



The Alberta Teachers' Association

ATA CENTRAL EAST DISTRICT REPORT

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Rally to Stand For Public Education a Great Success!

An estimated 5000 teachers, parents, students, and concerned citizens gathered on the front yard of the Alberta Legislature Building to Stand For Public Education. We stood in solidarity to tell all political parties to put public education first on their election agenda. The Rally was Phase 1 of three. We are now in Phase 2, with four in-person round-table discussions scheduled across the province and three on-line discussions to engage teachers, parents, business owners, really anyone who wants to help put Public Education at the forefront of the provincial election.

ATA Executive Secretary, Dennis Theobald, notes "The Commander of the Alberta Sheriffs' on site was so impressed by the friendly and upbeat tone of the event and the positive disposition of the crowd that he invited us to 'come back any time.'"



The Tireless Local Presidents of Central East District: Lynné Vining, Kelly Murphy, Brian Skinner, Sarjenka Kuryliw, Ross MacDonald, and Stephanie Cumbleton



The Johnson Family: Teachers Leah (Aspen View) and Byron (Greater St Paul) with their 3 sons and 1 nephew, rallying for Public Education. Thank you Johnsons!!!

Concerns? Questions?
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DRAFT POLICIES CONCERNING ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATION OF TEACHERS IN MATTERS RELATING TO PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT AND PRACTICE

For the past 85 years, the ATA has been upholding conduct standards and prosecuting members who behaved unprofessionally. Through Bill 15, Minister LaGrange's department is set to takeover the discipline and competency files for all Alberta teachers (of public, charter, and private schools) on January 1, 2023.

As per usual, the Minister is not sharing any details of the new Code of Professional Conduct and Competence. Complicating the Association's task is the large number of unresolved questions concerning the operation of the commissioner's processes. Although staff have been in contact with government to make sense of the convoluted legislative and regulatory regime being implemented and to manage the transition of individual cases and responsibility to the commissioner, it is still unclear what the Association can expect. Therefore, in consultation with BC and Ontario Teachers' Unions, ATA Provincial Executive Council has proactively drafted interim policies as to the role of the Association with respect to teachers who find themselves having to deal with practice and conduct complaints made to the government's Office of the Commissioner. The following ten interim policies will have to be possibly amended and finalized next May at our Annual Representatives' Assembly:

1. Association representation of a member in proceedings concerning professional conduct and practice administered by the Alberta Teaching Profession Commission is determined on an individual case-by-case basis.
2. The Association may represent members who are subject to regulatory processes concerning professional conduct and discipline administered by the Alberta Teaching Profession Commission, in accordance with the following provisions:
 - a. The member requesting representation must have held the highest level of membership at the time the events relevant to a proceeding took place and continued subsequently to maintain the highest level of membership available to them.
 - b. The nature and degree of representation provided reflects the seriousness of the potential outcomes, the resources required and associated costs to the Association, risk and opportunity for the establishment of precedent, and the reputation and interests of the profession.
 - c. The purpose of representation is to ensure that professional conduct and practice proceedings adhere to legislation and regulation, legal standards established for similar administrative proceedings, and requirements of fairness and natural justice.
3. The provision of representation does not constitute an endorsement of a member's conduct or practice.

4. Representation may be provided by the Association to a member who is subject to regulatory processes concerning professional conduct and practice administered by the Alberta Teaching Profession Commission, subject to the following:

- a. Representation may consist of assistance provided by executive or professional staff of the Association and/or provided by legal counsel in the direct employ of the Association or by external legal counsel under contract to the Association.
- b. Representation is provided at the discretion and under the direction of Associate Coordinator, Regulatory Affairs, in consultation with Association staff assisting the member.
- c. Where a member undertakes to retain their own independent counsel, all associated costs are the sole responsibility of the member unless and except where a prior contractual agreement has been entered into between the Association, the member and the independent counsel for the provision of independent legal representation.
- d. A member may appeal a decision not to provide representation or to limit the representation provided using a process established for this purpose.

5. Responsibility for upholding high standards of professional conduct and practice of teachers should be within the exclusive mandate of the Association as a professional regulatory authority (or entrusted to a professional college, independent of government, governed by teachers appointed by the Association, elected at large with sufficient public representation to ensure transparency and legitimacy).

