



The Alberta Teachers' Association

ATA CENTRAL EAST DISTRICT REPORT

by Murray Lalonde
District Representative

February/
March 2024
Vol. 5
Issue 5



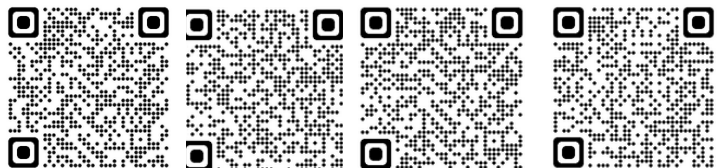
Substitute Teachers' Appreciation Week, March 11-15: Please help show our deep admiration for substitute teachers. Substitute teachers juggle multiple responsibilities—lesson plans, multiple curricula, materials, student management, and last-minute assignments, to name a few. They are proud professionals without whom our system would be doomed. Thank you, from the bottom of our collective hearts, for all you do. We appreciate you, we love you.

UCP Parental Rights Policy - Premier Smith created a demoralising and malicious policy against trans students, framing it around parental rights. This policy could become law in the Fall sitting of the Legislature. As teachers, our primary concern is the safety of our students. **Be assured, as a teacher following the TQS, you will be defended by your ATA against repercussions at any level in your duties protecting your students.**

Teacher Discipline: We have your back! If you are the subject of a discipline complaint, PLEASE IMMEDIATELY INFORM Regulatory Affairs - Membership Services (RAMS) by emailing professional.discipline@ata.ab.ca or call them directly at 780-447-9460. You ALWAYS have the right to representation. WARNING!!! School reps: you CANNOT represent your colleague at a meeting in disciplinary nature with school or district administration. The teacher must be represented by ATA Staff.

Question: How does the Alberta Teaching Profession Commission serve notice to the teacher if they are unable to find the teacher? The Govt's answer is to serve notice through the Superintendent. Our response to this would be to file a complaint because the teacher was not served by the ATPC. Also, how private is that? We have heard of a number of teachers who have lost employment opportunities because even a simple allegation will red-flag a teacher's file before the conclusion of the discipline file... "Guilty until proven innocent" is the statement that comes to mind.

Concerns? Questions?
Call or text: (780) 656-5952 (any day, any time)
email: murray.lalonde@ata.ab.ca
Website: <https://molalonde.my.canva.site>



Local Table Bargaining Continues...: 56 locals have either completed this round of local bargaining or are awaiting a Bargaining Unit General Meeting (BUGM). There are still five bargaining units in the process of completing negotiations. Four of the five remaining units are in various stages of mediation; two of which have authorised taking a strike vote. We send our well-wishes to our colleagues in Red Deer Catholic and Palliser Locals.

Central Table Bargaining Starts: The List of All Matters (LAM) for the 2024 round has been finalised, allowing the bargaining of matters to occur. We have just closed the Member Survey which told our bargaining team what the membership wants from this round.

Pre-Retirement Workshops: Are you planning to retire in the next 10 years? You may find it helpful to ensure a smooth transition by attending the last session of this school year: Saturday, March 9, 2024. Register at <https://teachers.ab.ca/events>.

Teacher Employment Services: Please try to make a “rainy day” fund in your personal finances. We are in a new round of central table bargaining in 2024. IMPORTANT: strike pay does not equal regular salary! Strike pay, while the money balance exists, will help to buy groceries, but not much more. This round of central (and some current) bargaining promise to be rough and every member must be ready to defend our collective position at the bargaining table.

Where is President Schilling? - Our ATA President has always been all over Alberta (and Canada) tirelessly advocating for teachers throughout his 5 years. Proof: he has recently logged his 1000th interview since his start date of July 1, 2019!



Member Organising Strategy: We are hoping to increase member engagement through meetings at the members’ workplace. The strategy would require a broad effort from locals including participation from local executives, teacher welfare committees and **school representatives (SR)**. This QR code is intended for SRs and will guide them to the ATA SR Collaboration site.

Public Relations Campaign: Keep an eye out on our new ad campaign. Three different commercials featuring parents, students, and teachers all say “Stop the Excuses.” Look for billboards and print ads, and encourage people to visit StoptheExcuses.ca.





Diversity, Equity, and Human Rights: The provincial DEHR Committee has a grant program not limited to locals but can be provided to individual schools. The deadline for applications is 2024 04 30. A total of \$35,000 in grant aid will be available with individual grants receiving up to \$2000. A subcommittee of DEHR will be formed to review applications and make recommendations to the DEHR committee for approval.

Women In Leadership Summit 2024: This is the last call for registration for the ATA WIL Summit, evening of Friday, March 8 and full day of Saturday, March 9, 2024.

AI Tools to Amplify Your Teaching and Save Time: Check out ATA PD Executive Staff Officer Danny Maas’ awesome presentation on Artificial Intelligence by visiting bit.ly/ata-ai-amplify. I have been playing with magicschool.ai and am really looking forward to using it in my teaching life.



New Ways to Get My Reports: I have a new website: molalonde.my.canva.site. There you will find my District Representative reports, my calendar, useful links, information, all updated as soon as I receive important information to pass on to you. I also have a **podcast version** of the DR Report! Please tell your teacher colleagues about these ways to keep informed of what the ATA is doing for its members, advocacy for students and Public Education.

