



The Alberta
Teachers' Association

Association Guidelines for Organizing Local Induction Ceremonies

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Introduction

Alberta Teachers' Association policy 21.3.4.1 states,

Locals are urged to conduct orientation and induction programs to give teachers practising for the first time in Alberta an understanding of the Association, professionalism, professional ethics and related matters.

Association Guidelines for Organizing Local Induction Ceremonies is designed to help Association locals plan induction ceremonies for new members, including both new teachers and teachers who have taught elsewhere but are new to teaching in Alberta. It outlines the steps for planning a local induction ceremony and includes a sample induction ceremony program and a sample letter of invitation.

Steps for Planning a Local Induction Ceremony

1. Organize a Local Induction Committee

Locals are encouraged to form induction committees of four or five members each spring.

The chair of the local professional development committee and at least one other member of the local executive should sit on the committee to ensure that the induction program connects to the local's ongoing professional development and member engagement activities.

2. Finalize the Budget, Date and Venue

The induction committee should develop a budget for the induction ceremony and present it to the local executive for inclusion in the local's annual budget. The budget should include realistic projections for venue rental, audiovisual services, catering, decor and flowers, printing, and inductee gifts.

The date and time of the induction ceremony should be determined early, and the venue should be booked a year in advance (if possible). This will allow the local to include the date of the next induction ceremony in its annual event calendar.

3. Plan the Induction Ceremony Program

Appendix A contains a sample program for a comprehensive induction ceremony.

All new members of the Association should receive a memorable introduction to the profession, but local induction committees should adjust the program's length and level of formality to reflect their local culture and traditions.

What Makes a Program More Formal?

Through tone and content, a formal program reinforces the gravitas and importance of being inducted into the profession.

Therefore, a more formal program includes more speeches and presentations. Inductees are often introduced by a sponsor from their school, are asked to stand to accept or repeat the Association's professional pledge, and are called to the front of the room to receive their induction kits.

The most formal programs include a pinning ritual, in which a senior member of the profession presents each inductee with an Association pin. Formal programs also end with an invocation (such as an inspirational prayer or a call to a higher power for guidance and inspiration).

What Makes a Program Less Formal?

Through tone and content, an informal program focuses on the joy and celebration of welcoming new teachers into the profession.

Therefore, a less formal program includes fewer speeches and presentations. Inductees are less likely to be introduced individually. Instead, their names, pictures and profiles are printed in a program booklet or shared in a looping slideshow or video that plays throughout the event. Inductees are not asked to rise or respond when charged to accept the professional pledge, and they are not called up

to the front of the room to receive their induction kits. Informal programs typically do not include an invocation, unless the local serves a faith-based community.

4. Invite Inductees and Sponsors

Inductees (including both new teachers and teachers new to Alberta) should receive a formal written invitation to the induction ceremony. A sample invitation is included in Appendix B.

Each school should select a current Association member to host its inductees. If a local has a mentorship program, each mentor should serve as the sponsor for their protégé. Sponsors are often given the chance to introduce their inductees during the ceremony.

5. Order Induction Kits

The presentation of induction kits is part of every induction ceremony.

Induction kits are provided to locals at no cost and include the following:

- Lapel pins bearing the Association logo and motto
- Induction certificates (in English or French) and certificate holders embossed with the Association logo
- Induction cards including the professional pledge (in English or French)
- Copies of *Membership Matters*
- Other Association publications and materials (as may be relevant or topical)

To order induction kits, contact the Association's Professional Development program area at pd@ata.ab.ca or 1-800-232-7208 (toll free in Alberta). Order a minimum of three weeks before the delivery deadline.

Appendix C contains the induction kit order form.

6. Order Gifts

Many locals purchase Association-branded gifts for their inductees from the Association store (<https://teachers.ab.ca/about/ata-store>).

Locals can also provide their inductees with flowers or gifts from local businesses or artists.

7. Have Sponsors Prepare Inductee Profiles and Introductions

Induction ceremonies often include short speeches, presentations, videos or printed programs that highlight information about each inductee. This could include their life experiences, postsecondary education, teaching assignments, and quotations or anecdotes from their students and colleagues.

To ensure that every inductee is honoured in the same way, the induction committee should clearly communicate to sponsors the specific content required and the submission deadlines. Sponsors should also be told whether they will be introducing their inductees during the ceremony and how formal the program will be so that they can prepare their remarks accordingly.

