



# The Alberta Teachers' Association

## ATA CENTRAL EAST DISTRICT REPORT

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### **The Work Keeps Piling Up and Teachers Are Tired**

A lot of discussion took place at Provincial Executive Council regarding the amount of work getting piled on the backs of teachers while we are still trying to deal with COVID. Teachers are reporting "June Tiredness" at the beginning of the second year in a row. Not only is workload, resilience, and compassion fatigue research important, but action in ensuring that teachers don't burn out is paramount. President Jason Schilling has used this information in his 650+ interviews since taking office. Please lean on your Association, both at the local and provincial level, to find a strong supporting base.

Dr Astrid Kendrick, in collaboration with Dr Lisa Everitt and Dr Carlyn Volume-Smith, developed the HEARTcare planning workbook, tool and website (available online as Appendix C and at <https://heartcareeducators.ca/>). These supports are designed to assist educators in planning at both collective and individual levels ways to encourage mental health for those who provide emotional labour as a part of their work in education. Further, a halfday HEARTcare planning workshop is available to locals upon request. Further information for this workshop is available through the Government program area.

Another research team, led by Dr Denise Larson, will develop a plan and then conduct a comprehensive environmental scan on the state of hope/hopelessness in Alberta schools coming out of the first phase of the global pandemic. The project will then scope out a system-level research and programmatic plan that highlights opportunities for the practical application of hope (and resiliency building) within the teaching profession, including a special dimensionality for school leadership, teachers and others.

Concerns? Questions?

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[empoweringthespirit.ca](http://empoweringthespirit.ca)

[www.cultofpedagogy.com](http://www.cultofpedagogy.com)

**Beginning Teachers Conference** - The 26th annual Beginning Teachers Conference was held virtually on Sept 24–25 with 469 teachers registered for the two-day event. Teachers were able to choose from 64 sessions offered over Friday and Saturday. Beginning teachers were appreciative of the high caliber of speakers and the variety of sessions and resources available to them. Specialist council booths were on display virtually for the entire conference, providing the opportunity for teachers to learn about supports and sign up for a council of their choice. The ATA Educational Trust, ATA Library, Diversity Equity and Human Rights and Walking Together projects were also highlighted through their virtual booths. External partners Capital Estate and Morgex Insurance were also featured. Morgex provided an iPad, Apple Watch and a \$500 gift card draw for three lucky delegates and a \$250 Amazon gift card prize was awarded to one of the beginning teachers who completed the evaluation. In addition, the 21 specialist councils each offered a \$50 gift card as prizes. Frequent comments included an appreciation for the great strategies and practical tools that can be utilized immediately in the classroom. Many wished that the conference was in-person to facilitate connections with other teachers, but were happy everyone was safe.

**Planning for Hybrid Meetings** - Association PD staff officers have developed a series of complementary resources to support subgroups with planning and conducting hybrid meetings. The resources include a PDF booklet, a planning checklist, a narrated PowerPoint video and a sequence of social media posts. The resources will be posted to the Online Professional Development page on the Association website (under My ATA > Professional Development > Online Professional Development) and through @ATAPD social media.

**Central Table Bargaining** - The Central Table Bargaining Committee (CTBC) met for the second time with the Teachers' Employer Bargaining Association (TEBA) on 2021 10 13. In the early stages of bargaining, both CTBC and TEBA continue to ask questions about items in the proposals. To keep updated, please see the website for "The Bargainer's Blog".

**Supports for School Leaders** - An interdepartmental team of association staff are currently working to promote and develop supports and services for school and district leaders as well as aspiring school leaders. To this end, staff have developed a webpage highlighting services targeted to school leaders. This page, hosted on Sched, will be updated regularly with all Alberta Teachers' Association events designed to support school leaders and aspiring school leaders. It will keep a detailed schedule of past and future school leader events for the year. Please see <http://tiny.cc/ATALeadersPD>

**Capital Estate Planning** - is launching two programs in the fall and asked that members be made aware of these opportunities. The Guaranteed Acceptance critical illness insurance will run from 2021 10 01 until 2021 11 30 and will require no medical. Applications can be made on line and will be accepted automatically. The second program is the Group Life Plus program which will run from 2021 11 01 until 2021 12 31. This includes up to \$100,000 of coverage without an application process.

