

2023/24

Welcome to the Profession

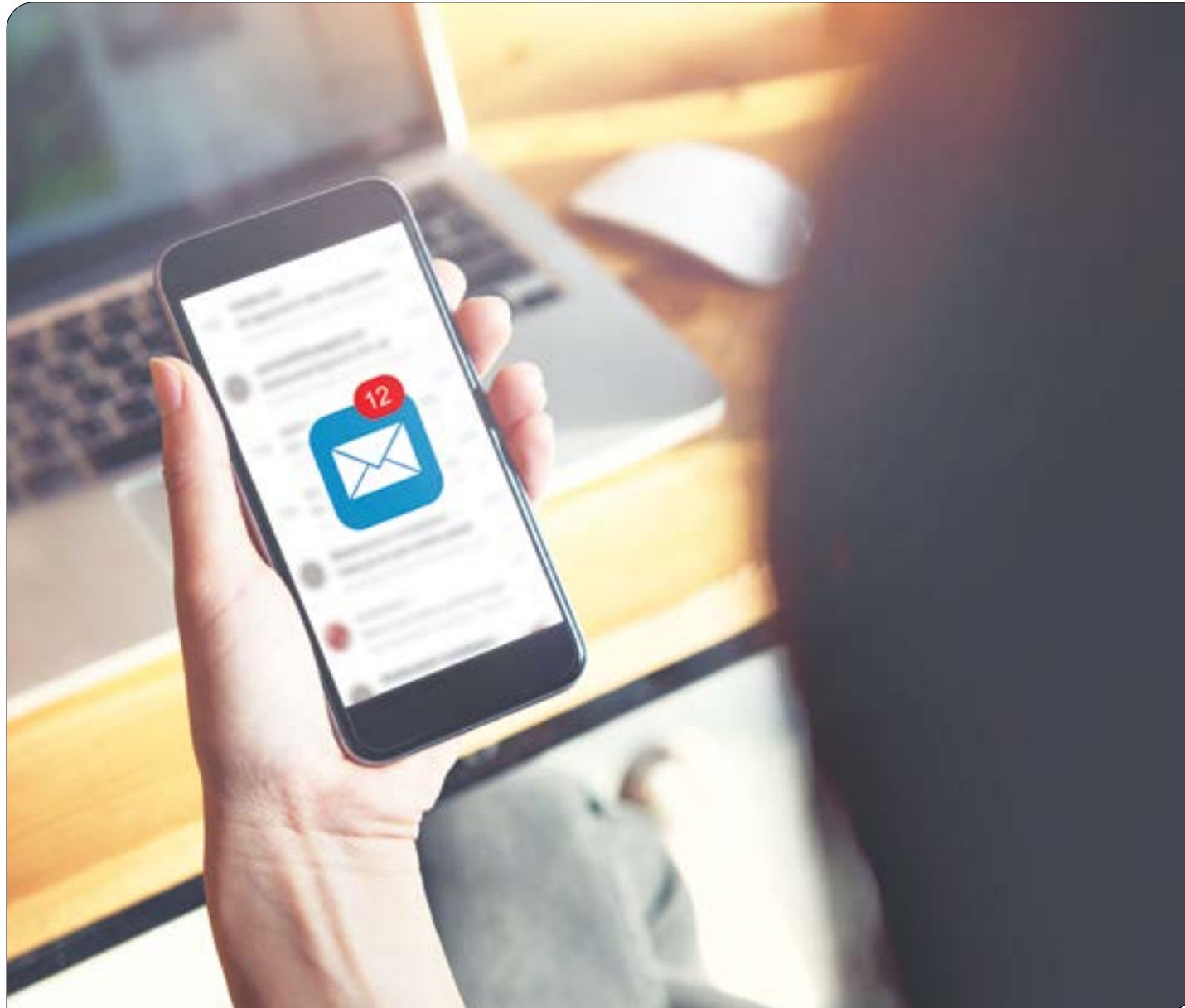
A Quick Guide to the Alberta Teachers' Association



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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
July 1 to Labour Day
0800–1630 Monday–Friday

Fax

780-455-6481

Website

www.teachers.ab.ca

E-mail

General inquiries about the Association or its services should be sent to postmaster@ata.ab.ca.
Inquiries about specific programs should be directed to the appropriate program area:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| • Government | government@ata.ab.ca |
| • Professional Development | pd@ata.ab.ca |
| • Teacher Employment Services | tes@ata.ab.ca |
| • Library | library@ata.ab.ca |
| • Teacher Qualifications Service | tqs@ata.ab.ca |
| • Educator Exchange Programs | exchanges@ata.ab.ca |

The Association will not respond to e-mail requests for specific advice relating to individual cases. Requests for advice must be made in writing, by phone or in person.

Alberta's Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA) governs the Association's collection, use and disclosure of personal information. Security of information and secure destruction of records are requirements under PIPA. All information in this handbook, including personal information, is to be used solely for the conduct of Association business. For more information about the Association's privacy practices, visit <https://teachers.ab.ca/privacy-policy>.

Service en français / Service in French

L'ATA offre, en français, un certain nombre de services de consultation et d'assistance sur vos droits ou en cas de problèmes dans l'exercice de vos fonctions professionnelles. Renseignez-vous en téléphonant à Barnett House. La réceptionniste vous mettra en communication avec le personnel bilingue.

Calgary Office

Southern Alberta Regional Office (SARO)

350, 6815 8 St NE
Calgary AB T2E 7H7

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

Labour Day to June 30
0800–1700 Monday–Friday
July 1 to Labour Day
0800–1630 Monday–Friday

403-266-6190



Welcome to the Profession and to the Alberta Teachers' Association

The purpose of the *Welcome to the Profession: A Quick Guide to the Alberta Teachers' Association* is to help you familiarize yourself with rights and responsibilities connected to the teaching profession in Alberta, as well as the programs and services that the Alberta Teachers' Association (the Association) offers. While not an exhaustive document, this guide will direct you to key programs and contacts.

The Association, as the professional organization of teachers, promotes and advances public education, safeguards standards of professional practice and serves as the advocate for its members. To achieve this mission, the Association offers a wide range of programs and services to its members.

The work of the Association is conducted not only by Association staff, but also by hundreds of active teachers who dedicate their knowledge, skill, and time to the teaching profession. Their dedication is indispensable in helping the Association achieve its mission and in ensuring that the service offered to members is current and effective.

Contributing to the Association takes many forms: serving on Provincial Executive Council, becoming a member of an Association committee, accepting an executive position with a local, specialist council or convention Association, joining one of the Association's consultant corps, or becoming a school representative. The Association is stronger by the involvement of its members and this guide offers a number of opportunities for you to become involved.

The Association is dedicated to advancing the cause of education and to building the teaching profession in Alberta. The Association is the expression of collective professional action. Its programs and services, developed in a democratic process involving the Annual Representative Assembly, Provincial Executive Council, local associations, and staff, are outlined in the following sections.

