*Apply for your Community Relations Grant today!*

# Community Relations Grants

Alberta's teachers are exploring new and innovative ways to profile public education and to show teachers as active and concerned members of their communities.



The Alberta Teachers' Association

# Teachers triumphant in community engagement

## ATA grant promotes relationships between schools and communities

Local Community Relations Grants (CRGs) play a key role in profiling the Alberta Teachers' Association's support for public education in Alberta and in illustrating how teachers are actively engaged in their communities.

As education systems worldwide undergo radical transformation, support for public education is more important today than ever before. Some transformations are positive and based on research; others are ill-informed and lead to dismantling the public education system. In the United States, for example, public education is under siege as the charter and private school movements position themselves as preferable alternatives to the public education system.

Promoting the benefits of public education to the community is an important initiative among Alberta's teachers.

The projects highlighted here provide insight into the variety of ways Alberta teachers have supported public education and the teaching profession through their active and engaged citizenship.




## Extra Credit: Stories Worth Sharing

Extra Credit: Stories Worth Sharing (#ExCred2017), held on May 3, 2017, was an opportunity for teachers, students, parents and community members to gather and share their personal stories of the value of human connection in education. The goals of the event were to inspire teachers, assure parents that their children are loved and cared for by their teachers, highlight the importance positive relationships have on mental health, and demonstrate to the public that public education is a worthwhile investment.

# Grande Prairie Festival of Trees

Every year Northern Spirit ATA Local 6 decorates a tree for the Grande Prairie Festival of Trees. The local purchased a Christmas tree for $900 from the Queen Elizabeth II Hospital Foundation, which was decorated (with a budget of $1100) and donated to the Grande Prairie Festival of Trees, where it was auctioned off. The Festival of Trees is a major event in Grande Prairie. Thousands of people attend the festival, viewing the trees and other Christmas decorations and raising over $300,000 for the hospital. This year teachers from Bezanson School decorated their tree with the theme of "A Musical Christmas."




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# Drayton Valley Triathlon and Kids of Steel Triathlon

Timberline Local 9 encouraged their teachers to register or volunteer for the Drayton Valley Triathlon and Kids of Steel Triathlon. Special swim caps for teacher participants featured both the ATA logo and Timberline logo. The local also made a donation to the triathlon and hung poolside Timberline banners.




# Teachers triumphant in triathlon

*Diane Lynch, Timberline Local No 9*

Thanks to a grant from the ATA, Timberline Local No 9 recruited teacher volunteers for the Drayton Valley Triathlon. Adult swimmers were given colourful swim caps featuring the Timberline and ATA logos, and the pool area was decorated with matching banners. Several Drayton Valley teachers organized school teams or individual students to participate in the Kids of Steel triathlon. The school division as a whole had many participants, including teachers, teaching assistants, maintenance staff and a superintendent. One high school teacher placed second in the women's individual category.

# Lucky 13 and the tournament of words

*Lisa Cummings, Battle River Local No 32*

In July, Battle River teachers received a grant to participate in the Canadian Mental Health Association's (CMHA) 13th annual Camrose golf tournament to raise money for mental health awareness. The tournament, one of the biggest in the region, typically raises more than $10,000 for CMHA. This community event promotes teachers as actively concerned about the mental health of children and youth.

Battle River Local also used its grant to sponsor a "Letters for Literacy" Scrabble tournament at the Camrose Mall during the Farmer's Market. Teachers from across the division provided Scrabble boards, and the local sponsored ads in area newspapers. One participant was especially passionate about literacy. This man, originally from the Northwest Territories, had been adopted by a local family who taught him to read and write. As a result, he is committed to literacy and was happy to see local teachers engaged in an initiative designed to promote literacy. Some of the funds raised during the tournament were donated to the Camrose Reading University, a literacy program for Camrose children held during the summer, and some to ABC Life Literacy.





# Mullets and Music

On March 16, 2017, members of Fort McMurray Local No 48 hosted their third annual McMurray Teachers for Mental Health event. This year's theme was Mullets and Music with Dan Tulk. The event was originally supposed to take place on 2016 05 05, however, due to the fires, had to be cancelled and later rescheduled. Dan Tulk, a popular local artist and principal within the local, played some awesome hits and kept everyone "mulling" it over all night. The mullets theme was in collaboration with Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) Wood Buffalo's March Mullet campaign to help start the conversation about mental health and end the stigma. Mullets and Music raised $1,342 for CMHA Wood Buffalo.






