



# The Alberta Teachers' Association

## Membership Matters



**Rights • Responsibilities • Services**

# Contacting the Association

## **Edmonton Office**

Barnett House

### **Address**

11010 142 Street NW  
Edmonton AB T5N 2R1

### **Telephone**

780-447-9400 in Edmonton  
1-800-232-7208 toll free in Alberta

### **Switchboard Hours**

*Labour Day to June 30*  
0800–1700 Monday–Friday  
0830–1300 Saturday

*July 1 to Labour Day*  
0800–1630 Monday–Friday  
Closed Saturday

### **Fax**

780-455-6481

### **Website**

[www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca)

### **E-mail**

General inquiries about the ATA or its services should be sent to [postmaster@ata.ab.ca](mailto:postmaster@ata.ab.ca).

## **Calgary Office**

Southern Alberta Regional Office  
(SARO)

3016 5 Avenue NE Suite 106  
Calgary AB T2A 6K4

403-265-2672 in Calgary  
1-800-332-1280 toll free in Alberta

*Labour Day to June 30*  
0800–1630 Monday–Friday

*July 1 to Labour Day*  
0800–1600 Monday–Friday

403-266-6190



# **The Alberta Teachers' Association**

## **Membership Matters**

**. . . when it's your profession**



# **T**eaching is our profession.

**Good teachers are a primary reason why Alberta's students are among the best in the world.**

Although individuals have a variety of specializations within the education field, teaching is the common professional base of knowledge for

- teachers,
- school-based administrators,
- system-based administrators,
- university professors and
- department officials.

All of these professionals need to work together for the benefit of students and public education. Members in a unified professional organization can speak with one voice and work toward common goals.

## **M**embership benefits **everyone.**

### **Active membership sets the standard.**

All active members of the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) have the right to

- participate in ATA meetings and discussions at the school (or work site) level,
- vote in local and provincial ATA elections,
- hold office at the local or provincial level and
- be treated in a professional and ethical manner by all other members.

All active members of the ATA have the obligation to

- act in a manner respectful of students, colleagues and the profession;
- participate in decision making within channels; and
- serve students, colleagues and the profession faithfully.



# **H**igh standards—high quality The profession ensures integrity for education in Alberta.

The high standards for teachers in Alberta are supported by the ATA. Alberta teachers are among the best in the world. Teaching standards are advanced by the following:

- Teaching Quality Standard
- Principal Quality Practice Standard
- Annual professional growth plans
- Ongoing teacher supervision and evaluation
- Representation on faculty of education councils
- Representation on certification committees
- Representation on the Council on Alberta Teaching Standards
- Active professional development programs
- Active maintenance of standards of professional conduct and professional practice



## **T**he ATA is its members! A unified profession establishes clearly identified goals to ensure student achievement.

Decisions are made by members in a unified, broad-based democratic structure. Every individual has an opportunity for input.

- The Annual Representative Assembly, attended by approximately 450 teacher representatives, based on population, sets policy and gives program direction.
- Provincial Executive Council (PEC) provides leadership in the ongoing activities of the teaching profession.
- Local leaders meet with school or work site representatives and PEC representatives regularly to share information and provide advice.
- Representatives at every school or work site in the province act as a liaison between members and the ATA.

# Active membership: the membership standard

The *Teaching Profession Act* makes membership in the ATA automatic upon employment as a teacher in public education. More than 35,000 full- and part-time teachers form the core of the ATA's active members. They are eligible to receive all ATA services and enjoy high levels of job protection. An additional 6,000 substitute teachers are considered active members upon first employment in a school year and maintain that status until the end of that school year.

Teachers in federal, charter and private schools and other educational institutions and teachers who are unemployed are *ineligible* for active membership. The *Teaching Profession Act* permits these teachers to be associate members. As associate membership is the highest category of membership available to them, they have the same rights and privileges as active members except they are not automatically entitled to legal support and representation. Furthermore, they are not subject to professional discipline by the Association.

An amendment to the *Teaching Profession Act* in 2004 gave a small number of members the right to opt out of active membership and become associate members or not to be members at all. For these individuals, ATA services are reduced or eliminated.

## Services to members

**ATA services are funded by member fees.**

### Professional Development

The ATA is the premier provider of professional development in education in Alberta. Each year the ATA organizes hundreds of institutes and workshops; dozens of conferences, seminars and symposiums; and 10 major conventions. The ATA also sponsors 21 specialist councils that organize conferences and workshops, and produce publications on curriculum and professional issues related to the specialty. One of the benefits of active membership in the ATA is the opportunity to obtain membership in one specialist council each year at no cost.



