



MY ALBERTA
TEACHER
HERO

Oct. 5 is
World Teachers' Day
[Contest details on page 10.](#)



Teachers from two Alberta schools make appearance on popular game show. [See story on page 9.](#)

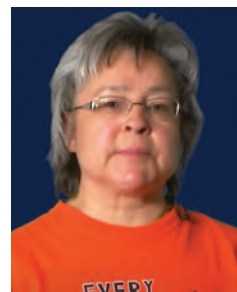
SUPPLIED



History lesson

LaGrange meme controversy cannot be allowed to blow over.

[See editorial on page 2.](#)



Truth and reconciliation

Sept. 30 is an opportunity to continue the journey.

[See story on page 4.](#)



Within our grasp

Teachers can help create schools where everyone matters.

[See Viewpoints on page 3.](#)



Sign of the times?

Observers fear meme controversy a sign of things to come.

[See page 5.](#)

Lessons from the Institut für Sexualwissenschaft



EDITORIAL

Jonathan Teghtmeyer
ATA News Editor-in-Chief

On May 6, 1933, just three months after Adolf Hitler became chancellor of Germany, Berlin's Institute for Sexual Science was raided, looted and ransacked.

The institute offered public education, training, research and medical care on a wide range of matters related to sexuality. Many of its services were often offered for free to those who could not afford it. The institute was the life work of Magnus Hirschfeld, a gay, Jewish physician. In the days that followed the raid, the institute's entire library — along with tens of thousands of other books — was dumped into Berlin's Bebelplatz Square and burned.

The original raid was conducted by the Deutsche Studentenschaft, the Nazi-dominated German Students' Union. In other words, the Nazis' persecution of homosexuals was kicked off by a violent display of force by brainwashed youth. By the end of the Nazis' reign of terror, an estimated 10,000 to 15,000 gay men were sent to concentration camps, where most of them were worked and starved to death.

These historical facts underline the hate-filled ignorance of Monique LaGrange's recently surfaced Facebook post.

LaGrange, of course, is the Red Deer Catholic School Division trustee who posted a picture of kids waving pride flags beside a picture of children waving swastika flags. The hideous argument she was making with the photos was that "brainwashing is brainwashing."

It's appalling. Setting aside the obvious attempt to erase the history of Nazi persecution and killing of gay people, the point she is making is that teachers and others who

perpetuated by the worst example of genocidal fascists in human history.

This notion of equating the teaching of Pride with indoctrination is occurring much more frequently. It is not only an act of hate against members of the LGBTQ2S+ community, but it is also a direct attack on allies and supporters who are simply working toward the safety and security of children. Sadly, too many children continue to die by suicide as a result of hatred, exclusion or isolation.

public figure is atrocious. That this would come from a school board trustee takes it to a whole new level of abhorrence.

Red Deer Catholic has over 10,000 students. I guarantee that it has gay students enrolled in its schools. It has lesbian, bisexual, asexual, pansexual, transgender, gender nonconforming, gender fluid, two-spirit, queer and questioning students enrolled. It has students, likely as young as kindergarten, who come from families with two moms, two dads or with parents or siblings who are queer, transitioning or transgender.

Teachers in Red Deer Catholic schools, on a daily basis, are trying to ensure that all students, regardless of the sexual or gender diversity within their families, feel safe and welcomed in the schools. One of the trustees in that school division has now equated those teachers with Nazi indoctrinators. What message does that send to those teachers? What message does it send to those students?

This person was elected with the explicitly defined purpose of being entrusted with the care of all students. She cannot hold that position and these views simultaneously. They are antithetical to each other.

Simply put, LaGrange has no choice but to resign or else she must be fired. We must not rest until that happens. As much as LaGrange would like it to, this matter cannot blow over. ■

I welcome your comments. Contact me at jonathan.teghtmeyer@ata.ab.ca.

“LaGrange has no choice but to resign or else she must be fired.”

want young people to learn that we should welcome, care for and support LGBTQ2S+ people and their families are demonstrating evil on par with Nazi indoctrination.

Sound like a harsh assessment? Here is a quote from LaGrange's only public statement following the incident: "The story meme is centred around indoctrination and how children are vulnerable to *evil* agendas filtering through culture" (emphasis added).

