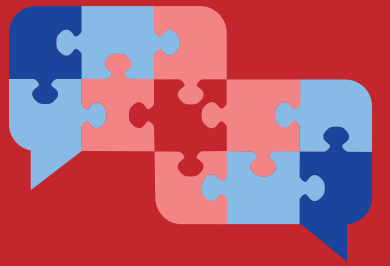




RALLIES ACROSS ALBERTA

Tens of thousands show support for public education See pages 6-7.



Bargaining update

Teachers go on strike

See page 4.

ATA NEWS

October 14, 2025 ■ Volume 60, Number 3

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TAKING A STAND, TOGETHER

To picket or not to picket?

It depends on the industry

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Premier sets education mandate

Consultation and caution urged

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Trustee time

Teachers run in the school board trustee election

See [page 8](#).

Alberta teachers are making history.



CORY HARE

Standing up for what you believe in is rarely easy. In fact, it can be downright scary—not knowing what comes next, not knowing if your voice will be heard. But it also feels good to take a stand for what you believe in. To raise your voice and stand in your courage, knowing that you are part of a chorus that is united and unwavering.

The government knows what teachers want. To say otherwise is nonsense. Across this province, we have rallied together—tens of thousands of teachers, parents, students and supporters—to make it clear that teachers want what students need: a strong, well-funded public education system that respects the profession and lifts up every student.

Teachers want to be in classrooms. We chose this profession because

we are committed to and believe in our students and their success. But enough is enough. Teachers are stretched too far, resources are too few, and more students are falling through the cracks at a faster pace.

Together, we are urging the government to provide real solutions. No more band-aids. No more excuses. Teachers need real, tangible ways forward with meaningful investments that address classroom size and complexity and that show understanding of and respect for the teaching profession.

The Alberta promise is about a better future. This fight isn't just about today. It's about protecting the future of our students, our profession and public education itself. We stand here in this moment in time so that the teachers and students who come after us inherit something stronger,

not something broken. We don't want to wind up here again.

What we are doing right now matters. History will remember that when public education was under threat, Alberta teachers stood their ground. This moment is more important than we might ever know.

So be proud. Be bold. Stand shoulder to shoulder knowing that we fight for each other, for our students and for the future of this province.

Thank you for your courage. Thank you to everyone standing beside us in solidarity. Together, we can do anything. Together, we will stay strong, stay united. Together, **we are ATA.** ■

Alberta teachers' strike a catalyst for change and hope



EDITORIAL

Kristine Wilkinson
ATA News
Editor-in-Chief

The teachers' strike in Alberta has ignited conversations that reach far beyond classrooms and staff rooms. It has become a symbol of collective resilience and a call to reimagine the future of education in our province. This moment is not just about contracts and negotiations. It's about values, vision and the kind of society we want to build. The rallies held across Alberta have made one thing abundantly clear: teachers are passionate advocates for public education, and they are united in their demand for meaningful change.

I remember standing at the legislature during a previous strike, a young teacher with an Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) flag around my neck, filled with hope that education would finally become a priority for our government. Yet

here we are, still fighting. Over the years, classrooms have moved away from being truly student-centred. Now, teachers are just doing the best they can with the limited resources they have. That shift is not just disappointing—it's unacceptable—and voices are being raised loudly around this issue.

the unified effort of every member of the ATA. Teachers are speaking with one voice, organized with purpose, and are advocating together.

This moment is a rallying cry for all stakeholders—teachers, parents, policymakers and community members—to reimagine and reinvest in Alberta's education system. The

same message: "I am doing this for the future of Alberta's students." That kind of dedication is what makes this movement so powerful.

The power of unity and the belief that progress is possible remind us that even in challenging times, collective action can spark meaningful change. Alberta's teachers are not just advocating for today—they are building a legacy of hope and opportunity for generations to come.

As the dust settles and negotiations continue, one thing remains clear: this strike has awakened a shared sense of purpose. It has shown that when we stand together—as teachers, as communities and as the ATA—we can shape a future where education is not just preserved but transformed.

Let this be the beginning of a renewed commitment to Alberta's students, teachers and the promise of public education. Let this be the start of the recognition that teachers are passionate and professional, and that they know how to get the job done. ■

I welcome your comments. Contact me at kristine.wilkinson@ata.ab.ca.

“ This moment is a rallying cry for all stakeholders—teachers, parents, policymakers and community members—to reimagine and reinvest in Alberta's education system. ”

At the heart of this movement in support of public education are the teachers who make up the ATA. As public teachers in this province, we can proudly say, "We are the ATA." The job action is not the work of a few; it is

strike is not a roadblock but a stepping stone toward a more equitable, innovative and sustainable future for schools across the province. I've listened to stories from teachers across Alberta, and every time I hear the

To picket or not to picket? Depends on the industry



Q & A

Dennis Theobald
ATA Executive
Secretary

Question: Why isn't the Association mounting picket lines?

Answer: Most of the law and practices around labour relations generally, and strikes in particular, originate with historical industry practices. These do not necessarily translate well into a public service environment or to the situation we now find ourselves in.

In an industrial workplace, a picket line is intended to disrupt efforts by an employer to continue production or maintain services as usual. Picket lines are intended to slow or stop the delivery of materials, the movement of nonunion labour into and out of the site, and the removal of products or delivery of services, all of which is intended to cause the employer to lose revenue and, ultimately, to consider whether making concessions to striking workers might be the better alternative to the financial pain they are experiencing. Picket lines, therefore, are essential to the functioning of an industrial strike and the main tool for moving an employer toward a settlement. That is why an industrial union will maintain a daily picket line outside the workers' usual

place of employment for the duration of a strike. Maintaining the line is so important that unions will incent member participation by making the payment of strike pay to a union member conditional on their walking the line.