# Teachers show what they're made of

## Calgary Public local fights for good causes

Calgary Public Teachers Local No 38 embraced the statement from its *Preferred Futures* document that says that "Calgary Public teachers are recognized as being actively engaged in the community," as teachers took off running, walking and conquering.



Teachers sport Calgary Public local tattoos at community events.

The local offered to pay teachers' registration fees (to a maximum of $100 per year) for charitable athletic events in Alberta, including the Sport Chek Mother's Day Run and Walk, Betty's Run for ALS (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis) and the Ride to Conquer Cancer. The only stipulation was that teachers had to wear a tattoo of the local's logo in a visible location and submit a photo of the tattoo taken at the event.

"We received many fun photos," said Jenny Regal, president of Calgary Public Teachers. "So far, we've had 97 applicants participate in 13 different events and have committed over $4,600. Our teachers have really taken to this idea and they're running with it! We may have to apply again next year."

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# Taking time for tea

*Michael Saad, Palliser Local No 19*

Teachers in Palliser used their grant to launch their first mental health awareness poster contest, in partnership with the Lethbridge branch of CMHA. Twenty-six entries were received and the winning artwork was displayed in schools. The local also used its grant to sponsor a Take Time for Tea basket for each of the 27 schools in its district and purchase advertisements for mental health awareness in local movie theatres.

# Caring for their community

## Elk Island Catholic teachers take action

With the help of a CRG, teachers from Elk Island Catholic Teachers Local No 21 participated in the Community Action Dash 5K walk sponsored by Action for Healthy Communities.

"Receiving the Community Relations Grant and participating in the Community Action Dash was a great opportunity to build community among our local ATA members, as well as providing us with the chance to support an organization that benefits many individuals," commented organizer Kristine Willis Dengler. "Everyone who came out Sunday morning loved the event and can't wait to do it again next year!"

Proceeds from the walk will support programs in the community, such as learning groups for seniors, self-help groups for single mothers, collective kitchens for the homeless, training workshops for the unemployed and underemployed, and cultural and recreational activities for low-income families.




Elk Island Catholic teachers at the Community Action Dash in May.

# Reading ready

## Greater Black Gold local promotes early literacy

For the past two years, Greater Black Gold Teachers' Local No 8 participated in a program to support family literacy in playschools and preschools. One part of the program featured books that were identified as being donated by the local. The other part encouraged children to create their own stories.

Lucy Nay, a preschool instructor at Notre Dame School, in Leduc, said that this year's program, which featured Curious George, was effective. "The children in my preschool classes revelled in the adventures of Curious George as he travelled from family to family," she said. "They eagerly awaited the stories of their classmates that were scribed by their parents."

Nay said the program was a fun and rewarding way for children to learn. "There were smiles and laughter with the learning," she added. "Thank you to the Alberta Teachers' Association for this special funding."



**Curious George comes home**

Zoe and Olivia Coburn enjoy the literacy program supported by Greater Black Gold. Kathy Coburn, the girls' mother, said her daughters were excited when it was their turn to bring Curious George home. "And they really enjoyed reading the stories their classmates wrote," Coburn added. "Their favourite part was illustrating a picture to go along with their very own story. What a rewarding opportunity for them to see their story and picture in a real book that was shared with the whole class."


















# Grow Calgary

Starting in May 2017, Calgary Public Teachers Local No 38 teachers were invited to take their classes to Grow Calgary, a large community urban farm that is 100 per cent volunteer run. Calgary teachers went ahead of time to volunteer their own time to help move this project forward. We were successful in transporting 5,000 students in 50 days with more than 75 busses to Grow Calgary. Calgary Metro News found out about our project, and on June 23, 2017, an article titled “Calgary Students Learn how to Farm” appeared in the paper. It was through this grant that we were able to practise, demonstrate and teach about citizenship, volunteerism and giving back to the community. Local No 38 teachers were back out in the fall to help harvest all that was planted in the spring. Harvested food was donated to various social programs around the city including Calgary Women’s Emergency Shelter, Boys and Girls Clubs of Calgary, Inn from the Cold, Calgary Drop-In Centre, Calgary Alpha House Society, and Children’s Cottage Society, just to name a few.