8. Book an Association Table Officer

Inspirational speeches by senior leaders in the profession are an essential part of every induction ceremony.

The local should invite an Association table officer (such as the president, the past president or a vice-president) to bring greetings to the new inductees and to participate in the induction ceremony (such as by leading the pledge or charge or by presenting the pins).

To request a table officer for your local event, e-mail Audrey Dutka at Audrey.Dutka@ata.ab.ca.

9. Book Guest Speakers or Entertainment

Many induction ceremony programs include guest speakers, such as division superintendents and trustees. Their presentations should be kept relatively brief. Locals should ensure that the ceremony is clearly about the teaching profession, not the school division.

Some locals include live music and performances (often by students) in their induction ceremonies. The induction committee should carefully screen potential performance groups before booking them.

10. Seek Association Support

For assistance with planning your local induction ceremony, contact the Association's Professional Development program area at pd@ata.ab.ca or 1-800-232-7208 (toll free in Alberta).

Appendix A

Sample Induction Ceremony Program

The following sample induction ceremony program is comprehensive and quite formal. For a less formal event, reduce the length or number of speeches and presentations, charge inductees instead of having them verbally respond to the professional pledge, and do not ask inductees to come to the front of the room to collect their induction kits.

Land Acknowledgement

The chair rises, welcomes all guests and shares the appropriate territorial land acknowledgement, based on the location of the induction ceremony.

Up-to-date land acknowledgements can be found on the Association website at www.teachers.ab.ca/professional-development/indigenous-education-and-walking-together.

Opening Statement

The chair reads the following:

The Alberta Teachers' Association deems it advisable and desirable that all persons entering the teaching profession for the first time in the province of Alberta shall be called upon to participate in a ceremony to recognize and acknowledge their professional responsibilities to students, parents, colleagues and the profession. This ceremony has two purposes:

- First, to present an opportunity for new teachers to pledge their commitment to the teaching profession and their professional association.
- Second, to give members of the Association an opportunity to welcome teachers new to the profession and new to teaching in Alberta.

Welcome to Inductees Who Are New Teachers

The chair reads the following:

Inductees who are new teachers, we welcome you into a profession that is both honourable and worthy of your respect in its traditions and ideals. Although the rewards of teaching will often be intangible, they are indeed significant.

They include the lifelong impact you will have on your students because you enlightened, inspired and shaped them into future leaders. They include the strong bonds and lasting friendships you will forge with your colleagues as you work together to create safe learning environments where your students can learn, grow and thrive. And they include the position of respect and trust you will establish in your classrooms, schools and communities.

Today/tonight marks an important event. Although it is a celebration and welcome, it is also a solemn occasion, one which underscores the responsibilities you are undertaking as you accept membership within the profession.

Introduction of Inductees Who Are New Teachers (Optional)

The chair invites sponsors to introduce inductees who are new teachers.

Welcome to Inductees Who Are Teachers New to Alberta

The chair reads the following:

Inductees who are experienced teachers new to Alberta, we also welcome you today/tonight. This is an important event for you, as well. It is a time to renew your professional commitment to the teaching profession and to acknowledge formal acceptance of your membership in the Alberta Teachers' Association.

Introduction of Inductees Who Are Teachers New to Alberta (Optional)

The chair invites sponsors to introduce inductees who are teachers new to Alberta.

Address from an Association Table Officer

The chair calls upon an Association table officer to address the inductees.

Pledge or Charge

Note: Choose either to pledge or to charge. Do not do both.

What's the Difference Between Pledging and Charging?

Pledging is centred on the inductees.

The chair delivers a number of statements, after which inductees affirm, "I will." (For example, the chair asks, "Will you strive to achieve and maintain the highest degree of professional competence?" and the inductees respond, "I will.")

Alternatively, the chair asks inductees to repeat each line of the pledge. (For example, the chair says, "I will strive to achieve and maintain the highest degree of professional competence," and the inductees repeat that line.)

Charging is centred on the chair.

Instead of asking inductees to respond verbally, the chair reads the same list of commitments listed in the pledge, but the chair simply charges (that is, calls upon) the inductees to meet those expectations.

Pledge

The chair rises and reads the following:

All inductees, please rise and remain standing. (*Allow time for the inductees to rise.*)

You will now be asked to pledge acceptance of membership in the Alberta Teachers' Association. This pledge recognizes the honour, dignity and ethical standards of the teaching profession of Alberta and your responsibility toward participation in its government.