In this assessment, advocating for the inclusion and safety of sexual and gender diverse people in society is equivalent to indoctrination

These attacks have taken the worst form recently. Not only are allies being portrayed as Nazis but they are also being portrayed as pedophiles. Nothing sickens me more than when we who try to protect the safety of vulnerable children are described as "groomers."

To be clear, LaGrange didn't delete the post, she hasn't apologized for it, she has no intention of resigning, and she is fighting every attempt to hold her accountable for her hateful actions.

"I did not resign because I believe I didn't do anything wrong," LaGrange told the *Western Standard*.

The fact this would come from any

Field trip permissions can be tricky



Q & A

Dennis Theobald
ATA Executive Secretary

Question: I'm planning some field trips for my class later in the year. In the past, I've had some difficulty getting proper written permissions from parents in place. What advice can you provide?

Answer: Field trips are among the most memorable learning experiences for students and are a great teaching opportunity, but they are challenging to organize, particularly in these litigious times. I've asked my colleague Keith Hadden, co-ordinator of Teacher Employment Services, to share some advice based on the calls the Association has received from teachers on the subject.

Keith notes that field trip permission forms have been in place since "time

immemorial" and are a frequent cause of headaches for teachers and school leaders alike. While it is wise to require that they be completed to ensure that parents are aware of the potential risks related to a field trip activity and as proof that they have granted informed consent for their child's participation, in practice, the forms have little effect in limiting legal liability should something go wrong. An injury to a student can always create the potential for a lawsuit.

The good news is that section 251 of the *Education Act* provides protection for a teacher from liability in the good-faith performance of that teacher's duties. Further, section 54 of the act requires boards to hold insurance for the purpose of indemnifying the board and its employees. So, you are generally not going to be at personal risk where the principal has parental consent demonstrated by a completed form allowing a student to participate. This assumes, of course, that you are being conscientious and attentive; gross negligence on the part of a teacher may

not be indemnified, even where there is a consent form on file.

Teachers will sometimes be placed in an awkward position when a student (or parent) fails to provide the school with a properly completed release form. One key question to ask is why the form is not forthcoming. Is it a simple matter of the form being forgotten? Does the parent object to the nature of the activity or have safety concerns? Is the parent concerned that they might not be able to afford to pay the cost associated with the field trip?

In such cases, the principal may intervene, directing that the student still participate. Before doing so, the principal typically would have taken steps to obtain verbal consent from a parent after having addressed and resolved any legitimate parental concerns. In this circumstance, the principal is essentially taking care and control of the process and assuming responsibility (including possible legal liability, although the same protections as described above for teachers also apply to school leaders).

Questions of legal liability aside, if a teacher disagrees with a student being permitted to participate in a field trip or activity without first providing a signed consent form, they can certainly communicate that to their principal in an informal or formal manner and seek resolution. That said, it is probably unwise to defy a direction from the principal to take a student along. If a teacher were to do so, they could face disciplinary action by the employer.

A staff officer with the ATA's Teacher Employment Services program area can help teachers understand the options around communicating their concerns to the principal and responding to any related consequences of that objection.

Best wishes for the year ahead, including some memorable (in a good way) field trips. ■

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



Teachers can help create schools where everyone matters



VIEWPOINTS

Annahid Dashtgard
CEO, Anima Leadership

In my line of work as an inclusion consultant, I'm always in the thick of discomfort, working out the best way to lead groups toward greater cohesion. Like many others who do this work, I come to it from personal experience — more explicitly, from racial trauma. Immigrating to small-town Alberta from Iran when I was nine

“Everyone involved in the education system must actively and tangibly support efforts toward more representative and inclusive schools.”

knocked early lessons about visibility and power right into my bones. This foundation later transformed into my life's passion: creating spaces where everyone matters and belongs.

Having worked for the past two decades in the equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) space, I feel as though there is a greater understanding of the need for EDI awareness as student and staff demographics shift and gaps in learning access become more widely known. Yet, at the same time, the education system and broader society are experiencing a backlash against the recognition that some groups experience unfair barriers. Here are but a few examples:

- The pushback against “woke” content in educational institutions and workplaces
- The banning of books and even language supporting gay, trans and racialized stories
- The US Supreme Court undoing affirmative action programs and other equity policies
- The discrediting of any equity education after the recent suicide of a Toronto principal

It's easy in times such as this to step

back and shut up: essentially, to avoid upsetting the status quo. But if we wish education to be equally accessible to *all* students, everyone involved in the education system must actively and tangibly support efforts toward more representative and inclusive schools. Here are three minimal steps any teacher can take.

