



The Alberta Teachers' Association

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Thank you for your letter of October 16, 2025, offering “enhanced mediation” to end the current strike action. The letter was considered by the Provincial Executive Council of the Alberta Teachers’ Association at an emergent meeting yesterday evening.

The most recent proposal formally tabled on October 14, 2025 was the Association’s direct response to the challenge posed by Premier and the Ministers of Finance and Education and Childcare to state clearly what teachers want. It reflects the legitimate aspirations and priorities of our members, which are shared and supported by many Albertans. We acknowledge that the parties remain at considerable distance from each other and regret the Teachers Employers Bargaining Association (TEBA)’s decision not to provide a counter proposal in an attempt to close that distance. Instead of continuing to bargain toward settlement, we have received a proposal for “enhanced mediation.”

This process being suggested would severely restrict the scope of the solutions that the mediator could even consider. It would require the Association to abandon the only approach that teachers have confidence would address in concrete and accountable ways serious issues of class size and complexity. In particular, the explicit stipulation imposed by government that “...the mediator’s recommendations cannot provide for hard caps on classroom sizes or student-teacher ratios” is engineered to produce a biased and predetermined outcome that entirely favours government’s objectives.

For this reason, the proposal for enhanced mediation is bound to fail and is entirely unacceptable to teachers.

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Teachers, who are bearing the financial cost of this strike/lockout most directly and who are fully conscious of the regrettable harm this action is imposing upon the students, very much wish to return to our classrooms. However, they cannot do so without securing some reasonable grounds for believing that their classroom conditions will be materially improved and that their extraordinary efforts will be justly compensated.

We need only point to the Talis Survey, published on October 7, 2025, which documented the reality that Alberta teachers experience the highest levels of occupational stress and the longest workweeks compared to other participating countries. The survey, funded in part by the Government of Alberta, found that forty-two percent of Alberta teachers reported high stress, more than double the global average of 19%, and they work an average of 47 hours per week. The findings also highlight the increased challenges teachers are facing, including classroom behavioral issues, complexity and lack of adequate supports.

Teachers are also aware of the power of and potential for government to pass back-to-work legislation, potentially impose the terms of a settlement, and even impose punitive measures on our Association, but as strong and free Albertans, we cannot let this crude threat drive us to step back from our principles.

We trust this response provides clarity and although we will not be suspending or terminating the strike, remain available to resume negotiations at the earliest opportunity.

Sincerely,



Dennis Theobald
Executive Secretary and Chief Executive Officer
The Alberta Teachers' Association

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