I would encourage you to assume or continue to perform an active role within your professional organization. The strength of the Association lies with you—an informed and committed membership.

On behalf of Provincial Executive Council, welcome to the profession and to the Association!

Jason C Schilling, President

What Are Your Professional Obligations and Rights?

Code of Professional Conduct

Professional Conduct Requirements

1 In relation to students,

- (a) the teacher or teacher leader shall respect the dignity and rights of all students and persons without prejudice as to the prohibited grounds of discrimination set out in the Alberta Human Rights Act and with regard to rights as provided for in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and be considerate of the circumstances of students and persons.
- (b) the teacher or teacher leader is required to demonstrate a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and nurtures a sense of belonging, which students are entitled to under the Act.
- (c) the teacher or teacher leader shall teach or lead in a manner that does not intentionally contravene applicable
 - (i) legislation, and
 - (ii) policies of Alberta Education
- (d) the teacher or teacher leader shall not
 - (i) intentionally harm or abuse a student verbally, psychologically or emotionally, or
 - (ii) harm or abuse a student physically or sexually.
- (e) the teacher or teacher leader shall not
 - (i) intentionally engage in an illegal activity or other activities that may cause a student to be put at or to remain at risk of harm or abuse, or
 - (ii) knowingly encourage or enable a student to engage in an illegal activity or other activities that may cause a student to be put at or to remain at risk of harm or abuse.
- (f) the teacher or teacher leader shall not disclose information received about a student in confidence or in the course of performing the teacher's or teacher leader's professional duties except
 - (i) as required by law, or
 - (ii) where
 - (A) in the teacher's or teacher leader's judgment, it would be in the best interests of the student to disclose the information, and
 - (B) the disclosure of the information is permitted by law.
- (g) the teacher or teacher leader shall not
 - (i) accept pay for tutoring a student in any subjects in which the teacher or teacher leader is responsible for giving classroom instruction to that student, but may provide tutoring to other students not in the teacher's or teacher leader's charge, subject to local school policy,
 - (ii) take advantage of a professional position to profit from the sale of goods or services to or for students in the teacher's or teacher leader's charge, or
 - (iii) while in a position of authority, teach or lead in a manner that exploits the teacher's or teacher leader's relationship with students for ideological advantage, material advantage or other advantage.
- (h) the teacher or teacher leader may delegate specific and limited aspects of instructional activity to non-certificated personnel, provided that the teacher or teacher leader supervises such activity.

2 In relation to parents of students, the teacher or teacher leader shall

- (a) respect parents and be considerate of their circumstances,
- (b) treat information received from and about parents with discretion,
- (c) be respectful in communications with and about parents, and
- (d) not discuss other students except where the matters being discussed are relevant to their child and then only to the extent that, in the teacher's or teacher leader's judgment, is necessary.

3 In relation to colleagues, the teacher or teacher leader shall

- (a) not undermine the confidence of students in other teachers or teacher leaders,
- (b) not criticize the professional competence or professional reputation of another teacher or teacher leader, except
 - (i) in confidence to appropriate officials, or
 - (ii) in making a complaint about the alleged unprofessional conduct or alleged professional incompetence of a teacher or teacher leader under the Act,
- (c) not take any steps to pursue the discipline or dismissal of another teacher or teacher leader because of animosity or for personal advantage, and
- (d) in addition to other reporting required by law, report to the Commissioner the conduct of another teacher or teacher leader who is alleged to cause or have caused psychological, emotional, physical or sexual harm or abuse to a student.

4 In relation to the teaching profession, the teacher or teacher leader shall

- (a) behave in a manner that maintains the honour and dignity of the profession, and
- (b) not engage in activities that adversely affect the quality of the teacher's or teacher leader's professional service



Declaration of Rights and Responsibilities for Teachers

This Declaration forms part of the Constitution of The Alberta Teachers' Association.

The general purpose of education is the full development of the potential of each individual. Society, of which teachers are a part, establishes the goals of education and the organizational framework within which formal education occurs.

In its broadest sense, teaching is a process which facilitates learning. Formal teaching activities are based on the specialized application of the learning process adapted to meet the educational needs of the learner.

A teacher has professional knowledge and skill gained through formal preparation and experience. A teacher provides personal caring service to pupils by diagnosing their needs and by planning, selecting and using methods and evaluation procedures designed to promote learning. In Alberta, a teacher is a member of The Alberta Teachers' Association and recognizes that membership in The Alberta Teachers' Association and support of it through the provision of fees is beneficial to the cause of education and the teaching profession in Alberta.

The Alberta Teachers' Association holds that teachers are entitled to the following rights and must accept the corresponding responsibilities.

- 1** Teachers have the right to base diagnosis, planning, methodology and evaluation on professional knowledge and skills, and have the responsibility to review constantly their own level of competence and effectiveness and to seek necessary improvements as part of a continuing process of professional development.
- 2** Teachers have the right to expect standards of pupil behaviour necessary for maintaining an optimal learning environment and have the responsibility to use reasonable methods to achieve such standards.
- 3** Teachers have the right to a voice in all decisions of a professional nature which affect them and have the responsibility to seek the most effective means of consultation and of collaboration with their professional colleagues.
- 4** Teachers have the right to criticize educational programs and have the responsibility to do so in a professional manner.
- 5** Teachers have the right to work in surroundings that are sanitary, healthful and conducive to teaching and learning, and have the responsibility to assess conditions encountered and to seek improvement of unacceptable conditions.
- 6** Teachers have the right to a reasonable allotment of resources, materials and services of support staff and have the responsibility to use them in an efficient manner.
- 7** Teachers have the right to fair and reasonable evaluation of professional performance and have the responsibility to give sincere consideration to any suggestions for improvement.
- 8** Teachers have the right to protest and in extreme cases to refuse the assignment of teaching duties when they believe their qualifications and experience will not provide adequate service and safety to pupils and have the responsibility to consider any special circumstances under which the duties were assigned.
- 9** Teachers have the right to be protected against discrimination on the basis of prejudice as to race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, physical characteristics, disability, marital status, family status, age, ancestry, place of origin, place of residence, socioeconomic background or linguistic background and have the responsibility to refrain from practising these forms of discrimination in their professional duties.

10 Teachers, collectively and collegially, have the right to:

- a) be members of the organization representing their professional, economic and contractual concerns,
- b) serve the organization and be represented by it,
- c) adhere to and to expect other members to adhere to the Government of Alberta's code of professional conduct for teachers and teacher leaders,
- d) have a voice in determining criteria and procedures for the evaluation of professional performance of teachers,
- e) be protected under provisions outlined in contracts of employment with the employer,
- f) bargain for salaries and working conditions which include fair and equitable grievance procedures,
- g) receive an adequate income while teaching and upon retirement, and have the responsibility to support actively their professional organization in its objectives to regulate relations between teachers and their employers and to improve the quality of education, the status of teachers and the status of the teaching profession.