Teachers really showed that they are concerned about poverty in the city. They were more than willing to help plant, water and grow food for our most vulnerable citizens. Field trips were planned and 5,000 students attended Grow Calgary to show their support.





Teachers and students help plant and grow food at Grow Calgary, a community garden benefitting social programs in Calgary.



# Hair to Spare

Prairieland Local No 36
May 18, 2018

The Hair to Spare? Show You Care event put on by Prairieland Local No 36 teachers raised over $900 for the Alberta Cancer Foundation.



# Spin-A-Thon

Chinook's Edge Local No 17
February 28, 2019

Teachers and students actively participated in a spin-a-thon. Teachers participated as well as led and taught the spin classes. Teachers at the school guided community members to the event in the school. We accomplished our goal of raising awareness and promoting resiliency skills in our youth.








# Movin' for Mental Health




Teachers organized a fun run/walk that had participants "movin' for mental health."

Greater Peace Local No 13
May 9, 2019

In conjunction with Mental Health Awareness Week (May 6–12, 2019), the community of Manning hosted "Movin' for Mental Health on May 9 on behalf of Greater Peace Local No 13. A fun run/walk was organized after school starting with laps around the walking trail at Rosary School, which led down a connecting path to a refreshment station at Manning Elementary School. From there, participants took a route through town that went across the river to Paul Rowe High School on the other side. The staff of Paul Rowe hosted a BBQ with hot dogs, oranges and watermelon. Draws for door prizes were made at the end. At 6:30 PM, as part of this event, the Aurora Theatre hosted a free movie called *Eddie the Eagle*. Donations were accepted for the Canadian Mental Health Associaton.

Other community partners included Alberta Health Services, who printed the posters and helped with promotions, and Family and Community Support Services, who sponsored door prizes and helped promote the event through its channels.

# Wolf Creek Teachers Support Everyone

Wolf Creek Local No 3
May 29, 2019



Wolf Creek Local No 3 received a Community Relations Grant to show students we support them.

On May 29, 200 teachers wore their Wolf Creek Teachers Support Everyone T-shirts at Wolf Creek Diversity Day.

We received a positive response from the community with our initiative. Many students commented on how much they liked the message as it was inclusive of all diversity, not just a specific group.

We plan on continuing this next year and purchasing more shirts for all teachers (and hopefully support staff) to wear as a group for a day in each semester.

# Going Batty for Mental Health

Edmonton Catholic Teachers Local No 54

May 2019







150 Edmonton Catholic Teachers

7 Slo-Pitch Teams

6 Kickball Teams

**$6410.00 Raised**

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# Walk for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention

Black Gold Teachers Local No 8

May 27, 2019

Local No 8 sponsored this event in memory of Thomas Maxwell (a Black Gold teacher's son who graduated from Leduc Composite High School and recently died from suicide). This event was an opportunity for our teaching community to show our support for mental health both in and out of school by promoting awareness and supporting loved ones. The walk began at the Devon Field of Dreams ballpark and ended at Voyageur Park. A wiener roast followed the walk. Busing was available to return to the ball diamond. Donations went to The Sashbear Foundation (an all-volunteer Canadian registered charity).

We were very pleased that about 130 people participated in the event and that over $6,000 was raised for mental health supports. We also had great media coverage, both print and television. Global News covered the event.








# Applying for a Community Relations Grant is *easy!*

Community Relations Grants (CRGs) of **$250 plus $1 per member** are available to Alberta Teachers' Association Locals. Approved projects must meet the two objectives of the grants:

- Profile public education
- Show teachers as active and concerned citizens

## Double your Community Relations Grant!

The Alberta division of the CMHA has nine regional offices throughout the province. We encourage locals to work with these regional offices and neighbouring locals to develop programs that promote public education and portray teachers as active and concerned about the mental health of children and youth. In some cases, sponsorship opportunities already exist. Additional information on the CMHA is available at www.cmha.ca. To discuss ideas for CRGs related to mental health, contact government@ata.ab.ca.

To apply for a Community Relations Grant, please download, fill in the form and submit it to government@ata.ab.ca.




## Tried and true grant ideas...

- Purchase and decorate a Christmas tree for the Festival of Trees.
- Sponsor a team of teachers in a fun run, walk or dragon boat race.
- Inscribe and donate books to doctors' offices or libraries.

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