While a legal right to maintain a picket line is recognized, Alberta's labour legislation severely restricts the operation of picket lines and

and there is no "production" to shut down by means of a picket line. That is the main reason Provincial Executive Council, acting on the advice of the Central Strike Advisory Committee, decided not to undertake picketing. Instead, teachers' efforts have been focused on raising public awareness in the hope that parents and ordinary citizens will pressure the government to commit the funding necessary to

government, which is actually saving money (estimated at \$21 million per day) every day the strike continues. So instead of picket lines, teachers will exercise their right to free expression and free association in the form of demonstrations and other coordinated activities to drive their message home directly to the government and indirectly to the public. An important responsibility of locals is organizing these events in the school community and ensuring that they are carried out in accordance with legal requirements for notification of relevant authorities, insurance, permits and the like. Effective action sends the message but avoids alienating those whose support we are counting on. Furthermore, such action must not trip prohibitions against secondary picketing by, for example, blocking access to an MLA's office.

The provincial Association is providing support to locals in organizing their events to ensure compliance with all legal requirements and to assist in matters including arranging for insurance if required. Information about rallies is available to local presidents, local communications officers and local political engagement officers on their respective collaborative sites. ■

Questions for consideration in this column are welcome. Please address them to Dennis Theobald at dennis.theobald@ata.ab.ca.

“ Teachers' efforts have been focused on raising public awareness in the hope that parents and ordinary citizens will pressure the government to commit the funding necessary to meet teachers' legitimate expectations for improved classroom conditions and compensation. ”

effectively prohibits secondary pickets, which are mounted for disruptive purposes by striking workers at places other than their usual worksite.

In the case of the teachers' strike, the usual places of employment, being schools, are simply not able to operate,

meet teachers' legitimate expectations for improved classroom conditions and compensation.

Teachers' strikes are intended to exert moral and political suasion on the government. What they can't do is exert economic pressure on the



The Alberta Teachers' Association

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Retired, but always a teacher: Why I still believe in public education



VIEWPOINTS

Carolyn Hartman
Retired teacher, Camrose

With municipal elections approaching across Alberta, I’ve been struck by how many retired teachers in Camrose are once again stepping up to run for the role of school trustee. It’s a familiar and encouraging sight. Teachers don’t easily walk away from education. So many of us continue to take an interest in what is happening in Alberta’s public education and to care about the next generation of students—and their teachers.

As a retired teacher who worked in three public schools in two different divisions, I have many reasons why I still care.

After earning my bachelor of education degree from the University of Alberta, I began teaching in Edmonton before moving to a part-time position in Camrose. When I took time away from the classroom for 14 years to raise my children, I found other ways to stay connected to the profession I loved: creating and coordinating children’s theatre and art programs and volunteering in the church and community. Even outside the classroom, a key tenet of public education—helping all children reach their potential—guided everything I did.

Then I returned to teaching. The class sizes were larger and there were more complexities. The expectations were higher. I also directed extracurricular choral and drama clubs, which I loved doing, but it was a lot of work. I was fortunate to work alongside wonderful, caring and dedicated colleagues. Support from administrators and access to professional learning through the Alberta Teachers’ Association helped us adapt to new technology and growing classroom diversity. But it was still a lot of work, and this was decades ago.

Teachers don’t stop caring when they retire. Like many of my peers, I found new ways to give back—mentoring student teachers, presenting at teachers’ conventions, and developing classroom resources and children’s stories inspired by my teaching experiences. These opportunities allowed me not only to stay connected to the profession but also to help prepare the next generation of teachers who will carry public education forward.

Our community also continues to be strengthened by retired teachers who still seek out ways to have a meaningful impact on the lives of children and youth, whether by stepping forward for school board trustee, volunteering with the local music festival, serving on committees or reading to an elementary class. Their involvement is about stewardship. We are part of a profession that cares. We care about our communities and understand that when public education is well supported, the entire community benefits.

Now, as a grandparent, I still find joy in teaching. Visits with my grandchildren remind me why I loved teaching in the first place—there is nothing better than inspiring and nurturing curiosity in kids. My four children and eight grandchildren all attended (and some still currently attend) public schools, and seeing their growth reaffirms my belief that our public system is worth protecting.

Public education is about providing every child with access to quality learning and opportunities to be inspired. Strong public schools create engaged citizens who contribute to vibrant communities. But this system cannot be taken for granted. It requires ongoing investment and the collective belief that every child’s education matters.

As voters prepare to choose new school trustees, I hope they recognize what’s at stake. The decisions trustees make affect the strength of our public education system and our communities for years to come. Well-resourced and supported public schools serve all of Alberta.

Teachers may retire, but our belief in public education endures. Supporting our public schools means protecting the values that hold our communities together. When we stand up for public education, we stand up for every child’s right to learn. ■

Carolyn Hartman taught elementary school for 20 years. A writer in her retirement, Hartman is passionate about storytelling and fostering of love of literacy and learning in children.

RED FOR ED

On Oct. 4, Camrose teacher Daylan Wizniuk used his marathon running skills to cultivate support for teachers in Alberta public schools. Wizniuk ran 100 miles, picking up letters in support of public education along the way to deliver to his MLA.

Teachers from Don Bosco School in Calgary wearing #RedForEd



Teachers showing their Red for Ed at Sturgeon Composite High School



Show us your Red for Ed

Want to share how you or your team is supporting public education in Alberta? Let your colleagues know why you wear Red for Ed or how you create moments of engagement or advocacy. Email managing editor Lindsay Yakimyshyn at lindsay.yakimyshyn@ata.ab.ca.

Create your own “Red for Ed” wear. Visit albertateachersassociation.entripyshops.com to customize and order “Red for Ed” branded apparel — hats, hoodies and more! The online shop rotates graphics every few months, so check out the current styles now.



BARGAINING

Central Table 2024

We are ATA.

Alberta teachers take historic stand with strike

Kim Clement
ATA News Staff

On October 6, teachers across Alberta began provincewide strike action, marking one of the largest labour actions in the province’s history. The strike follows teachers’ overwhelming rejection of a tentative memorandum of agreement presented this September, with 89.5 per cent voting no. More than 43,000 teachers cast ballots online between September 27 and 29. With this result, teachers began strike action on October 6.