**Curriculum Update** - A report was provided on research undertaken regarding the curriculum update. The purpose of this research was to get advice and feedback from the profession to present to other teachers and the government. The study was held from 2020 03 29 to 2020 05 15, included 6,038 participants and highlighted the following key factors:

The draft curriculum does not meet Alberta Education's overall vision, guidelines and considerations for curriculum development.

1. Little relationship between the government's own vision and guidelines for student learning,
2. Not logically sequenced and not appropriately designed for teacher use,
3. Developmentally inappropriate learning outcomes that lack high academic standards and do not adequately describe what students must know and be able to do,
4. Narrowly defined content that does not reflect the development of knowledge, understanding and skills for the 21st century,
5. Insufficient reinforcement of essential knowledge and skills across subjects,
6. Lack of support for all students to do their best in an inclusive classroom, and knowledge outcomes with low-level learning and thinking skills,
7. Inclusion of Indigenous content that is not authentic and appears as tokenism,
8. Inadequate inclusion of francophone histories, contributions and perspectives,
9. Twice as many learning outcomes as the current curriculum,
10. Lack of support for developing students' acceptance of diversity and sense of belonging, empathy and community, and a failure to acknowledge the Alberta Human Rights Act. Almost no content related to gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation, which discriminates against 2SLGBTQ+ students and their families;
11. Lack of respect for Alberta's diversity and support for a peaceful, pluralistic society;
12. Failure to address racism, sexism and other forms of bigotry;
13. Inclusion of world religions as a mandatory topic in K-12, which infringes on the religious freedoms of Alberta parents;
14. Language meant for the layperson, not for teachers with professional expertise.

The full report can be found here: COOR-184 Curriculum Response Report.pdf  
(teachers.ab.ca)

[https://www.teachers.ab.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/ATA/Publications/Research/COOR-184 Curriculum Response Report.pdf](https://www.teachers.ab.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/ATA/Publications/Research/COOR-184%20Curriculum%20Response%20Report.pdf)

PEC has received a preliminary copy of this report and has passed a resolution calling for a moratorium to be placed on this curriculum. PEC is requesting a committee be struck to develop a framework with practicing teachers to review and revise the curriculum in a process that is open and transparent.

## **Collective Bargaining Conference (CBC) (The Conference Formerly Known as TWAC)**

Originally, the CBC was only for up to 4 members per bargaining unit. Teacher Employment Services have changed that so a bargaining unit is able to send as many members as they would like. However, the Provincial ATA will only pay Grant In Aid for 4 members to cover their substitute teacher costs. Any other costs will have to be covered by the local. If a member has release time for days like this, they will be able to use the GIA for another. The CBC (aka TCFKATWAC) will take place on November 26 via Zoom.

**Professional Development Area Conference (PDAC)** - Check with your local's PD committee for opportunities to be involved with the wonderful work they do for your local. The ATA's Fall PDAC, December 2 and 3, is always a great opportunity for PD growth.

**Vaccine Mandates** - Ayla Akgungor, lawyer with Field LLP, presented the legalities on vaccine mandates. The employer has a legal responsibility to ensure their employees' health and safety. Their mandate has to be consistent with the Collective Agreement and must follow Human Rights Legislation. Patient confidentiality is always paramount, and the employer must safeguard the information it collects and cannot retain the information.

# My DR Calendar

## **November**

- 1 - Lakeland Catholic Induction
- 1 - Aspen View Executive
- 2 - Battle River Executive
- 4 - Fall Strategic Planning
- 4 - Lakeland Catholic Local Council
- 5 - Fall Strategic Planning
- 9 - Greater St. Paul Local Council and Retirement Celebration
- 11 - Remembrance Day
- 19 - Indigenous Advisory Circle
- 22 - Park Plains East Executive
- 22 - Northern Lights Executive
- 24 - Park Plains Local Council
- 26 - Collective Bargaining Conference
- 29 - Northern Lights Local Council
- 30 - Battle River Local Council

## **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

"Hey now people don't mind, we all get this way sometimes. Got to let your soul shine, shine 'til the break of day." - Warren Haynes, "Soulshine"