



# The Alberta Teachers' Association

## ATA CENTRAL EAST DISTRICT REPORT

December 2021  
Vol. 3 Issue 3

*By Murray Lalonde  
District Representative*

---

Alberta news (and thereby DR reports) are like it's weather: wait 5 minutes and it will change. I don't know if the Education Ministry does it on purpose (it's been pretty coincidental), but Adriana LaGrange seems to release some real doozies just after regularly scheduled meetings of Provincial Executive Council. Last week was no different when she announced her attack on our Association, vowing to split it in two by removing the disciplinary function of the ATA. LaGrange must own stocks in fuel for use in gaslights when she uses a 15 year-old case in which the criminal allegations did not appear until 2021 to spin a reason to split the ATA. ATA President Jason Schilling responded, "In this case, only one party did the job it was supposed to do, and that was the Alberta Teachers' Association. As a result of our processes, this teacher was removed from the profession and never taught again." Please read the full press release at [bit.ly/3m2gf0n](http://bit.ly/3m2gf0n). Did the ATA really do its job? YES! (the proof is in the reading of Dennis Theobald's Q&A in the ATA news: [bit.ly/3pTyzdI](http://bit.ly/3pTyzdI)).

**WE NEED YOUR HELP.** Please call your MLA, let them know how angry you are in being disrespected by the Minister of Education. Your message could be as simple as "I'm mad as \_\_\_\_\_ about me and my colleagues being disrespected!" Please keep amplifying ATA messages.

Then I thought I was done my DR report, and LaGrange announced today that there would be a change to the rollout of the disastrous K-6 curriculum. So, some extremely bad news followed by some good, but by no means perfect, news. President Schilling states "While this is a step in the right direction toward fixing this curriculum mess, there are still significant issues with the proposed content for the language arts, math, and phys ed and wellness programs." Please read Jason Schilling's full press release at [bit.ly/3m2gf0n](http://bit.ly/3m2gf0n).

A year ago now, a group of just over 100 teachers were asked to participate in a two day "consultation" with Alberta Education to get a brief review from the professionals who will bring draft curriculum to life in classrooms. To get an idea of teachers on last year's curriculum advisory committee, please read their open letter at [bit.ly/31SwyG4](http://bit.ly/31SwyG4).

Concerns? Questions?  
Call or text: (780) 656-5952  
email: [murray.lalonde@ata.ab.ca](mailto:murray.lalonde@ata.ab.ca)  
Twitter: @dr\_mo4

[www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca)  
[alberta-curriculum-analysis.ca](http://alberta-curriculum-analysis.ca)  
[www.ibelieveinpubliced.ca](http://www.ibelieveinpubliced.ca)  
[202122scevents.sched.com](http://202122scevents.sched.com)  
#IStandWithAbTeachers

**Central Table Bargaining** - The Central Table Bargaining Committee (CTBC) met twice with the Teachers' Employer Bargaining Association (TEBA) in November. We were able to agree to a new grievance procedure and will soon implement it through a Letter of Understanding. For more information on this procedure, you can talk to your Teacher Welfare Committee Chair or read the "Bargainer's Blog" ([bit.ly/3pX3Z2e](http://bit.ly/3pX3Z2e)).

**Bill 85 Passes** - LaGrange's Bill 85, the "Students First Act", has passed. Before last week's attack on the ATA, LaGrange used this Bill to tighten up some faults in the current discipline process. The ATA was quite open to some much-needed changes in the process. However, along with most teachers I was highly offended in the way she painted a picture of teachers with broad strokes of a giant brush, vilifying the typical teacher as a monster who needs to be supervised by her ministry. I cannot say it as well as Executive Secretary Dennis Theobald in his Q&A article, so I will guide you to the ATA News ([bit.ly/3dQcRRS](http://bit.ly/3dQcRRS)).

**Code of Professional Conduct** - Please remember that if you have an issue with a colleague, you must follow the code of professional conduct, in particular sections 13 and 14. You must bring your issue to the attention of your colleague BEFORE you take it to a higher level. As with any thoughts of students, you cannot discuss your issues about another teacher with fellow teachers. Executive Staff Officer Chris Gibbon's article is a great place to learn about this important subject: [bit.ly/30r5M7a](http://bit.ly/30r5M7a)

**ASEBP Changes** - Extended Health Care - Psychology will be increase its hourly maximum from \$100 to \$180 to better reflect the industry's standard charges, but the annual maximum will remain at \$1200. EHC, Dental Care, and Vision Care termination age of 70 will be removed for covered members who are an employee or serving as a school trustee. Also, Life Insurance indictable offence exclusion will be removed.

**Women In Leadership** - Dr Julia Smith is booked as the speaker for the January 24th Speaker Series. She was the principal researcher for our Gender Caregiving and COVID study. Smith is donating her time and in recognition of that and in lieu of speaker fees, we will be presenting a donation, in her name, to a charity of her choice.