My DR Calendar

March 2024

- 1/2 - Political Engagement Seminar
- 5 - Communication, Advocacy and Political Engagement Committee
- 7 - Buffalo Trail BUGM
- 7 - Lakeland Catholic Local Council
- 8/9 - Women In Leadership Conference
- 11-15 - Substitute Teachers’ Appreciation Week
- 11 - Park Plains East Executive
- 12 - Greater St. Paul Local Council
- 13 - Park Plains East Local Council
- 14 - ATA GSA
- 14 - Battle River Local Council
- 18 - Northern Lights Local Council
- 19 - Aspen View Local Council

April 2024

- 8 - Alternate Languages and Intercultural Council
- 9 - Greater St. Paul Local Council (V)
- 10 - Provincial Executive Council
- 10 - Canadian Teachers’ Federation
- 11 - Provincial Executive Council
- 11 - Lakeland Catholic Local Council
- 12 - Collective Bargaining Conference
- 13 - Collective Bargaining Conference
- 15 - Greater St. Paul TWC
- 15 - Northern Lights Local Council
- 20 - Alternate Languages and Intercultural Council
- 22 - Park Plains East Executive
- 23 - Aspen View Local Council
- 24 - Park Plains East Local Council
- 26 - Professional Development Conference (Calgary)
- 27 - Professional Development Conference (Calgary)

“And he still gives his love, he just gives it away. The love he receives is the love that is saved. And sometimes is seen a strange spot in the sky, a human being that was given to fly.”
 - Pearl Jam, *Given to Fly*



Worth Knowing #02-24 (2024 02 07)

WORTH KNOWING

Aggression in Schools

In a recent Alberta Teachers' Association survey of members, 52 per cent of teachers said they have experienced bullying or violence in their work environment at some point since the beginning of this school year. The aggression occurred in person 95 per cent of the time, and in 60 per cent of the cases, the violence was perpetrated by students in the teachers' own classrooms. A 2018 Canadian Teachers' Federation meta-analysis of seven member organizations found that up to 94 per cent of teachers had reported or experienced violence at some point in their career, mostly within three years of the study.

What actions are available to teachers who have been victims of student aggression?

Aggression can take various forms, including verbal, physical and emotional. Physical aggression by a student toward a teacher may or may not constitute assault. A variety of factors are considered, including the student's age, the student's background, and the nature and intent of the physical contact. Where assault is suspected, a teacher has the right to call the police. Whether or not physical contact by a student constitutes assault, teachers have a legal right to work in a safe and caring environment.

In addition to physical aggression, teachers can be subject to other forms of aggression, such as microaggressions, rude and disruptive behaviour, and intimidation.

Students who exhibit severe behavioural issues that make teachers vulnerable to harm require special supports and, in some cases, programming considerations. A coordinated effort is required to ensure that the teacher is not harmed. This can include a modified placement, an effective program or behavioural plan, a response plan that involves the parents, support from an educational assistant, and possible disciplinary action.

Legislation provides authority for actions that school and school division leaders need to take in order to ensure the safety of the school environment. Teachers have the legislated right to suspend a student from a class for one period. Principals can suspend a student for up to five days, after which time the student returns to school or is subject to expulsion.

(continued next page)

Section 33 of the Education Act imposes obligations on a school division to ensure that each staff member is provided with a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment. Occupational health and safety legislation also imposes obligations on employers and on supervisors to ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of employees. More specifically, it holds the expectation that no employee is subjected to harassment or violence at the work site. A teacher who believes that the action of a student constitutes harassment should consider whether a harassment complaint to the school division is appropriate.

School and school division leaders must lead courageously in responding to student aggression. Fear of parent backlash is no excuse for lack of action. Although most parents are engaged in their child's education and support their child's teacher, 69 per cent of teachers in the Association's survey reported that students or parents in their school community have made negative references to sexual orientation and gender identity, and 63 per cent reported prejudicial comments related to race.

In the survey, teachers identified the importance of implementing concrete solutions, including establishing consistent and fair student discipline protocols, prioritizing teacher and school leader safety, providing inservice support to teachers in addressing aggressive behaviour, holding parents accountable, creating a school atmosphere where teachers and school leaders are comfortable reporting and managing aggression, providing appropriate specialized programs and accommodations for aggressive students, and addressing understaffing and overcrowded classrooms.

WORTH SHARING

Teachers should be involved in crafting solutions to student violence in schools and should support one another in taking action. A teacher who suffers harm should immediately report the incident to the principal; document the incident within the school; seek medical intervention where necessary; consider whether the student's placement and programming are appropriate; engage the school, the division and the parents; and consider whether authorities (such as the police or child welfare) should be involved. **#WEAREATA**

ATA PARTNERSHIP WITH THE ALBERTA MOTOR ASSOCIATION

PRODUCTS

1. Exclusive ATA white label online booking engine accessed via the ATA Member secure website using the ATA Member's My ATA login credentials
 - Flights and Car Rentals
 - Hotels and Vacation Rentals
 - Vacation Packages, Tours and Cruises
 - Activities and Attractions
2. Special Offers for ATA Members
 - Access to exclusive hotel rates
 - For those who are AMA members:
 - o Exclusive Hotel Rates
 - o Car Rentals
 - o Select Cruises and Tours
3. Exclusive ATA white label online travel insurance website accessed via the ATA Member secure website using the ATA Member's My ATA login credentials
 - Travel Cancellation and Interruption Insurance
 - Package Insurance Options
 - Visitors to Canada Coverage
 - Rental Car Collision Waiver Coverage
 - Travel Medical Insurance
 - Non-AMA Members—5% off travel medical insurance
 - AMA Members—10% off travel medical insurance
4. Unique Phone Number
 - Trackable unique phone number to AMA Travel for ATA Members
5. New to AMA membership online join offer for ATA Members
 - Available year-round
 - \$50 off a New AMA Membership on "Plus" or "Premier" levels