This labour action is a historical moment: the first provincewide strike action by Alberta’s public, separate and francophone school teachers. The vote signals teachers’ deep frustration with critical classroom issues and years of falling behind in compensation, said ATA president Jason Schilling.

“The proposed agreement failed to meet the needs of teachers, failed to improve student classroom conditions in a concrete and meaningful way, and failed to show teachers the respect they deserve,” said Schilling.

The outcome makes clear the wide gap between teachers’ day-to-day realities in classrooms and the government’s perception of public education in Alberta.

At the centre of the matter are classroom conditions, workload and compensation. Teachers report that their class sizes have grown and student needs have become increasingly complex, creating additional demands and pushing learning environments to a breaking point.

“When oversized classes and growing student complexities combine to create learning environments that no longer meet students’ needs and push teachers far past their limits, the government must be held accountable,” said Schilling.

The vote highlights teachers’ desire for an agreement that addresses classroom conditions and provides compensation that reflects the responsibilities of the profession.

Parents, students and the broader community are monitoring the situation closely, as the strike affects both school operations and student learning. For teachers, the action is intended to support

sustainable teaching conditions and ensure students have access to the resources they need.

“This action is about maintaining learning environments where students can succeed and teachers have the support they need to provide education effectively,” said Schilling.

During an interview on October 8, Minister Demetrios Nicolaides signalled that \$2.6 billion is the “bucket” the government is working with and that trade-offs would need to be made in order to reach an agreement.

“We’re happy to work within that bucket to provide teachers with an increase [in wages] and help address some of the increasing complexity issues that we see in our classroom,” he said. “But we do have a limited bucket that we’re operating with.”

At time of press, the two parties were set to resume formal bargaining on October 14. This meeting follows a series of informal talks involving key members of both bargaining committees in an effort to find common ground and explore paths forward in bargaining. The latest updates on bargaining and the strike action are available on the ATA’s website. ■

Premier sets out education mandate

Directives on certification fast-tracking, Bill 27 draw criticism

Lindsay Yakimyshyn
ATA News Managing Editor

Alberta’s minister of Education and Childcare has been handed a wide-ranging mandate that includes directives on fast-tracking teacher certification, ensuring implementation of Bill 27, and advancing trades education and training.

In a mandate letter dated Sept. 22, Premier Danielle Smith acknowledged work undertaken by the ministry under Minister Demetrios Nicolaides before outlining its next priorities. Smith highlighted the Schools Now program—which accelerated 33 school projects—and the new standards for school library materials, which were revised after pushback this fall, as examples of the ministry’s recent accomplishments.

Looking ahead, Smith’s letter outlines 15 directives for the ministry. These include the following areas of focus: develop supports for students pursuing careers in areas facing labour shortages; advance vocational education, training and careers in the skilled trades; support career and education planning; support student mental health; support students with complex needs; strengthen parental input and ensure the funding model continues to promote parental choice in education; ensure implementation of Bill 27; and introduce an abbreviated path for individuals with degrees, diplomas or trade certifications to become certificated teachers.

Alberta Teachers’ Association (ATA) president Jason Schilling said the mandate letter contains several promising elements, including commitments to enhance student mental health supports, address complex learning needs and construct CTS labs. At the same time, the ATA has raised concerns with some of the directives.

Consultation and caution urged

Schilling urged the government to proceed with caution with its next steps, particularly when considering any abbreviated form of certification.

“Teaching is a rigorous profession requiring expertise and specialized skills beyond just subject knowledge,” he said. “We need to ensure our future teachers have the tools they need to succeed



Premier Danielle Smith and Minister Demetrios Nicolaides at a news conference on Sept. 30

in classrooms, while upholding the quality of education Alberta students deserve.”

What an abbreviated certification process might look like remains unclear and, in response to the mandate letter, Nicolaides said options are still being explored.

“Hopefully in the very near future, we’ll have some more information to announce. But obviously any individual would need to have some additional training to get up to speed, to understand the curriculum, the curriculum outcomes, to understand the teaching quality standard and standards that we have for teachers,” Nicolaides said.

Another directive drawing criticism relates to the implementation of Bill 27. Smith’s letter instructs Nicolaides to use “all available legal and constitutional means” to enforce Bill 27 (the *Education Amendment*

Act), which came into effect on Sept. 1, 2025. The amendments to the *Education Act* pertain to parental opt-in for sexual education classes; ministerial approval for resources and presentations on gender identity, sexual orientation or human sexuality; and parental consent and notification for name and pronoun changes in school.

While not confirming whether the notwithstanding clause would be invoked in implementing the amendments, Nicolaides acknowledged that “all options are on the table.”

“As the mandate letter directs, we want to make sure that it is fully implemented,” he said.

This directive comes a few weeks after two advocacy groups, Egale Canada and Skipping Stone, filed a constitutional challenge against the province on Bill 27, arguing that it represents a direct constitutional attack on the rights of gender-diverse youth. As the challenge works its way through the legal system, Schilling emphasizes the responsibility of teachers to keep students safe.

“Parental rights need to be balanced with teachers’ responsibility to ensure every student feels affirmed and supported in their learning environment,” Schilling said.

For his part, Nicolaides said he anticipates further legislation over the next two years to fulfill the mandate letter but did not provide specifics.

In responding to the mandate, Schilling urged the government to collaborate with teachers before implementing any program or policy changes that would affect Alberta’s education system.

“The government needs to engage in meaningful dialogue with the profession and educational partners to implement the priorities identified in the mandate,” he said. “Alberta’s students deserve a future shaped by thoughtful, research-informed policy, and together we can find solutions.” ■

The ATA’s full statement in response to the mandate letter is available here:
<https://abteach.cc/ATAresponseletter>.

Read the full mandate letter to the minister here: <https://abteach.cc/ABmandateletter>.

Teacher–parent navigates strike action

Lindsay Yakimyshyn
ATA News Managing Editor

For Oralia Hernandez, October 6 was a heavy day. It was the first day of the teachers’ strike, one she faced not only as a teacher, but also as a parent.

Hernandez was already feeling the weight of uncertainty that has affected teachers, parents and students since the strike notice was issued in September. But the first day of job action was hard.