Option 1

The chair reads the following pledge, and the inductees respond to each question with “I will”:

If you accept this pledge, at the appropriate points, please respond with “I will.” (*Pause to allow the inductees to prepare.*)

As a member of the Alberta Teachers’ Association, will you strive to achieve and maintain the highest degree of professional competence? (*Inductees respond, “I will.”*)

Will you always uphold the honour, dignity and ethical standards of your professional organization in order to further the welfare of the students entrusted to your care? (*Inductees respond, “I will.”*)

Will you make this commitment in the knowledge that the professional organization which you are now joining can achieve its objectives only to the extent that you participate in its affairs and government through the democratic processes open to you as an active member? (*Inductees respond, “I will.”*)

On behalf of Alberta teachers, it is indeed a pleasure for the teachers of this local to be able to welcome you to membership in our teaching profession.

Option 2

The chair reads the following pledge, and the inductees repeat it. Display the text of the full pledge for inductees to read from where they are standing.

If you accept this pledge, please repeat after me. (*Pause to allow the inductees to prepare.*)

As a member of the Alberta Teachers’ Association, . . . (*Inductees repeat the line.*)

I will strive to achieve and maintain the highest degree of professional competence, . . . (*Inductees repeat the line.*)

and I will always uphold the honour, dignity and ethical standards of my professional organization . . . (*Inductees repeat the line.*)

in order to further the welfare of the students entrusted to my care. (*Inductees repeat the line.*)

I make this commitment in the knowledge that the professional organization which I am now joining . . . (*Inductees repeat the line.*)

can achieve its objectives only to the extent that I participate in its affairs and government . . . (*Inductees repeat the line.*)

through the democratic processes open to me as an active member. (*Inductees repeat the line.*)

On behalf of Alberta teachers, it is indeed a pleasure for the teachers of this local to be able to welcome you to membership in our teaching profession.

Charge

The chair rises and reads the following:

All inductees, please rise and remain standing. (*Allow time for the inductees to rise.*)

You will now be charged with accepting the responsibilities of membership in the Alberta Teachers’ Association. This charge recognizes the honour, dignity and ethical standards of the teaching profession in Alberta and your responsibility toward participation in its government.

As a member of the Alberta Teachers' Association, you are charged with the following responsibilities:

- to strive to achieve and maintain the highest degree of professional competence;
- to always uphold the honour, dignity and ethical standards of your professional organization in order to further the welfare of the students entrusted to your care; and
- to participate in the affairs and government of your professional organization through the democratic processes open to you as an active member.

On behalf of Alberta teachers, it is indeed a pleasure for the teachers of this local to be able to welcome you to membership in our teaching profession.

Presentation of Induction Kits

The chair asks the inductees to resume their seats or to assemble, as required.

The chair then states the following:

As your name is called out, please come forward to be welcomed by the president of your local association.

The chair then reads out the names of the inductees.

The local president, possibly with the assistance of an Association table officer or district representative, welcomes each inductee with a handshake and presents them with their induction kit and any gifts.

Pin Presentation (Optional)

What Is Pinning?

In some professions, new members are officially inducted through a pinning ceremony, in which a senior member of the profession, a mentor or a family member attaches or presents a pin to each inductee.

When pinning presentations become part of an organization's annual induction ceremonies, the ritual and the pins themselves become incredibly meaningful.

To Pin or Not to Pin?

Whether the presenter takes the time to attach the pin to each inductee or simply presents the pin to the inductee depends on the number of new members being inducted and the length of the ceremony.

Either approach can be impactful, as long as the pins are presented in an intentional manner (as opposed to providing a basket of pins and telling the inductees to help themselves).

How to Conduct a Pin Presentation

To include a pin presentation in the induction ceremony, follow the process and script for presenting induction kits. Have the local president work with other Association leaders (such as an Association table officer, a district representative or a member of the local executive) to present each inductee with their kit and pin. This can be done in a number of ways, but it works best to have the president shake each inductee's hand and present them with their induction kit and then to have one or two Association leaders present or attach the pin to the inductee.

To reinforce the importance of the pin as a symbol of membership in the profession, the chair should state the following before the inductees are called up:

When you join us at the front of the room, you will also be presented with a pin that bears the Association's logo and motto *Magistri Neque Servi* (mah-GISS-tree NECK-way SER-wee), which means "masters, not servants."

