In our private lives, our communities, and the larger world, we are seeing a return of walls as the social and psychological boundaries crossing the last few decades is being replaced by a new inward-looking tribes. How will the new insularity affect our efforts as families and communities seek to ensure healthy, secure, open and democratic lives for youth? How will walls affect our ability to learn and form one another?

**Teachers and schools**

- **Cybercharters**
  - Are the implications of education and learning to be widened at all times, anywhere and at any place to public environments?

- **Segregation governance**
  - Segregation between poor and other students in public schools grew more than double since 1990, with rising residential segregation by income. The result? More liberté, more equality.

- **Institutionalization of childhood**
  - One-third of Alberta parents have hired a tutor for their child. Typically, the child is already academic over-achieving.

**Families and communities**

- **Domination of homophily**
  - For all the hope that comes from connecting with like-minded people and new ideas, researchers have found that online behavior is dominated by “homophily”, leading you to align and associate with people like yourself, and to exclude outsiders. Social media is local, helping you engage with people with whom you feel good about associating with those who pursue your outlook. (Bowen, 2017)

- **Adaptive learning**
  - Publishers and educational technology companies, promoting quantitative collecting data that will profile them from kindergarten to adult life.

**Liberation**

- **The glasses on several smart devices in a small neighborhood including themselves on the social safety net, new and emerging from one another.**

**Value of democracy**

- **Conflicts in Western Europe and the US** significantly less important to living in a democracy than other generations. Whereas, the former, born during the interval and initial postwar years, consider democracy to be an absolute value, references are far less intense. Much more important is the addition of democracy to the world. (Habbek, 2017)

**Unpredictable consequences**

- **Different sectors of the economy and different parts of the country will be harmed more than one would expect.** But one estimate projects that rising temperatures could cause U.S. productivity losses of $700 billion per year. (Burnham, 2017)

**Canada and Alberta**

- **Data security**
  - Even from a country as small as Canada, artificial intelligence (A.I.) will eventually gobble up 16 per cent of the world’s total carbon budget if it is to keep within its two separate carbon budgets. (Nikiforuk, 2017)

**Global**

- **The great divide**
  - The power of the internet and increased knowledge and skills are driven by continuous economic changes. However, the increased digital divide is driven by low-income internet access. (Bowen, 2017)
The Future has an Ancient Heart.

The future is not a result of choices among alternative paths offered by the present, but a present that creates... From the Mandala-M... in fact it is. The future is not something we are going to. But one we are creating. The path is not to be found, but made, and the activity of making them changes both the maker and the destination. (Linde Schau)

This publication is part of an ongoing commitment by the Alberta Teachers’ Association (ATA) to engage Albertans in a public dialogue about our shared future. The reverse side of this document identifies four strategic trends that are impacting society. On this side of the document is a comprehensive blueprint for educational development—detailed in the ATA research study A Great School for All: Transforming Education in Alberta—that outlines a hopeful and bold vision for 12 dimensions of development—detailed in the ATA research study A Great School for All: Transforming Education in Alberta—that outlines a hopeful and bold vision for 12 dimensions of change necessary to transform education and ensure that the gifts and talents of all Alberta students are fully realized. This transformation can only be achieved by and with teachers at the centre of educational development focused on excellence through equity.

Background

Since the turn of the new millennium, the ATA has hosted a series of public lectures and invitational research symposia focused on the role that public education will play in co-creating the future of Alberta. These public lectures have featured leading thinkers including Sir Ken Robinson, Sherry Turkle, Yong Zhao, Pasi Sahlberg, Michael Adams, Justin Trudeau, Linda Dobson, Jean Twenge, Thomas Homer-Dixon, Valerie Steeves, Wade Davis, Darin Horn, Michael Rich and Margaret Wheatley.

Strategic Focus

Engagement with Albertans that focuses on the critical issues affecting children and education is one of the key elements of the Association’s strategic plan—a document that conveys the Association’s clarity of commitment and unites its preferred future with a meaningful action.

Use the QR code to link to the ATA strategic plan and a digital version of this document.

No one is coming to save us...

We are the ones we have been waiting for. (Maya Angelou)

These words by the Indigenous Hopi Elders offer both an invitation and provocation as we engage the volatility, change and uncertainty of our shared future. As points of departure for an important public dialogue, the four strategic trends in this publication offer a glimpse of possible and probable futures, all worthy of our deeper reflection.

For more background information about this publication and ongoing partnerships with Albertans teaching, learning, profession, visit teachers.ab.ca or contact Dr Philip McRae at philip.mcrae@ata.ab.ca or 1-800-232-7208.

The path to educational excellence is through equity. My dream is that every student will have access to a great school in their community. (Pasi Sahlberg)

Accountability in Public Assurance

Narrow accountability vs. Public Assurance

What we expect: results

We have a public management system

What we need: a public engagement paradigm

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