“It just feels so surreal,” said Hernandez, a junior high teacher with 17 years of experience. “It was also hard to say goodbye to my students. My kids were having to say goodbye to their friends.”

The strike carries added tension for Hernandez’s family. Her daughter, a Grade 12 student, is beginning her postsecondary applications, and the uncertainty of school closures has her worried.

“She’s worried about her diplomas, what impact this will have,” Hernandez said. “She’s asking about what’s going to happen next.”

Hernandez knows that school provides not only academic and extracurricular activities, but also stability for many students.

“It’s heartbreaking because we know that a lot of these kids need those connections. School is their safe place,” she said.

Despite seeing the pressures the strike is placing on students and families, including her own, Hernandez says teachers did not make this decision lightly. It was a last resort. She reflected on years of deteriorating conditions, growing class sizes and mounting pressures on teachers.

“Teachers are committed to their students, and this is why we’re in this



Edmonton teacher Oralia Hernandez

place now, why we chose to exercise job action,” she said. “We want to be there for all of our students, your kids. But it’s just not sustainable. The system has deteriorated to the point where we had no choice.”

Having taught overseas, Hernandez has long been proud of Alberta’s public education system, and it worries her to see its erosion.

For Hernandez, this strike is about more than policy or contracts. It is about standing up for the future of public education, for her students and for her own children. Despite the challenges of being part of this historical moment, Hernandez remains hopeful and wants students to know they are and will be supported to ensure they are not left behind.

“The public is supporting teachers, people are behind us and our kids will be okay,” she said. “At the end of the day, we will all be there to help and support our students.” ■



YOUR VIEWS

Teachers shared the little (and big!) ways they’re showing up for their colleagues during the strike to stay connected.

- Natasha Gillman-Oltmanns**
I am hosting an Epic Star Wars Night for all of my teacher colleagues’ kids, my “nieces and nephews”. I feel their knowledge of the Force is woefully lacking, and it is my duty to educate them.
- Tracy Evelyn**
Breakfast this morning and a visit to our strike office in town.
- Leah Durrant**
Our staff is very connected at all times! Many of us have worked together for over 15 years. We have open communication and offer each other safe spaces. We share memes, recipes and inspiration.
- Zan Pinsky**
Went for a walk with my coworkers today!
- Lee Porath**
Spending way too much time on social media and talking with everyone.
- Dave Thiara**
Going to MLA office on Wednesday to forward the plight of education...also, making the phone call to Premier Smith tomorrow (missed chance today).

- Lindsay Elizabeth**
Organizing hangouts and texting in our group chat! A few teacher friends and I are having pizza and movie nights.
- Chelsea Wassing**
School staff WhatsApp group. Sharing pics and updates.
- Andrea Ellis**
Daily team check ins! Social get togethers!
- Audra Schneider**
Meeting with my MLA.
- Caleb Koning**
We are intentional about getting together. Time for sharing stories even though we don’t have school.
- Lisa Whitson**
Organizing activities with coworkers so we feel community but are not spending money.
- Landen Blize**
Started a D&D club for my colleagues.
- Kate Hiller**
We had lunch together today at a coworker’s house! Everyone brought something.

Research confirms Alberta teachers are experiencing high workload, stress

Phil McRae, ATA Associate Coordinator, Research

Lisa Everitt, ATA Executive Staff Officer

Recently released results from the 2024 Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) confirm what teachers are saying: the profession in Alberta is under pressure.

The results from the most recent iteration of the TALIS show that Alberta teachers are experiencing the highest levels of occupational stress out of the 50 participating countries. Forty-two per cent of Alberta teachers report experiencing high levels of work-related stress, with the global average at just 19 per cent. Alberta teachers also rank near the top in the world for highest weekly work hours. The data show that Alberta teachers work 47 hours per week, which is behind only Japan, New Zealand and Singapore and is, on average, five hours more per week than all other countries.

TALIS results also show that teachers are needing to spend an increasing amount of instructional time addressing behavioural issues in the classroom. Other data from the study signal that teachers in the province have experienced a sharp decline in how they feel valued by policymakers. Only 13 per cent of Alberta respondents felt their views are respected by the government.

Further analysis of the TALIS report will be shared with members of the Alberta Teachers’ Association and policymakers over the coming weeks to paint a picture of what teachers are experiencing in Alberta. ■

TALIS is the largest international educator survey in the world, surveying over 280,000 teachers and school leaders across 55 education systems. Alberta is the only Canadian jurisdiction that participated in TALIS 2024, and Alberta’s results reflect a sampling of 1,800 participants. TALIS 2024 noted lower participation rates in Alberta this year, so the results must be interpreted with this in mind.

FOR THE RECORD

“Investing in Alberta’s future means we invest in the classrooms that support the majority of Alberta’s students, and taking public dollars away from them to fund private institutions is a disingenuous use of taxpayer funds.”

— Meagan Parisian, vice-president of the Alberta School Councils’ Association, to Postmedia on a petition regarding public funding for private schools

World Teachers' Day events precede historic provincewide strike

Cory Hare
ATA News Staff

On Sunday, October 5—World Teachers' Day and the eve of Alberta's first ever provincewide teacher strike—teachers and supporters gathered by the thousands in various cities and towns to show their support for public education.

At the Alberta legislature in Edmonton, a lively crowd of more than 18,000 engaged in various chants, including "Public education matters!" and "Get a deal now!"

ATA president Jason Schilling told the crowd that the key to success during the strike would be to get loud and stay loud. He also stressed the importance of sticking together.

"Here's what solidarity means: we don't back down, we stand shoulder to shoulder and we don't leave anyone behind," he told the crowd. "It's time to invest in kids. It's time to invest in classrooms. It's time to invest in Alberta's future."

In Calgary, approximately 2,000 gathered and the message was the same.

"We are here to build a future where every new teacher will not have to think about this day; they will move forward in our profession, thanks to the work we are doing now," said Lee Martin, president of Calgary Separate School Local No. 55.

