

DECEMBER 2019

ATA CENTRAL EAST DISTRICT REPORT

Vol 1 Issue 3

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District Representative*

Inside the Issue



HIGHLIGHTS FROM PEC

Provincial Executive Council held its regular meeting December 5 and 6. Items of particular interest are found on pages 2-3.



NEWS FROM THE LEGISLATURE

More news from the Alberta Legislature. Bill 22, Employment Standards Code, and PISA on page 4.



NEWS FROM CENTRAL EAST

Items of interest for teachers from Central East Alberta and Endless Skies Teachers' Convention Association

My DR Calendar

Here are the meeting dates and times where I will be if you would like to meet in person.

Concerns? Questions?

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HIGHLIGHTS FROM PEC

Strategic Planning

There has been a lot of concern about what the ATA has been doing in response to the onslaught of attacks on our association and education. Rest assured, the ATA is deeply concerned about the attacks and are actively engaged in fighting back.

- President Jason Schilling has been interviewed by TV, radio, and newspapers at least 40 times since the Oct 24 provincial budget announcement.
- Executive Secretary Dennis Theobald and President Schilling have held meetings with Minister Adriana LaGrange on a monthly basis, strongly defending education and the ATA.
- Two District Reps attended the UCP AGM, at which they were able to express our concerns.
- I attended two committee meetings at the end of November (Political Engagement Committee and Teacher Welfare Services Committee), both of which are busy planning strategies for the very near future... stay tuned to the website.
- The #handsoffmypension email campaign was the best lobbying campaign Alberta Counsel (professional lobbyists) has ever seen.
- more talking points will soon appear on various types of media. Please regularly check the ATA website for updated information.

Substitute Teachers' Survey

The ATA is asking substitute teachers for their help in preparing future programs by completing an online survey. This survey can be found on the ATA website's main page carousel, and is open until December 20.

Understanding Aggression in AB Schools

The final report of June 2019 survey and November focus groups will be shared with the Committee on Understanding Aggression(s) in Alberta Schools and School Communities in 2020.

Teacher Welfare/CTBC Update

The current collective agreement had our salary provision go to arbitration. Both ATA and TEBA/Govt. presented their cases to the arbitrators in mid-November. We are patiently awaiting the arbitrator's decision, and expect it before the Christmas Break.

As for 2018-2020 Local Bargaining, 14 locals across Alberta ratified an agreement, including Central East District locals Aspen View and Lakeland Catholic. A whole lot more locals are very close to finishing this round soon.

2020's round of central table bargaining will start early in the new year, with building and conducting a member survey. This survey will guide the CTBC in bargaining the central/local items list and help build our initial proposal.

Red for Ed

The Red for Ed campaign started in USA, and we are embracing the idea. Wear red clothing on Fridays in support of public education. Pictured below are members of your Provincial Executive Council and Barnett House Staff Officers who wore red on Friday, December 6.



#DisconnectChallenge

Register your class on or before Dec 20, 2019. More information at disconnectchallenge.ca

More from PEC...

Financial Wellness Sessions for Teachers

Capital Estate Planning and MNP will be presenting workshops to support financial wellness. Part 1 - "Introduction to Financial Wellness: Preparing for Uncertainty" is quite timely for Alberta teachers. Topics for Part 1 include Saving 101, how to get started on a savings plan, best practices in investing, and saving for an emergency fund.

Part 2 - "Debt Solutions: Freedom in Uncertain Times", includes introduction to debt management, and debt reduction strategies.

Ask your local to book the sessions through Sue Beyer at Barnett House.

It is good, sound financial advice for everyone, not just teachers, to have one month of salary saved away for emergencies. ATA members have been hearing since Summer Conference that they have 18-24 months to save some money, "just in case". Families, ATA locals, and the provincial ATA are strongly urged to make sure their financial houses are in order.

ATRF Transfer

While it is nice that the government is consulting us on choice in public education, I find it extremely insulting that teachers were not consulted about the transfer of \$18 billion of ATRF assets to AIMCo. This insult is compounded when we see that we are being consulted about Daylight Savings Time, yet not our retirement.

Please know that we still have a retirement fund, and that our pensions are safe. We cannot lose faith in our retirement because it can end up hurting the brand, allowing the government to privatize it.