What is the Alberta Teachers' Association?

The *Teaching Profession Act* of 1935, one of the statutes of the Province of Alberta, establishes and constitutes the Alberta Teachers' Association (the Association). Its predecessor, the Alberta Teachers' Alliance, registered under the Societies Act, existed for about 18 years before that. The *Teaching Profession Act* makes all teachers (full-time, part-time and substitute) employed by school boards in Alberta, except superintendents, deputy superintendents and those eligible persons having elected associate membership or nonmembership, automatically active members of the Association.

The *Teaching Profession Act* establishes the objects of the Alberta Teachers' Association as being

1. to advance the cause of education,
2. to improve the teaching profession,
3. to increase public interest in and support for education, and
4. to cooperate with other bodies having similar objects.

Determining the Association's programs and services each year is a responsibility of the Annual Representative Assembly (ARA), which consists of 425 local delegates and the members of Provincial Executive Council. Each May, ARA approves the Association's budget for the following fiscal year. Teachers allocate resources to their Association because they recognize the need to act collectively to advance the interests of their profession and public education as well as to benefit from the programs and services important to their professional practice.

Overview of Association Services for Individual Members

- Information and advice on procedures in seeking teaching positions
- Provincial and local professional learning opportunities through courses, seminars, conferences, workshops and teacher conventions
- Publications related to professional learning, current educational and Association activities, and educational research
- Advice on contractual rights and assistance with grievances arising from collective agreements
- Advice and assistance in cases of dismissal or termination of contract or termination of designation
- Advice and consultation on professional issues and problems by telephone, letter or personal interview
- Employment insurance consultation and appeal assistance
- Advice regarding pensions and help with problems
- Advice concerning sick leave and extended disability and help with appeals
- Library services—research and reference inquiries, circulation of materials
- Teacher Qualifications Service—evaluation of years of teacher education for salary purposes
- Awards, fellowships and scholarships, some of which are offered by other bodies through the Association

Overview of Association Services for Local Associations

- Direct financial support in the form of a rebate of 20 per cent of Association fees and grants-in-aid for provincially called meetings
- Summer Conference to provide leadership training in local operation and programs, communications, professional development and collective bargaining.
- Local presidents' meetings to provide information about and collect reactions to Association affairs and concerns
- Advice on and assistance with local organization and programs
- Assistance in professional development and inservice education
- Programs and materials for induction ceremonies for teachers new to the profession and to the province
- Assistance with collective bargaining concerns through field service, advice and assistance in negotiations, information regarding progress with collective bargaining, area conferences and collective bargaining leadership training
- Collaborative websites for use by local executives
- Advice on political engagement through the Government program area
- Public relations services, including materials, consultation and advice regarding local programs and related publicity
- Assistance and grants to local political engagement programs
- Publications, handbooks and brochures

Overview of Services Through Affiliates

Canadian Teachers' Federation

- news service, economic and professional development studies, research programs, international assistance, representations to federal government

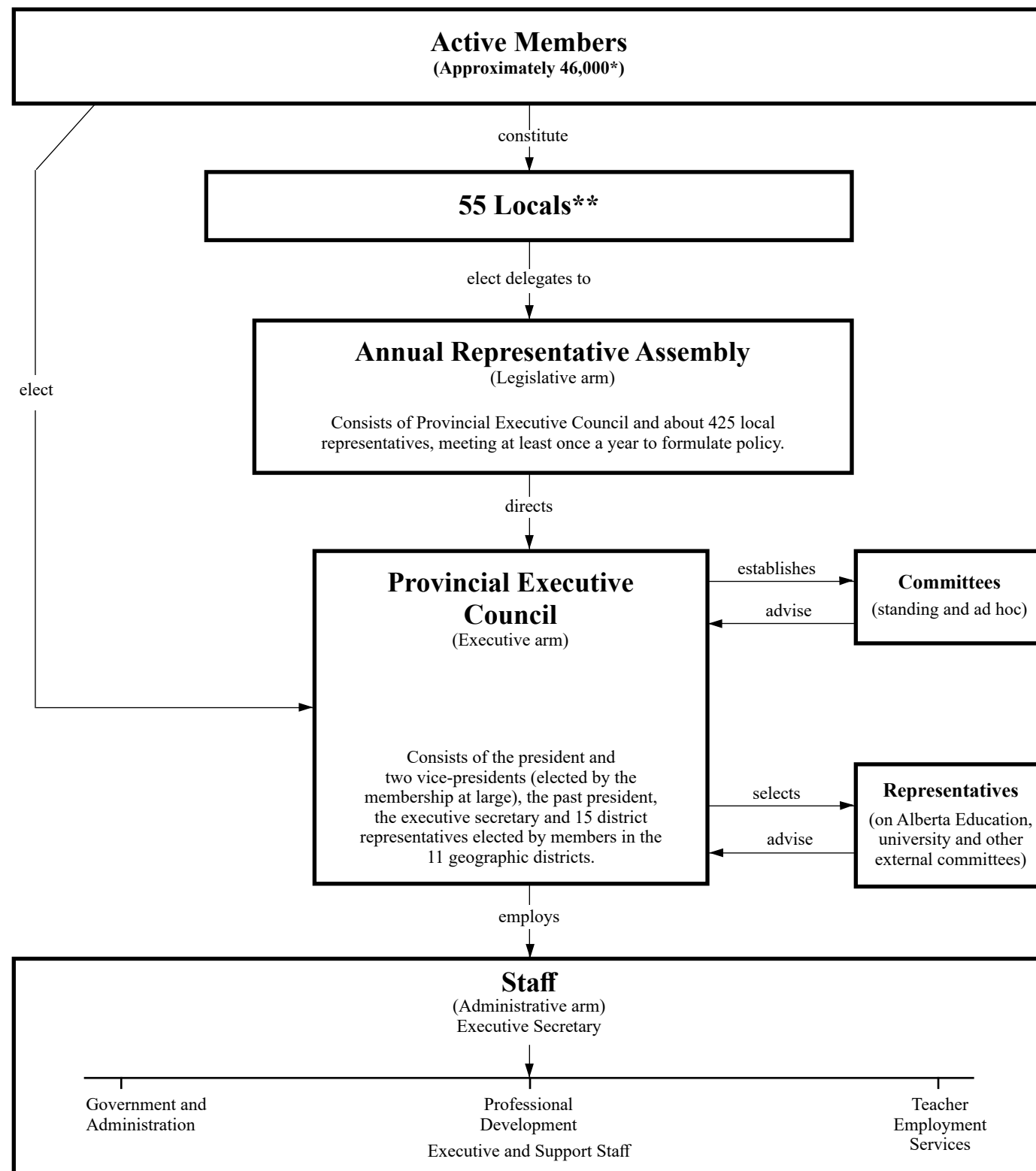
Education International

- contact with teacher organizations in other countries

KEY Q&A: CAN I BORROW BOOKS AND RESOURCES FROM THE ATA LIBRARY?