A rally in Lethbridge attracted around 2,000 participants and events in Red Deer and Grande Prairie attracted several hundred each. ■

Rallies erupt



GRANDE PRAIRIE



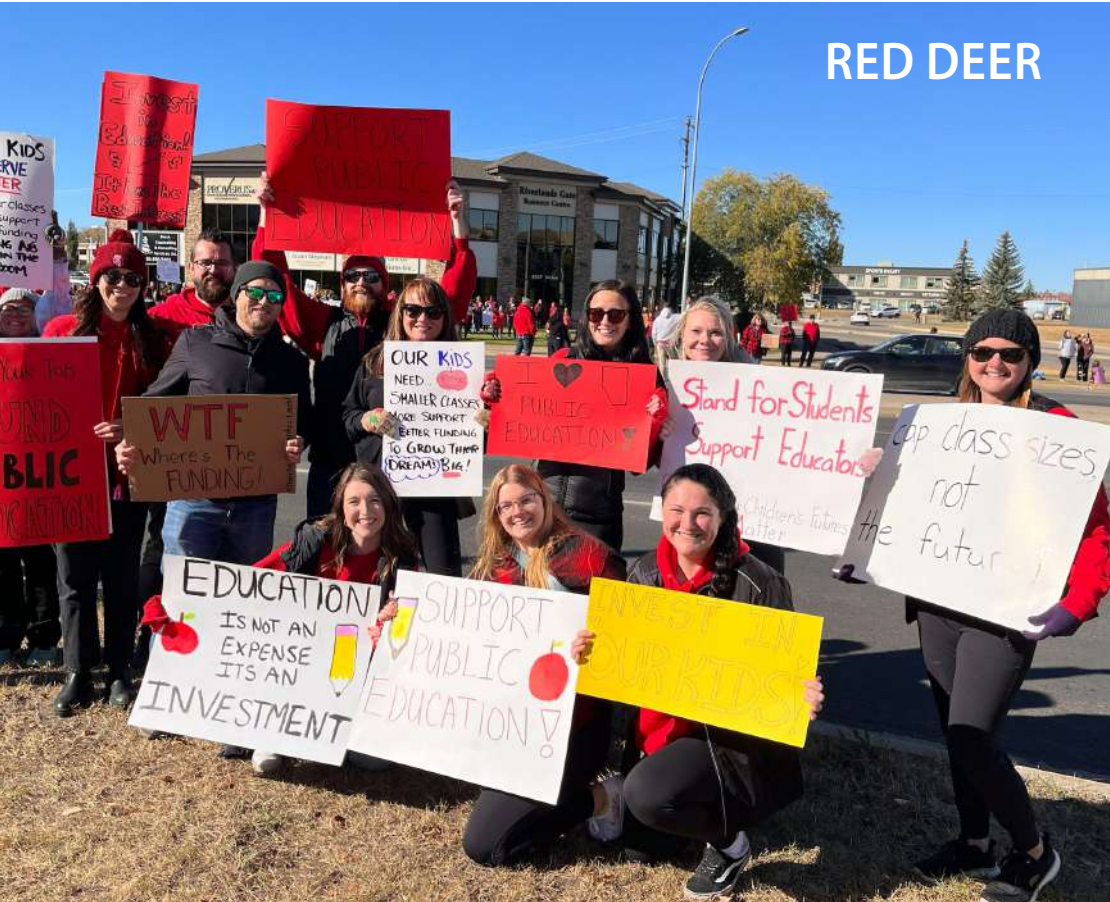
CALGARY





EDMONTON

CORY HARE



RED DEER

SUPPLIED



LETHBRIDGE

SUPPLIED



Ray Buziak



Leah Floyd



Shawn Haggarty



Al Stewart



Mark Swanson

Teachers run for school board trustee positions

ATA News Staff

This fall, Albertans will elect trustees to the province’s 61 public, separate and francophone school boards. Among the candidates are current and former members of the teaching profession.

Teachers running in the 2025 school board trustee election were invited to share their name, photo, brief platform statement and the school board for which they are running. The invitation applied to active Association members in good standing, Association life members and other members who have maintained the highest level of membership available to them.

Five submissions were received by the deadline and are highlighted here. Additional information on the trustee election, including platforms from candidates and voting details, is available on vote4kids.ca. Voting takes place on Monday, October 20.

Ray Buziak
Grande Prairie Public School Division

We need harmony and collaboration in our school communities. Chronic underfunding erodes harmony and leads to tension, anxiety and labour disruptions. We need increased base grants and equitable funding so we can restore harmony by better supporting our teachers, staff and students. I will continue to work to enhance public education.

Leah Floyd
Elk Island Public Schools

I am running because I care deeply about public education. With more than 20 years of classroom experience and as a parent with children in EIPS,

I bring a balanced perspective focused on creating supportive schools, engaged communities and bright futures for students.

Shawn Haggarty
Greater St. Albert Roman Catholic Separate School Division

Honoured to work 24 years with Greater St. Albert Catholic Schools. Strong voice protecting publicly funded Catholic education. Relationship based. Advocating for per student funding to be above the national average and reinstating class size averages to the Alberta Commission on Learning recommendations.

Al Stewart
Elk Island Catholic Schools

As a teacher, parent and grandparent, I know the importance of quality Catholic education. My priorities as trustee are clear: manage class sizes, secure stable funding, improve transportation, and support teachers as they address growing classroom complexities. Rooted in faith and committed to families, I will keep Catholic education strong.

Mark Swanson
Edmonton Catholic School Division

Mark Swanson, retired ATA executive, Concordia dean and Catholic school principal, believes in publicly funded Catholic education; right-sized funding for system growth and student success; relevant curriculum and resources for the 21st century; education fostering respect, honesty, loyalty, fairness and growth; and safe and caring learning environments for students, teachers and staff. ■



We all have an interest in public education.

On October 20, vote for your local school board trustee.

Visit vote4kids.ca for more information on voting, issues affecting education and candidates in your jurisdiction.