1. Represent all your students

Collect data, don't assume. Send out a survey, or get your principal to, asking students or their guardians to share (if they choose) their culture, holidays celebrated, family members and racial/ ethnic identity. With this information, you can adapt curriculum, use inclusive language and represent student identities often rendered invisible. For example, if you know you have two Muslim-identifying students in the class, wish them Eid Mubarak, ask them if they would like a space to pray during Ramadan and/or share about the Eid holiday in class (perhaps a family member might like to come in).

2. Initiate conversations with colleagues

Change happens one conversation at a time, eventually accumulating in a tipping-point moment. Suggest trans, Black, Muslim or other marginalized identity speakers for PD days. Host a book discussion series with books such as *Deep Diversity: A Compassionate Scientific Approach to Achieving Racial Equity*, which breaks down systemic discrimination into easily understood

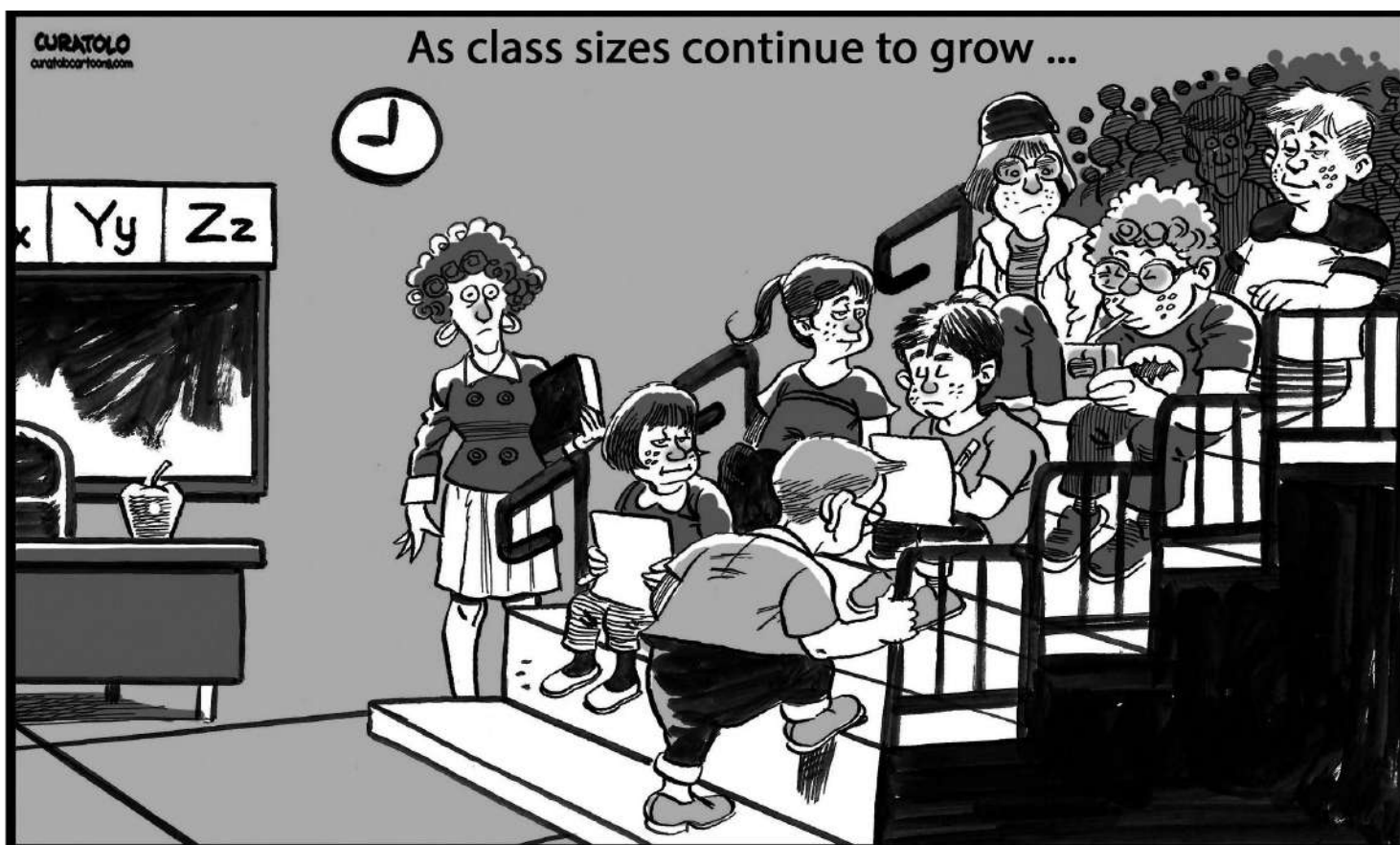
chunks. Use challenging moments such as case studies to discuss and learn from collectively. For example, if the N-word is used by a couple of students in the school, discuss as a staff what can be done to address it within the school culture as a whole. All words and behaviour happen in context.