Yes! The Association maintains a professional library in Barnett House that contains an extensive collection of books, periodicals and DVDs in both French and English. Makerspace kits of new educational technology are also available to members. Research services are also available to members on all topics related to their professional practice. The library is open during Association business hours and can be contacted as shown on page 5.

Materials can be found through the online catalogue on the library's website (library.teachers.ab.ca). E books, streaming video, and full text databases are also available to members when they login to the library site. All library materials are loaned for four weeks and mailed to members with prepaid return postage. Renewals can be arranged by telephone or e-mail, provided there are no outstanding requests for the items.



* In addition to active members, the Association has approximately 21,000 members included in other categories—associate, life and student.
 ** The Association also has 14 student locals and one special local.

The business of the Association is transacted by a council of 20 persons—the Provincial Executive Council. Its executive officers are the president, two vice-presidents, the past president and the executive secretary as a nonvoting member. The 15 other members of Council are the representatives of 11 geographic districts. Committees are established by Council to advise it and to assist in the business of the Association. The Annual Representative Assembly determines all Association policy, adopts the of the Association determines the membership fee and approves revisions to bylaws.

The policies formulated by the Annual Representative Assembly, decisions of the Provincial Executive Council and the work of committees are carried forward by an administrative arm or secretariat, consisting of approximately 160 staff.

The work of the Government program area involves the coordination and supervision of all aspects of Association activity. A major function is the advocacy of Association policy to the provincial government and its departments, school trustees, and organizations with educational interests.

In addition, activities in the program area include the following.

Communications and Public Relations

- Public relations programs working with individual teachers, schools, the local, subgroups of the Association and the provincial organization itself to foster an appreciation of the work of Alberta's teachers and of their professional Association
- Communications assistance provided upon request to locals and other Association subgroups, particularly in relation to advising on local communications programs, paid publicity, contacts, news releases, school-community public relations and political programs
- The *ATA Magazine*, which is published three times per year
- The *ATA News*, which is published 15 times per year
- *The Learning Team*, a newspaper produced for parents and teachers working together for children's education
- Partnership with the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA)—Alberta Division and Global Television to highlight teachers' concern for the mental well-being of their students.
- News releases, advertising and campaigns that support both ongoing public relations programs and emergent issues of concern to teachers

Better Government

Better Government initiatives are undertaken to increase teachers' awareness of politics and the political process, increase MLAs' awareness of public education, encourage teachers to play an active role in politics, and indicate teachers' concern for matters affecting student learning

Research

Educational research studies and surveys are undertaken that focus on such topics as educational developments; exemplary teaching practice and leadership; and education, technology and well-being. Research briefs are produced on emerging areas of concern related to public education. Further, international action research projects are conducted.

Professional Conduct

Professional relations assistance activities, which are carried out by Teacher Employment Services staff, are geared to the positive, to remediation, to conciliation (see Teacher Employment Services).

The Code of conduct for teachers and teacher leaders provides an indication of specific behaviours that are unprofessional. One violation of the code would be sufficient to warrant a guilty verdict at a discipline hearing.

A person wishing to discipline a colleague in this manner should address the request in writing to the Alberta Teaching Profession Commission. Members are advised to consult with a staff officer in Teacher Employment Services before proceeding in this direction. It is not uncommon that, after having discussed this matter, the enquirer decides that disciplinary action is not what is wanted.

If a teacher is found guilty of unprofessional conduct, the committee may recommend that the minister:

- a) issue a letter of reprimand to the teacher or teacher leader,
- b) suspend one or more certificates of the teacher or teacher leader, with or without conditions,
- c) cancel one or more certificates of the teacher or teacher leader or cancel a certificate and issue a certificate of a different class, with or without conditions, or
- d) order that the teacher or teacher leader be ineligible for one or more certificates for a definite or indefinite period, with or without conditions.

The teacher may appeal both the committee's verdict and the penalty to the appeal committee.

Regulatory Affairs

Any person is able to make a complaint to the Alberta Teaching Profession Commission against a teacher. If you are the subject of a complaint, it is advisable to contact representatives in the Regulatory Affairs area as soon as you are aware a complaint has been made. It is important to note that timing is important due to legislated timelines that are very short at the front end of the government's discipline process. Calling the Association and asking to speak with someone in the Regulatory Affairs area immediately will ensure that a staff officer will be able to advise and represent you at all phases of the discipline process.

KEY Q&A: HOW CAN I CONNECT WITH TABLE OFFICERS OR MY DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVE?

The table officers for 2023/24 are:

Jason C Schilling, President (jason.schilling@ata.ab.ca)
Greg P Carabine, Vice-President (greg.carabine@ata.ab.ca)
Peter F MacKay, Vice-President (peter.mackay@ata.ab.ca)
Greg A Jeffery, Past President (greg.jeffery@ata.ab.ca)
Dennis E Theobald, Executive Secretary (dennis.theobald@ata.ab.ca)

The district representatives for 2023/24 are:

Calgary City
Kevin L Kempt (kevin.kempt@ata.ab.ca)
Darren J Moroz (darren.moroz@ata.ab.ca)
Allison L Scott Davies (Allison.scottdavies@ata.ab.ca)

Calgary District

Karen M Nakaska (karen.nakaska@ata.ab.ca)

Central

Brenton J Baum (brenton.baum@ata.ab.ca)

Central East

M Murray Lalonde (murray.lalonde@ata.ab.ca)

Central North

Rick C Kremp (rick.kremp@ata.ab.ca)

Central South

Brice J Unland (brice.unland@ata.ab.ca)

Edmonton District

Paul A Froese (paul.froese@ata.ab.ca)

Edmonton McMurray

Carmen N Glossop (carmen.glossop@ata.ab.ca)

Greg G Meeker (greg.meeker@ata.ab.ca)

J Jay Procktor (jay.procktor@ata.ab.ca)

North West

Rhonda A Kelly (rhonda.kelly@ata.ab.ca)

South East

Heather D McCaig (heather.mccaig@ata.ab.ca)

South West

Katherine D Pritchard (katherine.pritchard@ata.ab.ca)

Details on which locals belong to which district are available at <https://teachers.ab.ca/about> and are represented on page 27 of this guide.

The Teacher Employment Services program area assists teachers, both individually and collectively, with professional problems and school division or local issues. Members can contact Teacher Employment Services with confidence that confidentiality will be maintained and their interests will be protected.