Vote4Kids.ca

COMM-244e 2025 01

ATA Magazine recognized with industry awards

ATA News Staff

The ATA Magazine received multiple honours at the Alberta Magazine Awards, held on September 25.

The magazine earned first place in the Editorial Package category for its feature entitled “We Are Here!” Published in the fall of 2024, it featured the lived stories of 2SLGBTQ+ teachers in the public education sphere.

In the Illustration category, the magazine earned

two awards, first place for its depiction of teacher Michael Koehler and second place for its rendition of teacher Tom Spila.

The magazine also earned second place in the Service Journalism category and was short-listed for awards in the following categories: Alberta Story, Cover, Essay and Feature Design.

“This recognition reinforces that the hard work and dedication shown by our staff and contributors is translating into a top-quality magazine for members,” said editor-in-chief Elissa Corsi.

Further, the magazine’s managing editor, Cory

Hare, was recognized as Editor of the Year for 2024–25 at the annual Alberta Magazine Awards. In accepting the award, Hare shared credit with the ATA Magazine team.

“Our team of designers and editors is second to none in this industry and any success I’ve had comes from being part of this group,” he said.

The Alberta Magazine Awards, presented annually and sponsored by the Alberta Magazine Publishers Association, celebrate and recognize excellence in journalism and visual storytelling in the province. ■



The magazine’s feature on teaching in unconventional settings took home second place for Service Journalism.



The depiction of teacher Michael Koehler received the top award for an illustration.



The illustration of retired teacher Tom Spila received an award.

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Alberta teachers named to national advisory committees

Lindsay Yakimyshyn
ATA News Managing Editor

Three Alberta teachers are set to bring provincial perspectives to the national stage after being appointed to Canadian Teachers’ Federation (CTF/FCE) advisory committees.

This year, Betty Fu, Isabelle Barre Czarnecki and Joshua LaFleur begin two-year terms on national committees focusing on the status of women, French as a first language and the teaching profession respectively. Their appointments give the Alberta Teachers’ Association (ATA) representation on four of the CTF/FCE’s five advisory committees.

Fu, a Curriculum and Learning Supports program coordinator with Edmonton Public Schools, said she will draw from her experience on local ATA committees, the Science Council executive and the CTF/FCE’s Teaching Together program in her work on the Advisory Committee on the Status of Women.

“These experiences showed me the value of building relationships with educators and learning from their diverse experiences,” Fu said. “As an Alberta teacher, I hope to share the issues we face as we continue to advocate for the importance of public education.”

Fu added that she looks forward to representing Alberta teachers on a committee that works to improve equity.



Betty Fu

“I hope to contribute my perspective on the unique challenges faced by women and other equity-denied communities within the teaching profession,” she said.

Barre Czarnecki, a francophone teacher with the East Central Francophone Education Region, said she is honoured to represent her colleagues. Originally from France and now active in her ATA local, she is passionate about strengthening francophone education in Alberta and across Canada. She will serve on the Advisory Committee on French as a First Language.

“It’s an opportunity and a responsibility, too, to represent teachers from Alberta and work with colleagues



Isabelle Barre Czarnecki

across Canada,” she said. “It’s not only a way to share my voice but also to learn more about francophone education across the country with all the teachers. Together, we can build strategies.”

LaFleur, a learning specialist with Rocky View Schools, also looks forward to collaborating nationally as part of the Advisory Committee on the Teaching Profession.

“I have loved learning from colleagues around Alberta on provincial committees and wanted to learn from teachers across Canada,” said LaFleur. “It is always so helpful to see what is happening in other spaces.”

Having served on several ATA subgroups and currently pursuing doctoral studies, LaFleur encourages



Joshua LaFleur

other teachers to grow and share their experiences by getting involved locally or through committees.

“[They are] a place for support, encouragement and many valuable ideas,” LaFleur said.

Together, Alberta’s representatives to CTF advisory committees are helping shape the future of education in Canada, ensuring the voices of Alberta teachers are heard. ■

Each year, the Alberta Teachers’ Association nominates members to serve on CTF/FCE advisory committees. Opportunities and application information are posted on the ATA’s website each spring under *Advocacy > Volunteer*.

Council authorizes support for challenge of Bill 27

PEC POINTS

Highlights of the Provincial Executive Council meetings held June 24, August 12–14, August 21, August 28, September 9 and September 10, 2025

1. Appointed members to the Central Strike Action Committee (CSAC).
2. Authorized the purchase of additional lawn signs to support advocacy around teacher collective bargaining.
3. Authorized one member of staff and two members of CSAC to attend the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees Strike Captain Training (online or in person) and to report to Council on anything applicable to the Association’s organizing for job action.
4. Authorized staff to publicize a guide for members in regards to Ministerial Order 030/2025 (Standards for the Selection, Availability and Access of School Library Materials), that outlines the reaches and the limits of the ministerial order; outlines members’ rights and obligations under the ministerial order, including teachers’ autonomy to select materials for use in their classrooms and their personal classroom libraries; outlines steps a member should take should they be compelled to remove educational material from their school or classroom library; emphasizes how members will be supported by the Association when they are challenged over their selection of materials; and outlines what members can do to voice

opposition to and lawfully resist the ministerial order.

5. Approved the name of one teacher for inclusion in the name bank from which Association instructors are selected.
6. Authorized \$800,000 to fund strike-related activities and demonstrations allocated in the appropriate fiscal year.
7. Authorized that the Association go forward with the recommendations of the CSAC, solidifying the communication strategy for rollout as soon as possible.
8. Authorized that the Association set 2025 10 06 to commence a strike, as authorized by members on 2025 06 10, and to provide notice of a strike commencing on 2025 10 06 by 2025 09 12.
9. Advise the government, members and the public of the Association’s willingness to engage in expedited negotiations, effective immediately.
10. Authorized and directed the Central Table Bargaining Committee to prepare a revised position in response to the government’s last tabled position for the purpose of resuming bargaining.
11. Authorized that the Association propose to the government a joint embargo on public commentary concerning bargaining for a mutually agreeable period.
12. Directed that, in the event of a strike, the Association will engage members in demonstrations and protests but will not conduct pickets at schools or other places of teacher work.
13. Authorized that strike action commencing 2025 10 06 will consist of a withdrawal of all services in all

jurisdictions and schools throughout the province, without exception.