3. Normalize mistake-making:

As educators, we know that any learning process has to involve practice and that making mistakes is a necessary part of the process. Think about teaching algebra to students for the first time! The same applies to learning about students and colleagues who occupy an identity we are less familiar with. We will say and do awkward things, we may put our foot in our mouth, we may misstep — we need to be accountable for ways we could have done better, and then we need to let it go. Creating inclusion should feel *inclusive*, not like a prison we fear being locked into. Compassion is the underpinning of all sustainable change.

As members of the teaching profession, we know change isn't predestined but is a choice. I hope we choose a future where all students, not just those who are well-off, white and culturally Christian, have equal access to belonging, learning and success (in exactly that order). ■

Annahid Dashtgard is an author and CEO of AnimaLeadership.com, a leading inclusion consulting firm.



YOUR VIEWS



Teachers comment on the ATA's statement on Monique LaGrange's post comparing Pride to Nazism

Andrew Clapperton

I am glad to hear that the ATA is standing up for all students and teachers who support them. Free speech doesn't mean free from consequences. School board trustees are public representatives and must be held accountable when they express hateful comments.

Jamie Martin-Cairney

Thank you ATA for releasing this statement.

Darvin Summers

I am happy that Monique LaGrange has been [removed from her role with the Alberta Catholic School Trustees Association]. Homophobia never wins.

FOR THE RECORD

“I did not resign because I believe I didn't do anything wrong. I was elected to stand up and protect our children and that is what I am doing.”

- Monique LaGrange, Red Deer school trustee who posted a meme comparing Pride flags to Nazi flags. Reported by the *Western Standard*.

Letters to the editor: We welcome letters to the editor. Please limit your submission to 300 words. Only letters bearing a first and last name, address and daytime telephone number will be considered for publication. Teachers are also asked to indicate where and what they teach. All letters are subject to editing for length, clarity, punctuation, spelling and grammar. Email managing editor Cory Hare: cory.hare@ata.ab.ca.

Social studies curriculum to be rewritten

ATA News Staff

Alberta's K-6 social studies curriculum will be rewritten, and teachers will have a place at the table.

On Sept. 18, Alberta Education announced that, following two years of "valuable feedback," it is beginning a process to redraft the K-6 social studies curriculum in "a transparent and collaborative engagement with Albertans and education partners."

The aim of the process is to create a curriculum that "builds students' critical thinking and communication skills, enhances Indigenous and francophone perspectives and is age and developmentally appropriate."

The development of the new social studies curriculum has been stalled for over 18 months after an initial draft drew widespread criticism from various stakeholders. This new plan puts social studies curriculum development back on track and headed in a better direction, said Alberta Teachers' Association president Jason Schilling.

"Teachers must play a key role in curriculum development in order for implementation to succeed," he said. "Comprehensive, thoughtful and authentic engagement with teachers, education partners and the public are critical to the process."

The phased approach began in the summer, when new Education Minister Demetrios Nicolaidis met with various education partners to build an understanding of the new engagement approach and process for curriculum development.

The next phase will begin with an online survey to gather information

from Albertans about what they would like students to learn in social studies. The survey will be available until Oct. 16.

Later this fall, Alberta Education will follow up by meeting with a variety of stakeholders, including teachers, "to inform the development of the scope and sequence of K-12 social studies curriculum and the content of draft K-6 social studies curriculum."

In early 2024, Alberta Education will begin public engagement so that Albertans can view and provide feedback on the draft K-6 social studies curriculum. Throughout the 2024/25 school year, teachers will have an opportunity to pilot the refined draft K-6 social studies curriculum in classrooms and provide further feedback.