Teacher Employment Services staff also work to raise the status of the teaching profession by promoting and advancing the interests of teachers to secure conditions that will make possible the best levels of professional service. Staff in the program area engage in and support bargaining through representation in central table bargaining and in local table bargaining offering training on labour matters and negotiation techniques, and providing services to bargaining units local bargaining and the ongoing enforcement of collective agreements. In addition, staff conduct and disseminate research in economics and education finance.

Further, this program area supports teachers with respect to the following:

- advice and support related to transfers, terminations and suspensions
- resources and advice to school representatives
- assistance to local officials in planning appropriate organization and activities
- seminars and presentations on teacher rights, responsibilities and liabilities
- confidential discussion, advice and assistance to any teacher on problems and concerns, such as on a variety of employment issues (including evaluation) and professional relations problems
- support to the 14 student organizations, including a grant, advice and assistance
- consultation to locals, groups of teachers and individual teachers (upon request) on the proper use of assistants by teachers and relevant Association policy and publications
- consultation, advice and resources to deal with the many challenges and concerns unique to substitute teaching
- assistance to members aimed at resolving disputes arising from professional relationships that cannot be resolved by personal discussion
- advice and assistance to individual members on issues relating to the collective agreement, including sick leave, extended disability benefits, maternity/parental leave and other pay-related issues
- education on teacher retirement and pension
- assistance with workplace health and safety issues that affect their employment.

Transfers, Terminations and Suspensions

Teachers experiencing difficulties with their position are encouraged to call Teacher Employment Services at the earliest possible time. Association staff will acquaint them with their rights and advise as to procedures. Early contact with the Association is essential and often allows a nonadversarial resolution. Further, teachers should

KEY Q&A: CAN I E-MAIL THE ATA FROM MY SCHOOL BOARD E-MAIL ADDRESS?

The use of e-mail to obtain advice is discouraged due to the lack of security and the increased likelihood of missing an important aspect that may arise in conversation. In particular, an employer-owned e-mail system should never be used to seek advice on employment concerns. Members are encouraged to keep in mind the fact that district offices can monitor employee e-mails, making it difficult to maintain confidentiality of the communication.

seek advice from Teacher Employment Services as soon as they realize that they may be facing an unacceptable transfer, termination or suspension. Contact is confidential. No action is initiated without direction from the member.

Professional Relations

The purpose of Association involvement is to improve the teaching profession by advising and assisting members in the conduct of their professional working relationships. It is assumed that teachers have some interest and commitment to improve conditions in a professional manner and a willingness to examine and adjust, if necessary, their own behaviours.

Professional relations assistance has two major objectives:

1. To assist in the identification and resolution of staff relations problems before a deterioration of educational services or other serious consequences (terminations, transfers, discipline charges) result. In certain situations, the Association may refer a staff relations problem to the Staff Relations Service, which is formal mediation.
2. To advise members of their possible jeopardy regarding ethical practice or tenure.

In general, Association work in professional relations is of an objective, conciliatory nature. Any member may request assistance with problems arising from disputes or misunderstandings with colleagues. In many cases, it might be considered a teacher's duty to make such a request. For details on the policies and processes related to disputes arising from professional relationship, contact Teacher Employment Services (see page 5).

KEY Q&A: WHAT IS THE ROLE OF A SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE?

In each school one or more teachers (depending on the size of the school) are elected by the teachers of the school to represent the teachers at the local level. School representatives have duties for both the provincial and local association, including the following:

- Provide information to members about services available; channel requests for these services to the proper local and/or provincial Association officials.
- Encourage the use of available services from the local and/or provincial Association, its website and its subgroups.
- Serve as a two-way communications facilitator between teachers and the local and/or provincial Association.
- Encourage members to update their personal information on the Association's website and to access their no-cost specialist council membership.
- Convey information on teacher concerns to the local and/or provincial Association.
- Distribute ATA publications to teachers, on behalf of the local and/or provincial Association.
- Assist with gathering data and conducting surveys, for the local and/or the provincial Association.
- Serve as a contact person, for the local and/or provincial Association for meeting arrangements (regional, CBCs, local meetings, collective bargaining).
- Support and facilitate communication for central and local bargaining by ensuring they report information to teachers on staff and further, to report teacher questions and concerns related to bargaining to local council meetings.
- Welcome new teachers to the profession and/or to the staff. Help them with procedures and to reach sources of assistance as required.
- Organize the distribution of the ATA News and the ATA Magazine to substitute teachers who wish to receive the publications at the school.
- Inform teachers about the voting process for elections for Provincial Executive Council.

Many locals provide training for school representatives. The Association makes available to every school representative a copy of the School Representative Toolkit, updated annually, which provides more detail on the role and on key reference materials.

Other Professional Relations

Space does not permit an exhaustive treatment of the issues involved in teacher–board, teacher–parent, teacher–community or teacher–Alberta Education relations. Teachers have the right to expect fair and unbiased treatment from these bodies. Any teachers who encounter what they consider to be a serious problem in this area of professional relations would be well advised to consult with staff in Teacher Employment Services.

Other Investigations

Noncertificated Persons

If teachers observe that noncertificated people are performing tasks that they believe should be, or traditionally have been, performed only by teachers, they should let it be known both to local association officials and to the provincial Association. The employment of non-teachers to perform the tasks of teachers contravenes section 221 of the *Education Act*.

Complaints Against Teachers, Boards, Superintendents

Serious complaints related to education in the schools can, on request, be investigated with a view to bringing about improvement. The Association may not have jurisdiction in some of these areas but it is in a position, at times, to bring a problem to the attention of appropriate parties. If teachers are unsure of proper procedure, they are encouraged to call the Teacher Employment Services program area of the Association.

Collective Bargaining

The Labour Relations Code provides for the certification of appropriate unions or associations as bargaining agents for groups of employees and the *Public Education Collective Bargaining Act* names the Association as the bargaining agent for all active members within the bargaining unit. The Association conducts central table bargaining with the Teachers' Employer Bargaining Association (TEBA) and assigns a representative of the bargaining agent to assist bargaining unit representatives in local bargaining.

When a central memorandum of agreement is reached following negotiations with TEBA, this memorandum must be approved by a majority of Association members through electronic voting.