Highlights of the Provincial Executive Council meeting held September 18–19, 2025, at Barnett House, Edmonton

1. Approved in principle the final form of seven electoral ballots proposed by local associations and three Council-sponsored electoral ballots for distribution to the membership.
2. Approved a statement of Association program emphases for 2025/26.
3. Authorized financial assistance in the amount of \$15,000 to Egale Canada in support of its constitutional challenge of the Government of Alberta’s *Education Amendment Act*, 2024 (Bill 27).
4. Authorized disbursement of the 2025/26 international cooperation budget for international goals, including Teachers’ Action for Teaching Project Overseas, Change for Children PD by Alberta Teachers, Tools for Schools Africa Foundation and Right to Learn Afghanistan.
5. Due to an ongoing decline in the demand for field service support from the Professional Development facilitator corps, the following decisions were made:
 - a. approved that the Professional Development facilitator corps be reduced to five members for the duration of the 2025/26 school year, with thanks to the members no longer serving;
 - b. authorized, effective immediately, that Professional Development

facilitators no longer receive an annual honorarium and are compensated for field service rendered;

c. approved that all duties currently assigned to the Professional Development facilitator corps be transferred to the Association instructor corps during the 2025/26 school year; and

d. approved that the Professional Development facilitator corps be dissolved, effective 2026 06 30.

6. Approved, as the position of Council, recommendations on the six-year review of policy and authorized locals be informed accordingly.

7. Approved, for submission to the 2026 Annual Representative Assembly, the proposed Disposition of Immediate Directives.

8. Approved two executive resolutions for submission to the 2026 Annual Representative Assembly.

9. Named field members to field experiences committees and the Substitute Teachers Committee, named a member to the Central Table Bargaining Committee (CTBC), and appointed a chair to the CTBC and the Central Strike Action Committee. ■

DID YOU KNOW?

Association administrative guidelines provide for the attendance of observers at selected portions of PEC meetings. Association members who are interested in observing selected portions of PEC meetings at their own expense are advised to contact their district representative.

Solutions In Action

Insights Event for ADHD & LD

OCT 25/25
Courtyard Airport Marriott
Conference Centre, Calgary



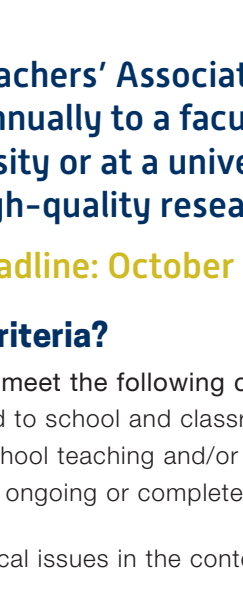
Dr. Sterling Sparshu



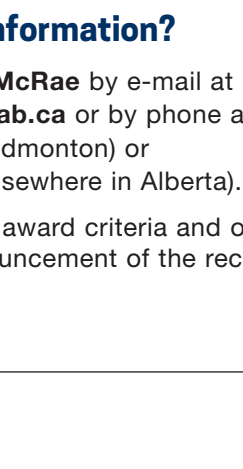
Dr. Heather Baker



Dr. Anita Parhar



Hayley Bobye-Magnusson



Aaron Telnes
...and other experts.



Learning Disabilities & ADHD Network
CALGARY REGION

Join us for a **full day of insights and practical strategies on ADHD and Learning Disabilities:**

- Teaching Complex Students - special double session for teachers
- Mental Health for Adults
- Optimizing Brains
- Homework Strategies
- Supporting 'Adulting' in Youth & more

At only \$30/ticket, this is ideal PD for the whole staff!



Get Tickets Now!



ATA EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AWARD

Alberta research focused on teaching & learning

The Alberta Teachers' Association Educational Research Award, valued at \$5,000, is presented annually to a faculty of education member or sessional lecturer at an Alberta university or at a university college that the Association recognizes who has undertaken high-quality research on classroom teaching and learning.

Application deadline: October 30, 2025

What Are the Criteria?

The research must meet the following criteria:

- Be directly related to school and classroom practice
- Be focused on school teaching and/or learning
- Be current (either ongoing or completed within the last two years)
- Be related to critical issues in the context of public education
- Have involved classroom teachers and/or students
- Be applicable to the Alberta context
- Be of practical benefit to teachers in improving their professional practice
- Be of high quality in terms of purpose, methodology and originality

Require More Information?

Contact **Dr Philip McRae** by e-mail at philip.mcrae@ata.ab.ca or by phone at **780-447-9469** (in Edmonton) or **1-800-232-7208** (elsewhere in Alberta).

Find details on the award criteria and on the selection and announcement of the recipient on the ATA website.

Application form
www.teachers.ab.ca





The Alberta Teachers' Association



COOR-165e 2025-09



Three teachers receive Inspiring Educator Award

Mark Milne
ATA News Staff

Three Alberta teachers have been named recipients of the TELUS World of Science 2025 Inspiring Educator Award, an initiative recognizing educators who make science engaging and accessible for students.

Created to mark the 40th anniversary of TELUS World of Science, this award highlights teachers who encourage curiosity and inspire discovery in the classroom.

This year's recipients are Hannah Ludlage, a junior high teacher at Cold Lake Junior High in Cold Lake; Chayce Moon, an elementary teacher at Glendale Sciences and Technology School in Red Deer; and Julie Arsenault, a junior high teacher at Michael Strembitsky School in Edmonton.

"I was absolutely thrilled when I found out I had been selected for the Telus World of Science Inspiring Educator Award," said Moon. "It was such an incredible honour to be recognized for sharing my love of science with students."

With the program sponsored by EPCOR, each award winner will receive a \$1,000 classroom grant to support science education, as well as a complimentary TELUS World of Science-Edmonton field trip for their entire class, which can be delivered either in person or virtually.