## **Publications**

The *ATA News* and the *ATA Magazine* are among many publications that the ATA produces each year to keep its members informed and up to date on professional, legal and political issues. Specialist councils also publish newsletters and journals containing the latest information on curriculum, pedagogy, council events and current issues.

## **Advocacy**

The ATA is the voice of the teaching profession in Alberta. The ATA is a non-partisan advocate in the political process and advocates on behalf of its members and Alberta's students. Provincial Executive Council (PEC), the elected governing body of the ATA, considers the interests of all members in reaching sound positions on matters of vital interest to the profession and education. This exercise in democracy ensures that adversarial situations are avoided and that energy goes into meeting student needs. No member of the profession or group outside the ATA can speak for or make commitments on behalf of the members or the profession.

## **Library**

The ATA maintains a professional library with an extensive collection of books, periodicals and videos available to members. Materials can be requested directly from the online catalogue on the ATA website, via e-mail or telephone, or by visiting the library at Barnett House. The library subscribes to two licensed databases providing full-text periodical articles from a variety of academic journals. Members must be logged on to the members-only portion of the website to access the full-text databases. The library also offers a wide range of research services to members. Library services and materials are available in both English and French.

## **Salary, Benefits and Job Protection**

The ATA protects the individual rights, the collective rights and the jobs of active members to the full, reasonable extent of the law. Advice is available from staff officers who are well recognized for their expertise and knowledge. Salary and benefits are negotiated by experienced and effective bargainers, who also assist in ensuring that collective agreements are followed. When necessary, legal assistance is provided at no cost to active members who are in or out of the collective agreement. Examples of legal services include contract advice and protection, representation (including some civil matters) and criminal protection (including allegations related to the past).



ATA Services Available*	Type of Membership		
	Active	Associate (Ineligible for active membership)	Associate (Opting out of active membership)
Status of being a member	✓	✓	✓
Participation in designated meetings	✓	✓	✓
Right to vote and hold office provincially	✓	✓	✓
Membership in a local	✓	✓	No
Salary and benefits protected by a collective agreement	✓	If in an ATA bargaining unit	No
Legal support	✓	At the ATA's discretion	No
Representation	✓	At the ATA's discretion	No
Support in accessing benefits	✓	At the ATA's discretion	No
Consultation and advice	✓	✓	No
Access to a members-only website	✓	✓	No
The <i>ATA News</i> and the <i>ATA Magazine</i>	✓	✓	No
Other ATA publications	✓	✓	No
Eligibility to serve on committees and on instructor and consultant corps	✓	✓	No
Subject to professional discipline	✓	No	No
Access to ATA workshops and presentations	✓	✓	No
Opportunity to attend teacher conventions	✓	✓	No
Specialist council membership	✓	✓	No
Access to the ATA library	✓	✓	No
Teachers' rate services (insurance, etc.)	✓	✓	No
Opportunity to participate in Project Overseas	✓	✓	No

**Contact the Association for advice on the availability of other services.**

**\*The ATA has the right to withdraw any service to an individual when appropriate.**

## Student Membership

ATA General Bylaws provide that students enrolled in full-time undergraduate programs leading to first certification as teachers in Alberta may become student members by joining a student local on their campus.

Student members receive services through their locals. In addition, they are eligible to access from the provincial level

- advice and consultation on professional matters;
- ATA presentations and seminars;
- the *ATA News*, the *ATA Magazine* and other publications;
- the ATA library;
- reduced rates for membership in specialist councils; and
- the opportunity to develop leadership skills.

## Life Membership

ATA General Bylaws provide that teachers who retire after 20 or more years of membership are awarded life membership. Such membership not only celebrates their long commitment to the profession but also helps them maintain contact with the profession through free access to publications such as the *ATA News* and the *ATA Magazine*. Life members are not entitled to vote or hold office in the ATA. Should they wish to participate in these activities they must become associate members.

## Honorary Membership

Each year, the ATA invites locals to nominate individuals for consideration as honorary members. PEC considers the merits of the nominees and grants honorary membership to a person who has provided outstanding service to public education in Alberta. Honorary membership is the ATA's highest award.





ISBN 978-1-897196-56-4

MS-60 2010 10