There will be a webcast regarding the ATRF transfer, Bill 22, and the 10% issue on the ATA website, planned before the Christmas Break. Also, keep updated by visiting www.atrf.com

My ASEBP (not just mine, but yours, too)

Changes to the ASEBP benefits will be taking effect on January 1, 2020:
Benefit Plan Eligibility - age requirements

Other Medical Services & Supply Changes - assignment billing, diabetic supplies, hospital rooms

Drug Changes - joint injectable materials

Extended Disability Benefits - accommodation employment, other income offset.

You will receive communications regarding these changes in the form of digital properties, admin bulletin, emails to covered members, and emails to employers.

Please visit their website: www.asebp.ca for more information.

News from the Legislature



Employment Standards Code

Well, what's Friday without a controversial announcement from the provincial government? On the morning of December 6, Teacher Welfare staff was informed of changes made to the *Employment Standards Code* regulations. The current collective agreement has substitute teachers receive general holiday pay, "calculated as [5%] of their earnings at the daily rate, vacation pay and general holiday pay earned in the four weeks immediately preceding the general holiday." The changes to the *Employment Standards Code* exempt teachers from receiving this pay. The regulations have been sent to our legal counsel.

Bill 22

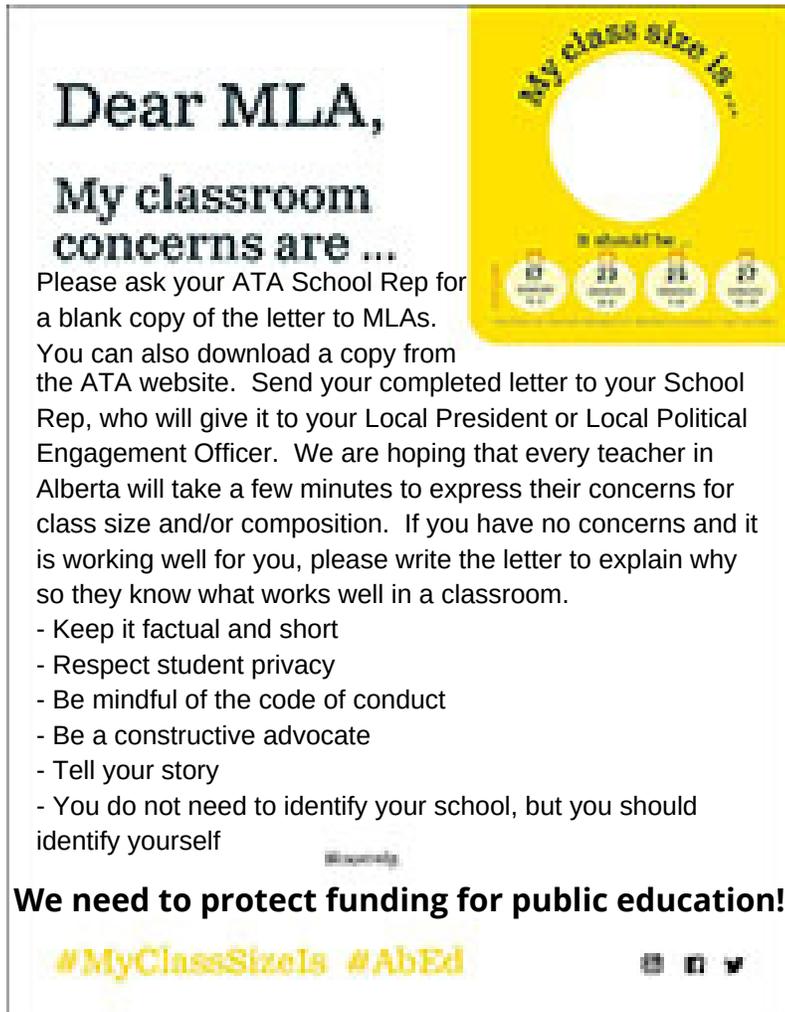
Bill 22 - *Reform of Agencies, Boards and Commissions and Government Enterprises Act* is not only a long name, but is a very long piece of legislation. Bill 22 passed third reading on Nov 21 after only 10 hours of debate. After it has been granted royal assent by the Lieutenant Governor, public sector pensions, including our ATRF, will transfer their assets to the Crown corporation Alberta Investment Management Corporation (AIMCo).

The PISA Results are In!