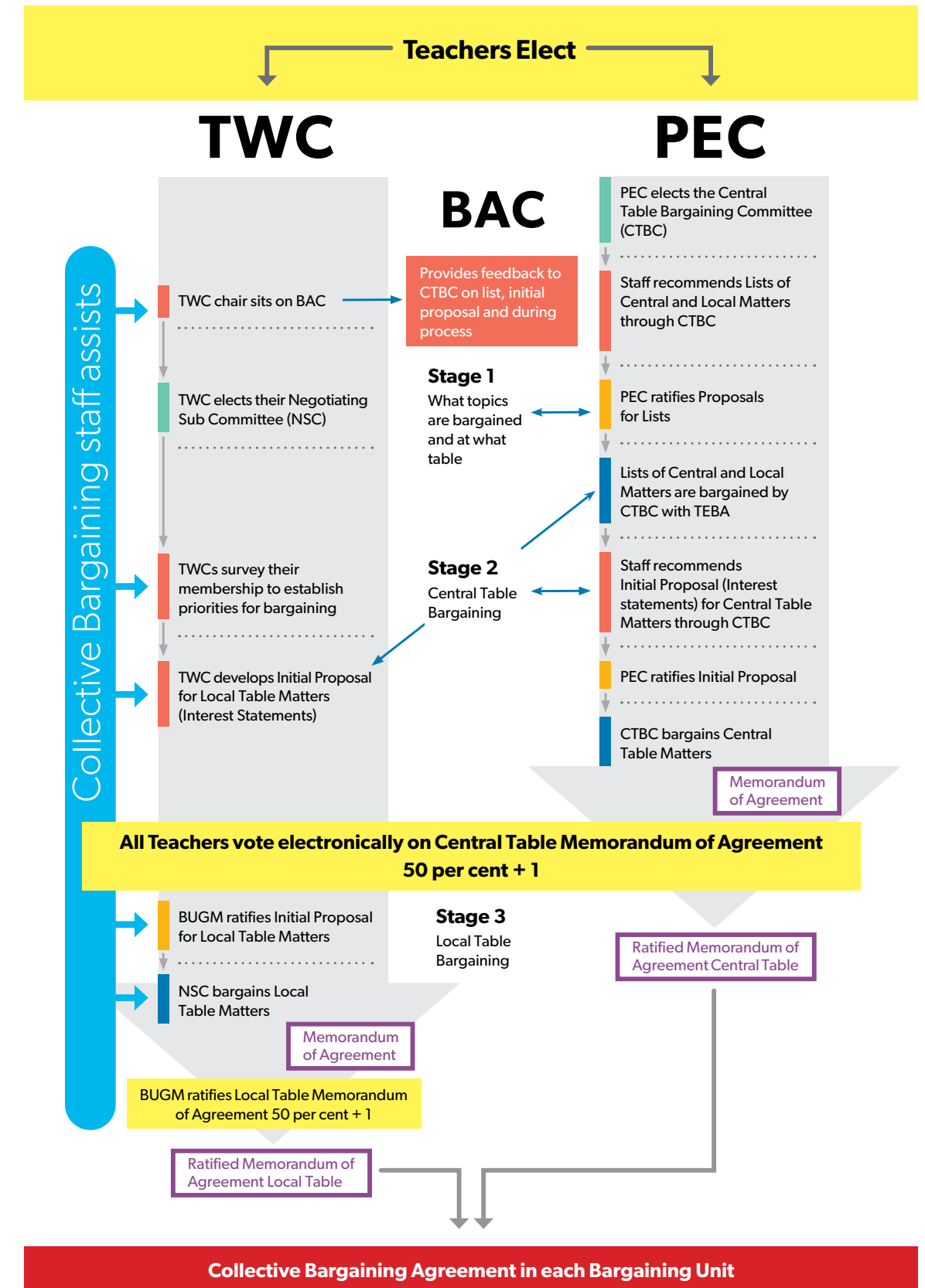
When a local memorandum of agreement is reached, the memorandum of agreement is voted on by bargaining unit members at a bargaining unit general meeting. Upon ratification by both parties, a collective agreement is prepared and signed by teacher and division representatives and the Association.

The bargaining process is represented in the figures below.

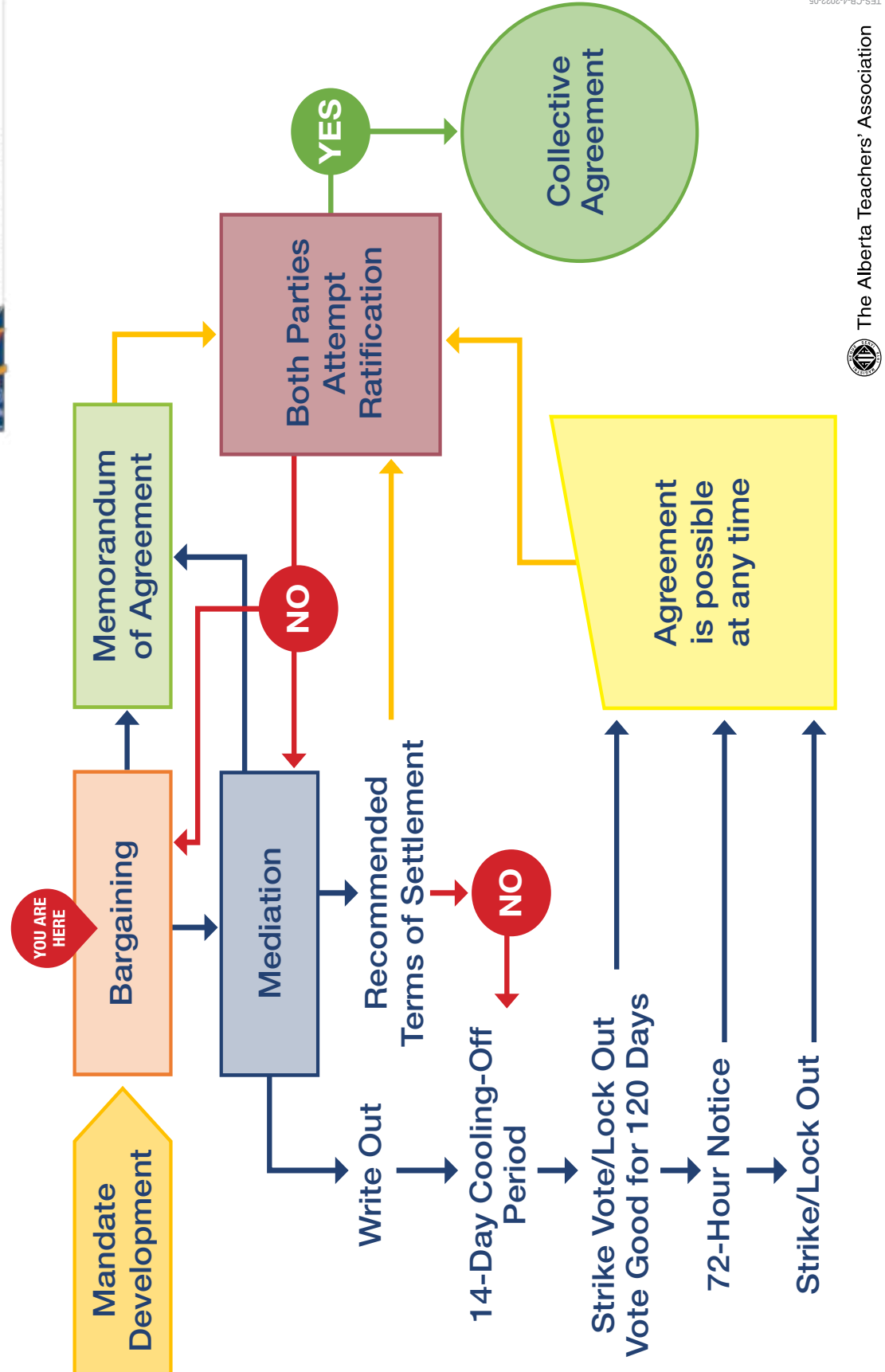
KEY Q&A: WHAT IS A TEACHER WELFARE COMMITTEE?

