.

Dr Shelley Duggan, president of the AMA, emphasized that “being unclear about policy and creating barriers to vaccination for the most high-need groups are counterproductive measures.” We echo this concern, particularly as it relates to teachers and school staff, who play a critical role in maintaining the stability and safety of our communities.

The Alberta Teachers’ Association urges the Government of Alberta to reconsider this decision and to ensure that COVID-19 vaccinations remain publicly funded and easily accessible to all Albertans, especially those in high-contact professions such as education. Doing so is a matter not only of public health but of educational continuity and equity.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. We remain committed to working collaboratively to safeguard the health and well-being of Alberta’s students, teachers and families.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jason C Schilling". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jason" being the most prominent part.

Jason C Schilling  
President

JCS/mm

cc Provincial Executive Council  
Executive Staff