

LEADERSHIP UPDATE

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Nearly One in Three Alberta Teachers Considering Leaving Employer

ATA president worries about impact of workload issues on teachers and students

A research report released today reveals the majority of Alberta teachers are satisfied with the work of teaching, but 30 per cent of them consider leaving their employers at least once a week.

The Situation for Alberta Teachers is the fourth report stemming from the 2011/12 *National Study on Balancing Work and Caregiving in Canada*, authored by renowned work-life balance experts Linda Duxbury (Carleton University) and Christopher Higgins (University of Western Ontario). It compares the results from a sample of 2,462 Alberta teachers with national findings from 25,000 employed Canadians and highlights unique work-life challenges for Alberta teachers.

The study found that teachers work more hours per week than most Canadians. The typical Alberta teacher spends an average of 10 hours more per week on work tasks than other professionals in the study sample—60.8 hours for teachers versus 50.2 hours for other professions.

“What really surprised me is how much time teachers spend doing things for their students—marking, volunteering and so on—outside school hours; about 14 hours a week, or approximately two days of additional work

per week outside the more than 41 hours they spend at the school,” said Duxbury.

The study also shows that teachers exhibit high work overload and high work-family conflict and are significantly less likely to have any form of workplace flexibility. ATA President Carol Henderson views the findings as troublesome for teachers and for Alberta classrooms.

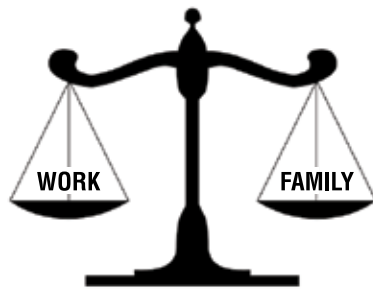
“We know that teachers enjoy their work with students and want to do their best work for children,” said Henderson. “But this study confirms that the limitless devotion to the profession is just not sustainable. The workload of teachers has to be addressed. The

conditions for teachers in our education system directly impact the conditions for students. And right now, conditions for many teachers in this province aren't good.”

The Situation for Alberta Teachers is available at <http://tinyurl.com/at5lh9c>. For an in-depth story on the study's findings, go to <http://tinyurl.com/ck9b5we>.

For more information on the study, contact Dr Linda Duxbury, Sprout School of Business, Carleton University, at 613-225-9985.

For comments on the findings on Alberta's teachers, contact Carol Henderson, ATA president, at 780-447-9457 or (toll-free in Alberta) 1-800-232-7208.



**The past is
where you
learned the
lesson.
The future is
where you
apply the
lesson.**

—Unknown



Council for
School Leadership

Local Bargaining/ Provincial Agreement

Historically, teachers and school boards have bargained collective agreements at the local level for more than 70 years.

In November 2007, the provincial ATA and the government reached an agreement to address an unfunded liability in the teachers' pension plan. That agreement established a process for settling all collective agreements in the province through to the end of the 2011/12 school year. Teacher salary rates for the last four years of the agreement were based on the increases in the Alberta Average Weekly Earnings Index. Because this agreement has now expired, teachers in all 62 bargaining units have been working without a collective agreement in place since September 2012.

Discussions about a new provincial framework were first initiated in the fall of 2010 by the Government of Alberta and have continued on and off under the direction of various education ministers since. In December 2012 and February 2013, Minister of Education Jeff Johnson made separate proposals for a provincial framework agreement that were rejected outright by the Association. Absent a framework

agreement, teacher bargaining units have attempted to carry on with local collective bargaining as usual.

Unfortunately, recent developments, including explicit directives from Minister Johnson to boards concerning what is acceptable in a local agreement and a provincial budget that froze the base instruction grant for the next three years while cutting other transfers, have severely compromised the local bargaining process.

In response, the Association officials have worked with government representatives to outline teachers' concerns with government's earlier proposals and, in response, Premier Alison Redford intervened to make a new offer that addresses critical teacher concerns. The offer, which Provincial Executive Council accepted and is recommending be forwarded to Association bargaining units for ratification, proposes to settle teacher salaries for a four-year term and make improvements addressing teacher workload and limiting teachers' instructional time. It still, however, provides opportunities for collective bargaining between Association bargaining units and school boards.

Before the offer can be put into effect, though, it must be approved by members in each of 62 bargaining units and by each of the province's 62 school boards, a process that must be completed before May 13, 2013.





Q & A
GORDON THOMAS
 Executive Secretary

Q: I notice that a number of boards have posted their opening positions online, and a common theme appears to be the removal of administrators from the collective agreement. Will administrators be removed from the collective agreement?

A: There are a number of reasons why the Association supports and defends the inclusion of administrators in the collective agreement.

School administrators are teachers with an administrative designation. Principals, vice-principals and assistant principals are teachers with an allowance that accompanies a designation but are always teachers first.

Principals and other teachers with an administrative designation play a vital role in Alberta’s education system. We base our model of education delivery on the fact that all teachers are professional colleagues first. Even though some have a supervisory role, all are active in teaching students. In the school setting, the working relationship between the instructional leaders of the school and the classroom teachers is best implemented through a collegial model. Here, *collegiality* generally refers to relations among staff that are supportive of professional efforts and provides for the opportunity for relationships of personal and professional value to teachers. So, philosophically speaking, separating teachers with an administrative designation from their colleagues in the school setting is in direct opposition to our core beliefs as a unitary profession.