**Tempus fugit** - December 12 marks the 18th anniversary of my missing my first staff Christmas party in Smoky Lake (my second full year of teaching). Why would I do such a silly thing? My wife and I welcomed our first daughter, Ava, into the world. That beautiful little girl is now an adult, off on her own in Edmonton, studying hairstyling at MC College. She is thriving and I cannot be happier for her. I have no idea where the time flew off to.

## WORTH KNOWING

### Travelling During a Pandemic (Information as of 2021-11-01)

With borders reopening and the holiday season fast approaching, information to assist teachers with decision making related to travel is important. An employer cannot direct what teachers do on their personal time. A decision to travel may have consequences, but that decision remains with the teacher. As always, the Association advises teachers to call for assistance with personal situations, as every situation may be slightly different.

Alberta Health Services (AHS) guidelines and restrictions remain in effect and can be found at [www.albertahealthservices.ca](http://www.albertahealthservices.ca). As well, travel advisories greatly affect travel plans, and it is the traveller's responsibility to check on these. Remember that not only are there international travel restrictions, but there are also provincial restrictions. These restrictions continue to change. Be sure to check on all travel advisories at <https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/advisories>. Here are some questions you should consider:

- What is the destination country's vaccine requirement?
- What documentation do you need upon arrival or departure?
- What is required if you start to exhibit COVID-19 symptoms?
- What is your plan if self-isolation is required, either upon arriving at your destination or upon returning to Canada?

Some of these requirements may affect your ability to return to work after the holiday and may exacerbate potential issues with your employer.

If you are sick, for whatever reason, you are entitled to sick leave provisions in your collective agreement. If you are required to quarantine because you are exhibiting symptoms and are sick, you are entitled to sick leave as per your collective agreement. (Some teachers have 90 days and some have statutory sick leave of 20 days per year). Sick leave entitlement is not affected by travel in any way.

Problems with a return to work as the result of other issues (such as a delayed flight) are managed with collective agreement days off, such as personal days or days off without pay. If you are not sick but are required to quarantine, you must take that time without pay, as travel is a Personal choice and is unpredictable at this time, or use applicable leaves in your collective agreement (such as personal days) for the quarantine period.

As for benefits and travel, some aspects of your medical coverage may not be in effect if you travel internationally when advised not to do so. Check with your medical benefits insurer for the specific details of your plan. If you have Alberta School Employee Benefit Plan (ASEBP) coverage, contact ASEBP before you travel and review the details at [www.asebp.ca/my-benefits](http://www.asebp.ca/my-benefits).

Further information or assistance is available by calling Teacher Employment Services at 1-800-232-7208. WORTH SHARING With the holidays approaching, teachers may be considering travel. Teachers should check current travel advisories and consider all potential consequences of travelling during a pandemic. #WEAREATA

# My DR Calendar

## December

- 1 - Canadian Teachers' Federation
- 2 - Provincial Executive Council
- 2 - Lakeland Catholic Local Council
- 3 - Provincial Executive Council
- 3-4 - Fall PDAC
- 5 - Middle Years' Council
- 6 - Indigenous Education Committee
- 7 - Battle River Executive
- 8 - Aspen View Local Council
- 9 - ESTCA
- 14 - Greater St. Paul Local Council
- 15 - Deadline for ARA Resolutions

## January

- 4 - Battle River Executive
- 6 - Lakeland Catholic Local Council
- 7 - Indigenous Advisory Circle
- 10 - Northern Lights Executive
- 11 - Greater St. Paul Local Council
- 13 - ESTCA
- 17 - Northern Lights Local Council
- 20 - Provincial Executive Council
- 21 - Provincial Executive Council
- 24 - Park Plains East Executive
- 26 - Campus St Jean Area Field Experience
- 27 - Battle River Local Council

In the spirit of recent and upcoming holidays, I find myself thankful for a few things. Well, quite a few things, but the following in particular:

I am thankful for all teachers. Full-time, part-time, substitutes, administrators, support, alternative delivery, online, first-year, retired... ALL teachers. Without your dedication and resilience, students would have a completely different education experience, especially through the past 1.75 years. Without your advocacy in Standing for Education, the current provincial government would think that they came up with a reasonable draft K-6 curriculum and are funding education properly. You do all this work for the love of public education, to expertly pass on knowledge to future generations, and want you to know that your Association recognizes your efforts and cannot do their work without you.

There are a lot of reports of fatigue, exhaustion, desperation. Please reach out for help from your family, friends, employer, and/or your Association. A quick way to find information is to call the ATA at 1-800-232-7208.

***Thank you so much for everything you do!*** I wish you all a wonderful holiday and well-deserved break. Merry Christmas, Joyeux Noël, Христос народився, Joyous Kwanzaa, Happy Hannukah, Happy Holidays, Merry Yule and Bright Solstice... in any way you celebrate I hope you are able to relax and rejuvenate and spend time with your loved ones.

Бог предвічний народився,  
Прийшов днесь із небес,  
Щоб спасти люд свій весь,  
І утішився.  
(Boh Predvichny, my favourite Christmas Carol)

"I've got a feeling this year's for me and you. So happy Christmas, I love you baby. I can see a better time when all our dreams come true." - The Pogues, *Fairytale of New York*