The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) results for the 2018 test have been released. Even though many teachers oppose the idea of standardized testing, the results are nice to see. If Alberta was a country, our students placed 3rd in Science, 3rd in Reading, and 8th in Maths in the world! These are amazing results, and we should be proud of our students and our teachers! Many grades of teachers have prepared students for these results. Congratulations!

NEWS FROM CENTRAL EAST

Letter Writing Campaign



Dear MLA,

My classroom concerns are ...

Please ask your ATA School Rep for a blank copy of the letter to MLAs. You can also download a copy from the ATA website. Send your completed letter to your School Rep, who will give it to your Local President or Local Political Engagement Officer. We are hoping that every teacher in Alberta will take a few minutes to express their concerns for class size and/or composition. If you have no concerns and it is working well for you, please write the letter to explain why so they know what works well in a classroom.

- Keep it factual and short
- Respect student privacy
- Be mindful of the code of conduct
- Be a constructive advocate
- Tell your story
- You do not need to identify your school, but you should identify yourself

We need to protect funding for public education!

#MyClassSizeIs #AbEd

ESTCA Preparations

The Endless Skies Teachers' Convention Association (ESTCA) Committee has been working hard at planning our 2020 Teachers' Convention.

New this year will be a Blood Donation Drive! Shuttle buses will take donors to the Blood Donor Clinic at the UofA Campus.

"Sched" is very close to being released. With this, you will be able to plan your convention, check out the sessions, find out who will be the keynote speakers, and (possibly) view a list of vendors.

If you are not staying at the nearby hotels, or just want to avoid the parking costs, the LRT is 1 block away (Central Station), or further if you miss this stop.

Is This New?

I have included the letter writing campaign info at the left from my previous DR Report. We are still encouraging teachers to hand-write a letter to your MLA to educate the government, UCP and NDP, about how complex and/or full your classroom is. If your classroom condition is great, write the reasons why to let them know what works.

Engagement in ATA

There are a lot of teachers who are concerned with the attacks on public education and on teachers. Staying engaged in knowing what is or is not "fake news" is very important. We cannot lose faith in our retirement, we cannot lose faith in public schools, and we cannot lose faith in our association. If the government sees or hears that we have lost faith, it makes it easier for them to privatize it.

"Any time teachers have been successful in pushing back, they have had organized support from parents" (J. Schilling, 2019). Our government seems to like grassroots organizations; we need the support of parents to fight for public education.

You are encouraged to talk to your MLA. Please find the talking points on the ATA website - teachers.ab.ca. If you are a Twitter user, follow the ATA (@albertateachers), President Jason Schilling (@schill_dawg), me (@dr_mo4), among others. On Facebook you can find groups like "The Alberta Teachers' Association" and "Alberta Teachers for Public Education".

My DR Calendar

December 2019

- 2 - Battle River Executive Meeting, Camrose
- 5-6 Provincial Executive Council, Barnett House, Edmonton
- 5 - Lakeland Catholic Local Meeting, Cold Lake
- 5 - Battle River Local ATA Induction, Camrose
- 6-7 Math Council ATA meeting
- 9 - Greater St. Paul Local Council
- 14 - Endless Skies Teachers' Convention Executive Meeting, Edmonton
- 16 - Central Table Bargaining Committee, Barnett House, Edmonton
- 17 - Greater St. Paul Teacher Welfare Committee Meeting, St. Paul
- 18 - ATA Resolutions Committee Meeting, Barnett House, Edmonton

January 2020

- 6 - Battle River Executive Meeting
- 9 - Lakeland Catholic Local Meeting
- 11- Teacher Welfare Services Committee Meeting
- 13 - Northern Lights Local Executive Meeting, Cold Lake
- 14 - Political Engagement Committee - Barnett House, Edmonton
- 14 - Greater St. Paul Local Council Meeting, St. Paul
- 17-18 - Math Council of ATA Meeting
- 20 - Northern Lights Local Council Meeting, Cold Lake
- 21 - Greater St. Paul Local BUGM, St. Paul Regional High School
- 23-24 - Provincial Executive Council, Barnett House, Edmonton
- 27 - Park Plains East Executive Meeting, Wainright
- 28 - Battle River Local Council, Norseman Inn, Camrose
- 29 - Park Plains East Local Council, Wainright

Thank you all for the amazing work you do!

Please make sure to take time for yourselves and your loved ones, and take care of each other.

“Is there anything that’s worth more than peace and love on the planet Earth?” - Steven Universe