Our collegial model isn’t without its challenges. The principal’s ‘management’ responsibilities under the *School Act* and Alberta Education’s draft leadership framework can be difficult to navigate when working with colleagues; however, the principals’ primary responsibilities in the *School Act* emphasize instructional leadership.

The objects of the Association are described in section 4 of the *Teaching Profession Act*. With respect to collective bargaining, s4(b)(iii) stipulates that the Association is to promote “*the establishment of working conditions that will make possible the best level of professional service.*” It is in this object that the union function of the Association is rooted. The Association is a unified organization, with the union function operating within the larger umbrella of the profession. Consequently, the Association carries a special obligation to represent all its members’ interests. Active membership in the Association entitles teachers to the full range of rights, advice and protections of the Association. It is difficult to see how school administrators would be served well by being excluded from the collective agreement.

The *Labour Relations Code* (LRC) is the legislation that governs the collective bargaining relationship between employers and unions. The LRC specifies in s153(1) that

No trade union or person acting on behalf of a trade union shall deny an employee or former employee who is or was in the bargaining unit the right to be fairly represented by the trade union with respect to the employee’s or former employee’s rights under the collective agreement.

Section 153 outlines our duty of fair representation. Were the Association to agree to remove administrators from the collective agreement, it would open the Association to labour relations complaints of failure to represent administrators fairly. It is not in the Association’s legal interest to entertain this course of action. To that end, the Association is prepared to act to support and defend the rights of school administrators under the collective agreement.

To find archived issues of *Leadership Update*, go to www.teachers.ab.ca and click on Other Publications (under Publications), then go to School Administrators.

Feedback is welcome. Please contact Konni deGoeij, associate coordinator, administrator assistance, Member Services, at konni.degoeij@ata.ab.ca.





WHO ARE WE?

The Council for School Leadership (CSL) is a specialist council of the Alberta Teachers' Association whose membership comprises emerging and current school leaders, principals, assistant principals and division-level principals. The Council for School Leadership is a province-wide advocate for school leaders and is charged with the task of articulating and addressing the needs of its members. The Council for School Leadership believes in

- Public education for all children
- Leadership learning professional activities to support emerging and current school leaders focused on innovation and change management
- Supporting networks of leaders to facilitate a connected community
- Experienced school leaders acting as mentors and coaches
- Recognizing excellence in leadership

Membership offers the following benefits:

- The opportunity to attend many regional and provincial professional improvement activities at a reduced rate
- The opportunity to network and collaborate with administrators locally and provincially
- A voice concerning the direction the province and the ATA are heading regarding policies that affect school leaders
- A voice at the national level
- Membership in the Canadian Association of Principals (CAP)
- The *Leadership Times* newsletter, published tri-annually
- Representation on the School Administrators' Issues and Concerns Committee (SAICC)
- Eligibility for the prestigious CSL Distinguished Leadership Award, which is bestowed annually in May
- Eligibility for Canada's Outstanding Principals Award
- Professional development opportunities sponsored by CSL: uLead Conference (Edmonton), Leadership Essentials for Administrators—LEA (Calgary or Edmonton), Banff Leadership Seminar, Educational Leadership Academy—ELA (Banff), CAP 2013 Conference (Banff Springs Hotel)
- School council resource materials and workshops
- *Issues for Administrators* monograph series

For more than 50 years the CSL has been representing school leaders in Alberta and helping them to grow



Find Out More at bit.ly/joincsl



Council for School Leadership

Council for School Leadership Distinguished Leadership Awards

The Council for School Leadership is pleased to invite nominations from throughout Alberta for the CSL Alberta Distinguished Leadership Awards in a new format that will see 20 recipients honoured in May. The CSL Distinguished Leadership Awards create a learning community of outstanding principals throughout Alberta who can share professionally, interact collegially and act as mentors to new colleagues. They provide avenues for research and sharing of best practices. The cadre of distinguished Alberta school leaders are people who want to challenge the status quo, improve learning in their contexts and be equipped for higher levels of leadership. These people will become role models in a vibrant network of educational leaders with the confidence and capabilities to lead innovative change for 21st-century learning—the Council for School Leadership.

Please consider nominating a deserving school leader for consideration for this honour. You can nominate a school leader for this award by visiting bit.ly/CSLLeader. (Note: this link is case sensitive.)

Regular Active members of the Alberta Teachers' Association and associate members who are ineligible for active membership as specified by ATA bylaws are eligible for regular membership in the council. All such members are entitled to full privileges of council membership, including the rights to vote and hold office.

Student Student members of the ATA may join this council and are entitled to all benefits and services of council membership except the right to hold office.

Life Retired members of the ATA, as specified in ATA bylaws are eligible for life membership in the council and are entitled to all the benefits and services of council membership except the right to hold office.

*Central office staff who are eligible for active membership in the Association, but have elected associate or non-membership are not eligible for specialist council membership.

Council for School Leadership Membership Categories

Visionary Leadership for Today's Learner

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You must be a
CSL member
before mid-May
2013 to be
eligible for
the draw.

ICP – Cairns, Australia – July 2013
CAP 2014 – Halifax – Spring 2014

This May, the Council for School Leadership will select one member to attend the International Congress of Principals Conference, in Cairns, Australia, and one member to attend the CAP 2014 conference, in Halifax, NS.

If you are a school principal, assistant principal or district leader, join the CSL today to be eligible for our spring PD draw. Find out more at

bit.ly/joincsl