"The Inspiring Educator Award shines a spotlight on teachers who go above and beyond to make science engaging, accessible and exciting for their students," said Constance Scarlett, president and CEO of TELUS World of Science-Edmonton. "We look forward to seeing how this year's recipients use their classroom funds and science centre programs to continue their efforts."

For the teachers receiving the award, the recognition serves as both encouragement and inspiration to keep finding creative ways to bring science to life in their classrooms.

Arsenault plans to use the award to help build on the learning experiences her students

will have during their trip to the TELUS World of Science.

"I am planning to use the money to purchase robots that my students will learn how to code during our field trip," said Arsenault. She also intends to expand this unique learning opportunity well beyond her own classroom. "I want to have my junior high students partner with some elementary classes to help support their new coding and technology curriculum outcomes."

Moon says science and hands-on learning play an incredibly important role in the classroom, encouraging curiosity, problem solving and critical thinking.

"When students actively explore and experiment, they develop a deeper understanding of concepts rather than just memorizing facts," said Moon. "These experiences also make learning more engaging and help students connect classroom lessons to the real world."

As education resources continue to shrink, Ludlage points out that having organizations like TELUS World of Science and EPCOR behind teachers allows their students to explore and discover things that otherwise simply wouldn't be possible.

"The support doesn't just impact one classroom in one year—it benefits students for years to come," said Ludlage. "Teachers are thoughtful with how we spend, always aiming to create meaningful and lasting learning opportunities."

TELUS World of Science-Edmonton is operated by the Edmonton Space & Science Foundation, a charitable organization focused on creating opportunities for lifelong learning and scientific exploration. The centre serves as a hub for science engagement in the region, offering immersive experiences and educational programming for all ages.

More information on the Inspiring Educator Award and this year's winners can be found at twose.ca/InspiringEducatorAward.



The Alberta Teachers' Association

wîcihtotân Let's Help Each Other

wîcihtotân is an ATA program and network for Indigenous teachers and school leaders to listen and learn together. The program connects participants to offer support, guidance and mentorship with each other.

The Alberta Teachers' Association is seeking First Nations, Métis and Inuit teachers and school leaders to **join wîcihtotân** and attend three gatherings throughout the school year:

December 11, 2025 1:00 – 3:30 pm, online via Zoom

January 29, 2026 1:00 – 3:30 pm, online via Zoom

May 1, 2026 9:00 am – 3:30 pm, Edmonton, location TBD

Release time will be provided by the Association.

To Register go to <https://surveys.teachers.ab.ca/s3/2025-2026-w-cihtot-n-Mentorship-Program-Registration>.



Registration Deadline: November 30, 2025

For More Information

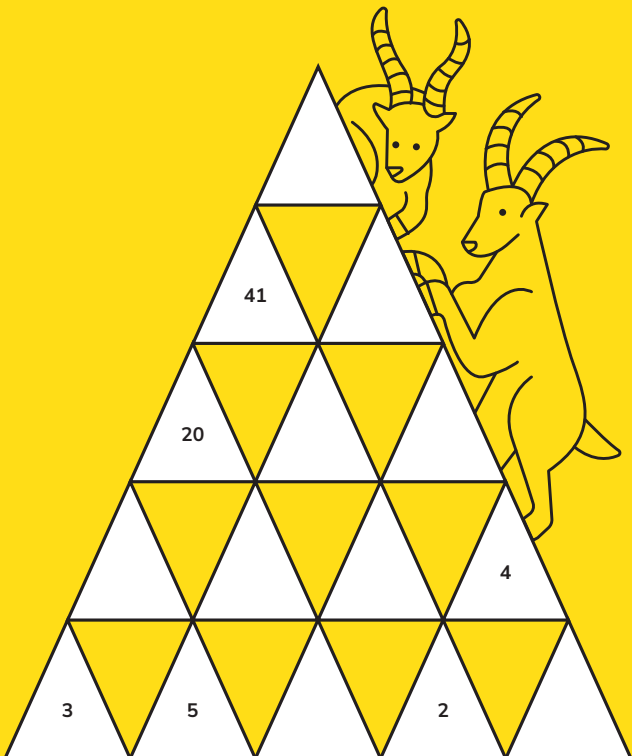
E-mail: walkingtogether@ata.ab.ca
Phone: 780-447-9400 (in Edmonton),
1-800-232-7208 (toll free in Alberta)

PD-208-2025-07

popquiz!

Sum Summit

If the number in each triangle is the sum of the two below it, what number should appear at the top of the summit?



JOIN US
APRIL 23-25
2026
BANFF CENTRE

Explore, Learn, Grow
TAKE LEARNING THE OUTSIDE
Embrace the environment while staying active

Accepting Speaker Proposals starting October 15, 2025. Please go to www.atasciencecouncil.com or www.hpec.ab.ca to submit a proposal.

Delegate registration will be available November 15, 2025!



Science Council
THE ALBERTA TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION



HPEC
Health & Physical Education Council
The Alberta Teachers' Association

TALEND

October 14, 2025 | Volume 60, Number 3



ATA PD Coordinator Nancy Luyckfassel welcomed an energetic group of delegates to the Edmonton iteration of the Beginning Teachers' Conference.

LINDSAY YAKIMYSHYN

Starting STRONG

More than 600 of our newest colleagues came together this fall at Beginning Teachers' Conferences for professional learning and networking. Open to teachers in their first two years of classroom teaching, the conferences were held in Edmonton from Sept. 26 to 27 and Calgary from Oct. 3 to 4.



LINDSAY YAKIMYSHYN

Second-year teacher Brianna Bolt shared that she pursued teaching because working with students fills her cup—"It's about inspiring students, their 'a-ha' moments."



LINDSAY YAKIMYSHYN

ATA president Jason Schilling delivered a powerful message to Alberta's newest teachers: "You've joined the most important profession in the world, at the exact moment when your energy, your voice and your commitment are needed most."



OLIVIA LECLAIR

Teachers Ariana Blandizzi and Alyssa Demeria wore orange in recognition of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.



LINDSAY YAKIMYSHYN