Both the motto and the pin affirm your expertise and professional standing. Wearing this pin signifies the trust that society places in you as a master of your craft. It also serves as a reminder that, as a teacher, you are called upon to nurture the growth of every student and contribute to the well-being of the communities you serve and are prepared to stand resolute when public education must be protected.

Guest Speaker Presentations and Entertainment

The chair calls upon any guest speakers (such as the division superintendent) or entertainers to share their presentations.

Invocation (Optional)

The chair, or someone specifically invited for the purpose, asks the audience to rise (if they are able to do so) or bow their heads while the following invocation (or a similar message) is read:

[Optional] God/Divine Creator, by whatever name we call you,

We come together today/tonight to welcome new colleagues and to celebrate the important work that is our shared calling. As teachers, we make valuable contributions to the lives of our students, fostering for them experiences and environments that promote growth, understanding and generosity.

We must remain wisely aware of the great impact we can have on our students as we accompany them on their academic and personal journeys. May we be ever respectful of their experiences, stories and dreams as we guide them toward greater challenges and successes.

Despite the distractions of a sometimes turbulent world and the many demands on our time and attention, may we never forget that within each student is untapped potential, and let us be perceptive and diligent enough to discover their gifts and help them learn how to use these for the betterment of others.

[Optional] May your light guide us as we endeavour to use our own gifts to make our classrooms, schools and communities places of compassion, wisdom and hope.

Closing Remarks

The chair rises and expresses thanks and appreciation to all participants for their contributions to and presence at the induction ceremony.

Appendix B

Sample Letter of Invitation

The following letter of invitation includes details about the pledge or charge portion of the induction ceremony. This will prevent misunderstandings or misgivings that inductees might experience if they were not expecting to be called upon to make a public affirmation of their professional responsibilities.

Dear Colleague

You are cordially invited to an induction ceremony to be held in your honour by the Alberta Teachers' Association Local No ____ at _____ on _____, 20____, from _____ to _____.

To facilitate the planning of this special occasion, kindly confirm your attendance with me by _____ and provide me with the name(s) of one/two guest(s) you would like to accompany you, along with any allergies or dietary restrictions.

The purpose of this ceremony is twofold. First, it provides your colleagues with an opportunity to welcome teachers new to the profession and new to teaching in Alberta into the Alberta Teachers' Association. Second, it provides an opportunity for inductees to publicly affirm that they are committed to maintaining the high standard of professionalism expected of all members of the teaching profession.

During the ceremony, the chair will either charge you with meeting the following requirements or will ask you to publicly pledge that you will

- strive to achieve and maintain the highest degree of professional competence;
- always uphold the honour, dignity and ethical standards of your professional organization in order to further the welfare of the students entrusted to your care; and
- participate in the affairs and government of your professional organization through the democratic processes open to you as an active member.

Near the conclusion of the ceremony, you will be presented with an induction kit that contains a certificate and card to commemorate your induction into the profession, as well as a number of important documents to ensure a long and successful teaching career.

Sincerely

[Name]

President

ATA Local No ____

[E-mail address]

[Phone number]

Appendix C

Induction Kit Order Form



The Alberta Teachers' Association

REQUEST FOR INDUCTION MATERIALS

Local _____

Date of induction ceremony _____ Deadline for delivery of materials _____

***Must be submitted at least three weeks prior to the deadline delivery.**

INDUCTION KITS include the following:

- Guidelines for Organizing a Professional Induction Ceremony
- Induction card (pledge printed on reverse)
- Induction certificate
- Other Association publications and materials (as may be relevant or topical)
- ATA induction certificate holder
- ATA lapel pin

Please indicate the number of sets of materials required in each language. All items are available in both French and English.

TOTAL NUMBER OF KITS REQUIRED: English _____ French _____

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

The following items may also be ordered with induction kits.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Number Required</i>
ATA retirement certificate(s) available upon request	

MAIL/COURIER INSTRUCTIONS

Name _____ Local position _____

Mailing address _____

Postal code _____

Phone (school) _____

E-mail _____

Hold for pickup at Barnett House ☐

Other instructions _____

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date request received _____ Date materials sent _____

Please e-mail this completed form to pd@ata.ab.ca at least three weeks prior to the deadline for delivery of materials. If you have any questions or require further information, please contact the Professional Development Program Area at 1-800-232-7208 or 780-447-9400.



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