Each bargaining unit has a Teacher Welfare Committee (TWC) that sets local bargaining objectives for teachers in the bargaining unit. Bargaining objectives proposed by a TWC must receive the approval of the membership prior to being relayed to the employer. The TWC chairs become members of the Bargaining Advisory Committee (BAC), which provides feedback to the Central Table Bargaining Committee (CTBC).

Locals also constitute a Negotiating Subcommittee (NSC). This subcommittee, usually three members, is selected from the members of the TWC. The personnel of this subcommittee should be selected with utmost care because in the final analysis the success of the negotiation process is dependent largely on the ability and sound judgment of the individual members on the committee.



Bargaining Process Flowchart



TES-CB-4-2022-05
The Alberta Teachers' Association

Professional Development

The primary goal of the Professional Development (PD) program area is to establish and maintain high standards with respect not only to the practice of individual teachers but also to teaching as a profession. To achieve this goal, the program area undertakes the following activities:

- studies and takes action on curriculum and student evaluation matters
- monitors and advises on matters pertaining to teacher education and certification
- engages in programs, creates resources for subgroups and makes recommendations to promote social justice and respect for diversity, equity and human rights
- creates and offers programs to support members in meeting the competencies outlined in the Professional Practice Standards
- organizes conventions through the 9 convention associations established in the province
- assists its 21 specialist councils by providing consultation, membership services, publication assistance and funding

Provincewide Professional Learning

The program area offers high quality, relevant professional learning opportunities across the province, responding to requests from school staffs and other groups for assistance in providing and facilitating professional development activities, and regularly making presentations about Association services to students enrolled in education programs recognized by the Association. To offer provincewide training, the Association constitutes and trains a corps of PD facilitators and of Indigenous education PD facilitators, all of whom are practising teachers.

Programs for School Leaders

The Association provides a comprehensive program of PD services for leaders. This includes the following:

- Workshops are available for school leaders on topics of leadership development for school improvement; professional collaboration; resiliency; and teacher professional growth, supervision and evaluation.
- The Leadership Essentials conference, the Educational Leadership Academy and the Council for School Leadership's uLead Conference provide professional development geared to the needs of school leaders.
- The Association supports a school leader mentorship program, and Association staff is available to customize a program for retreats.
- The Association produces a number of publications targeted to school leaders, including *Leadership Update*.

Local Support

The program area also supports local associations in their work planning professional development activities for local teachers. At Summer Conference, the Association offers a professional development course designed to prepare the chairs of these committees for their leadership role. Professional development chairs receive additional training and support at two Professional Development Conferences per year. The Association also assists locals in the fall with induction ceremonies for teachers in each local who are new to the profession.

KEY Q&A: DO ALL TEACHERS NEED TO ATTEND TEACHERS' CONVENTION?

Teachers in the province are required, by law, to attend the convention organized annually in their area. Such conventions afford teachers the opportunity to keep up with developments in education, to identify common issues and to exchange ideas with colleagues.

Abbreviations Frequently Encountered

Awards and Scholarships

Each year the Association awards two \$15,000 fellowships for doctoral study in education, the Nadene M Thomas Graduate Research Bursary of \$5,000, the John Mazurek Memorial–Morgex Insurance Scholarship of \$2,500 and four General Proficiency Gold Medals awarded to graduates. In addition, the Association grants a \$5,000 Educational Research Award to faculty of education academic staff and sessional lecturers from Alberta universities on an annual basis.

Further information, including eligibility requirements for each award, are available through the program area or on the Association website, <https://teachers.ab.ca/professional-development/grants-awards-and-scholarships>.

Teacher Qualifications Service

The Teacher Qualifications Service (TQS) provides Alberta teachers with an evaluation of their educational qualifications for salary purposes. Evaluations are made according to the *Principles for the Evaluation of Years of Teacher Education for Salary Purposes* established and reviewed annually by the Teacher Salary Qualifications Board. The statement of qualifications issued by the service is accepted by all public, separate and francophone school jurisdictions in the province for the purpose of determining educational placement on salary scales set out within the collective agreement of the jurisdictions.

Statements of qualifications are issued only to (a) teachers who hold or are eligible to hold an Alberta teacher's certificate or other teaching authority from Alberta Education and (b) students admitted to Alberta education faculties with advanced standing in programs leading to eligibility for certification. Teachers wishing to obtain evaluations are required to submit original transcripts (not photocopies) from each educational institution attended.

The fee for an initial assessment and a qualifications statement is \$125 for applicants with all documents. Duplicate statements are issued at a cost of \$75 each. Further information and application forms (in English and French) are available from the TQS (see page 5) and on the Association website.

ACSTA	Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association	LCO	Local Communications Officer
AECA	Alberta Educational Communications Authority	LE	Leadership Essentials
AI	Association Instructor	LISL	Legal Issues for System Leaders
ARA	Annual Representative Assembly	MLA	Member of the Legislative Assembly
ASBA	Alberta School Boards Association	NSC	Negotiating Subcommittee
ASCA	Alberta School Councils' Association	PD	Professional Development
ASEBP	Alberta School Employee Benefit Plan	PDC	Professional Development Conference
ATA	Alberta Teachers' Association	PEC	Provincial Executive Council
ATRF	Alberta Teachers' Retirement Fund Board	PECBA	<i>Public Education Collective Bargaining Act</i>
BAC	Bargaining Advisory Committee	PPAC	Professional Practice Appeal Committee
CAC	Certification Appeal Committee	PRECIS	Provincial Executive Council Summary
CAFEC	Calgary Area Field Experiences Committee	PR	Public Relations
CASS	College of Alberta School Superintendents	PSBA	Public School Boards' Association of Alberta
CBC	Collective Bargaining Conference	RBA	Representative of the Bargaining Agent
CEA	Canadian Education Association	ROE	Record of Employment
CSJAFEC	Campus Saint-Jean Area Field Experiences Committee	SARO	Southern Alberta Regional Office
CTBC	Central Table Bargaining Committee	SIN	Social Insurance Number
CTF	Canadian Teachers' Federation	SR	School Representative
DR	District Representative	SRS	Staff Relations Service
EAFEC	Edmonton Area Field Experiences Committee	TEBA	Teacher Employer Bargaining Act
EDB	Extended Disability Benefits	TEC	Teacher Education and Certification
EIC	Employment Insurance Commission	TES	Teacher Employment Services
ELA	Educational Leadership Academy	TBAC	Teacher/Board Advisory Committee
ESA	Education Students' Association	TOC	Table Officers Committee
ESO	Executive Staff Officer	TPA	<i>Teaching Profession Act</i>
EUS	Education Undergraduate Society	TQS	Teacher Qualifications Service
HI	Healthy Interactions	TQS	Teaching Quality Standard
LAFEC	Lethbridge Area Field Experiences Committee	TSQB	Teacher Salary Qualifications Board
		TWC	Teacher Welfare Committee

KEY Q&A: WHAT ARE SPECIALIST COUNCILS AND HOW DO I JOIN ONE?