6. Legislation, regulations, processes, structures and institutions intended to uphold high standards of professional conduct and practice of teachers should be established only with the advice and consent of the Association.

7. Any costs associated with processes, structures and institutions established by the Government of Alberta without the consent of the Association for regulating the professional conduct and practice of teachers should be paid for by the Government of Alberta, with no fees, levies or charges being imposed upon teachers for this purpose.

8. When possible, members should use informal and formal processes, including those established by the Association, to address and resolve conflicts with colleagues in a constructive, restorative manner.

9. Teacher members of the Teacher Professional Conduct and Practice Panel should be populated from a list consisting of active members nominated by the Association.

10. Effective 2023 01 01, the Association's Code of Professional Conduct is in abeyance until Association approves an alternative code of conduct for its members.



Is it a Matter of Conduct or Competency?

Much like curriculum and pedagogy, the current government of Alberta does not seem to understand that there is a difference between conduct and competency. You may have seen or participated in the minister's public survey on a new Code of

Conduct for Teachers. The current Association's code of conduct and related processes for maintaining the high standards it embodies have evolved over the years to reflect teachers' deep understanding of their responsibilities toward students, colleagues and the profession; the high expectations placed upon teachers by the community; and the practical realities and complexities of teachers' daily work.

The Association is concerned that this survey, much like government's other "consultations" on curriculum or other issues, is predominately political in nature and designed to distract from the real challenges facing public education today. Association staff have highlighted serious concerns with the survey, notably confusion of conduct issues with competence and the potential for the government's code to diminish teachers' professional judgment in favour of enforcing abject compliance with the employer's and government's directives.

Local Table Collective Bargaining

Your ATA Local's Teacher Welfare Committee (TWC) is working hard at constructing an Initial Proposal. They need your help: please participate in your local member bargaining survey and attend your local Bargaining Unit General Meeting (BUGM). The collective agreement is owned by all teachers and your TWC needs to know what you would like to see in your local's initial proposal.

DEHR and GSAs

The first meeting of the ATA GSA was held on Thursday, Oct 6 via Zoom. Seven locals are actively participating in the ATA GSA and have committed to hosting one monthly meeting each. A dedicated email address (atagsa@ata.ab.ca) was created to ensure a high level of confidentiality for teacher members and invited guests who wish to join the mailing list.

There is a Student GSA Conference set for four days of online programs from November 21-24. Please see the website for more details.

If your DEHR Committee is looking to apply for grants, please apply.

Curriculum

The Minister of Education is reporting her version of "bold numbers" (~2%) of teachers and students piloting the Grades 4-6 curricula. Feedback is due Feb 2023. What happens to curriculum piloted after Feb 2023? This feedback, recommendations and review may not be implemented into the final curricula rollout!

My DR Calendar

November

1 - Lakeland Catholic PD Day
1 - Buffalo Trail TWC
2 - Battle River Executive
3 - Lakeland Catholic Local Council
7-11 - Aspen View Fall Break
8 - Greater St Paul Local Council
8 - Buffalo Trail BUGM
9 - Northern Lights TWC
11 - Remembrance Day - Waskatenau Legion
17 - Greater St Paul BUGM
18-19 - Collective Bargaining Conference (Edmonton)
21 - Benefits Insurance Pension Committee
21 - Northern Lights Local Council
21 - Park Plains East Executive
22 - Aspen View Local Council
23 - Battle River Local Council
23 - Park Plains East Local Council
25-26 Fall PDAC
28 - Northern Lights TWC
30 - Canadian Teachers Federation
30 - Northern Lights TWC

December

1-2 - Provincial Executive Council
3 - ESTCA Council
5 - Indigenous Education Committee
7 - Middle Years Council
8 - Battle River Executive
8 - Battle River Induction
12 - Aspen View BUGM
13 - Greater St Paul Local Council



Pre-Retirement Workshops

TES-ESO Myra Rybotycki, the ATA's retirement expert, will be conducting Retirement Workshops and Understanding Your Pension:

"Pre-Retirement Workshop" (designed for teachers in the final 5 years of their career) for Central East and other rural districts:

1. November 26, 2022, 2. January 21, 2023, and 3. March 4, 2023

"Understanding Your Pension" (designed for Early Service Teachers): Jan 25, 2023

"Retirement Planning for Women": February 23, 2023