The Association's 21 specialist councils were created to foster the professional development of teachers having a common interest in a particular subject or special interest. By sponsoring annual conferences, producing publications and organizing regional workshops and seminars, specialist councils provide their members with opportunities to share ideas and to gather new information about their specialty.

Membership in specialist councils is available to active, associate, student and life members of the Association. Every active member of the Association is entitled to one no-charge council membership. Members can obtain their membership by applying online on the Association Website, <https://teachers.ab.ca/professional-development/specialist-councils>. The following councils are active:

- Additional Languages and Intercultural Council (ALIC)
- Alberta School Learning Commons Council (ASLC)
- Career and Technology Education Council (CTEC)
- Conseil français (CF)
- Council for Inclusive Education (CIE)
- Council for School Leadership (CSL)
- Council of School Counsellors (CSC)
- Early Childhood Education Council (ECEC)
- Educational Technology Council (ETC)
- English as a Second Language Council (ESLC)
- English Language Arts Council (ELAC)
- Fine Arts Council (FAC)
- Global, Environmental and Outdoor Education Council (GEOEC)
- Health and Physical Education Council (HPEC)
- Indigenous Education Council (IEC)
- Mathematics Council (MC)
- Middle Years Council (MYC)
- Outreach Education Council (OEC)
- Religious and Moral Education Council (RMEC)
- Science Council (SC)
- Social Studies Council (SSC)

Bargaining Unit: The bargaining unit consists of all active Association members employed by a particular school board with the exception of those members who have been specifically excluded from the collective agreement during negotiations. It is on behalf of such a unit that a collective agreement is negotiated.

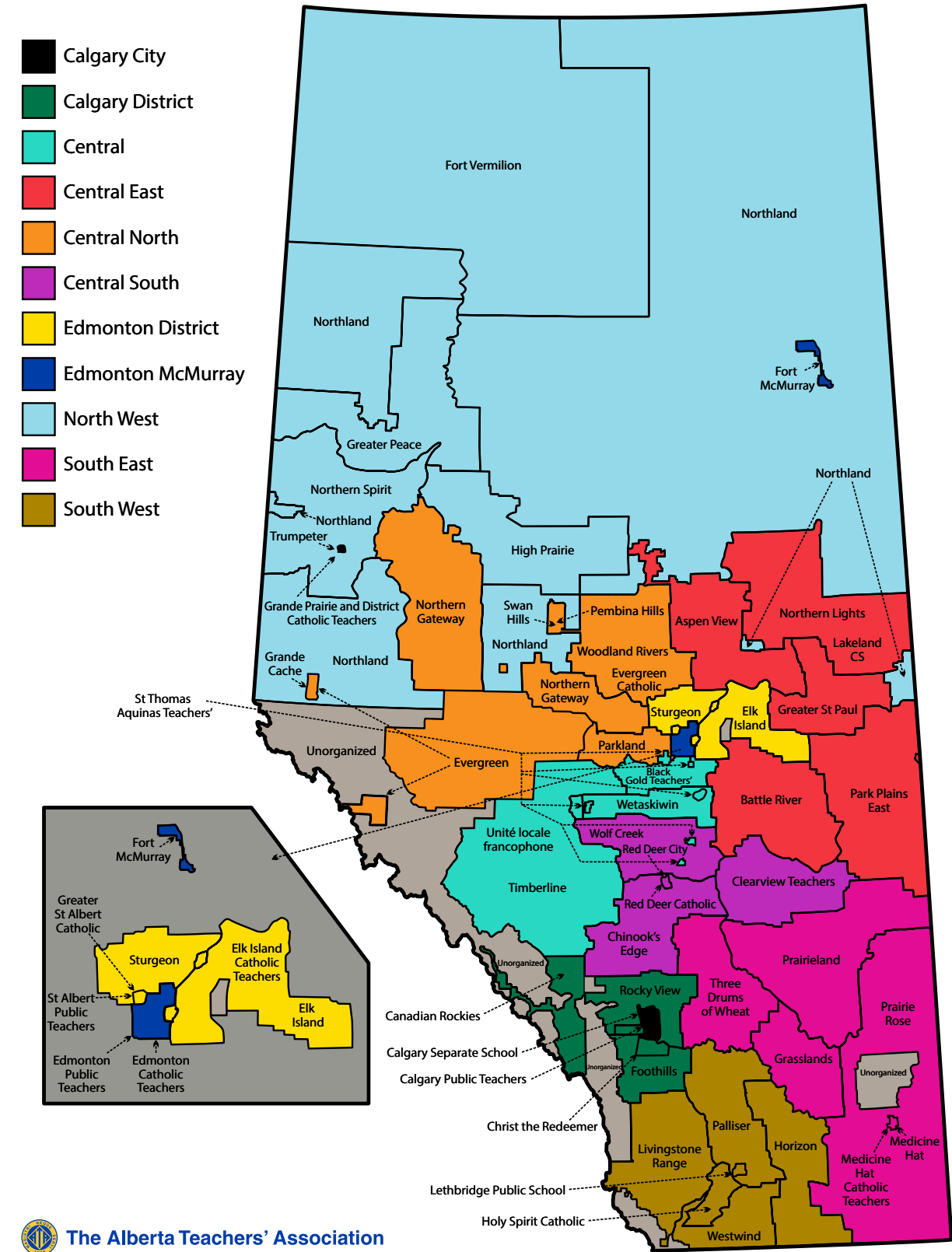
Contract: The individual agreement between a board and a teacher governing terms of employment.

Collective Agreement: The agreement regarding salary, benefits and working conditions negotiated between the board and the Association.

District Representative: District representatives are elected officials that represent members from their geographic district in transacting the business of the Association. There are 15 district representatives.

School Representative: The school representative is the key link between the Association and its members, playing a leadership role in ensuring effective communication and advocacy on behalf of the Association. Details on this important role are on page 19.

Table Officer: Table officers include the president, past president, two vice-presidents and executive secretary. The positions of president and vice-president are elected by the vote of members on a provincial basis.





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