Schilling encourages teachers to take an active role in these engagements to ensure that teacher voices are included, as there is still a risk that these processes will be subject to a great deal of politicization.

He also said that the government's plan provides a model for moving forward on other issues facing education, as well as curriculum development and implementation in other subjects. Math is of particular concern, as teachers have been experiencing problems implementing the new K-6 program of studies in that subject.

"The attempts to implement the new elementary math curriculum are not going well. Teachers report that students are having significant struggles," Schilling said. "There are too many outcomes, and many are not introduced at a developmentally appropriate time. Math, in particular, needs to be given a second look." ■



Teachers often ask me how I come up with ideas to write about. The answer is, it really depends on what is happening. Some of my Off Script columns are about timely issues, others focus on issues that are more systemic, and some are based on random thoughts about teaching. Since we just started another school year, I thought I would hit on all three.

Under the timely issues column, I have recently done a number of media interviews on two topics: class size and trustee Monique LaGrange's social media post. Trustee LaGrange's social media post undermines the trust and care that school trustees are supposed to foster for all students and staff in our public schools. Instead of promoting acceptance and diversity in our schools, she is promoting discrimination and bullying—this is not what we want for our students and each other in schools. That is why it is important to call out hate when we see it.

With respect to systemic issues, my other recent interviews have focused on class size and the enormous growth many districts have seen this fall.

The government stopped collecting class size data in 2019, and for several years has failed to fund for growth and inflation. Class size is a systemic issue that must finally be addressed by the government and school boards. Our students deserve better, and so do we. As I mentioned to the minister at a meeting the other day, the government can no longer kick the class size issue down the road. Teachers, school leaders and students need solutions as soon as possible.

This leaves me with a random thought about teaching. One of the biggest adjustments I experienced when I became president was not being in my classroom at the start of the school year. I love teaching, working with students and being at school. Once again, this September I was a bit sad about missing the excitement that comes with the start of another school year. But no matter how nostalgic September may be, I know we have a lot of work in front of us, and our desire to make public education better for our students and classrooms is timeless. ■

I welcome your comments. Contact me at jason.schilling@ata.ab.ca.



Teacher resources are available on the Orange Shirt Society's website.

Sept. 30 is an opportunity to strengthen reconciliation

ATA News Staff

Back to school can be a time filled with excitement for many, but this also marks the time of year when Indigenous children were taken from their homes and sent to residential schools. Wearing an orange shirt on Sept. 30, the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation/Orange Shirt Day, has become a way to signal support and remembrance of what Indigenous families lost because of residential schools. This day is also an opportunity to both deepen and apply our own foundational knowledge of First Nations, Métis and Inuit culture.

From implementing learning activities in the classroom to continuing your own journey toward reconciliation, there are various ways for teachers and school leaders to recognize this day in their own contexts. Consider the following ways to honour the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, and to support the revival and/or maintenance of local Indigenous cultural practices:

1. Communicate with care

- Share information on the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation with students and families, some of whom may be learning about residential schools for the first time, in advance of Sept. 30.
- Gather and make mental health supports available.

2. Include and honour local Indigenous perspectives

- Create an authentic experience and honour stories and experiences by inviting local Indigenous communities, Elders, Knowledge Keepers and residential school Survivors to your activities. Considerations related to this and

information about cultural Protocols are available in the Indigenous Education and Walking Together section of the ATA website.

3. Wear and share

- Wear an orange shirt to mark the day, being mindful of how the shirt was created and how proceeds from its purchase will be used (view the Orange Shirt Society's website, orangeshirtday.org, for more information).
- Create awareness while moving beyond the performative — not only posting an Orange Shirt Day photo of yourself, but also contemplating and sharing what your reconciliation journey includes.

4. Explore resources

- Resources for your own learning and for the classroom — including sample activities by grade — are available through the ATA's website, including the ATA library guides. The Orange Shirt Day Society's website also offers lesson plans and other materials.

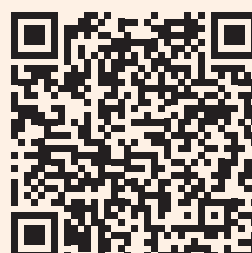
5. Continue your learning beyond Sept. 30

- Bring learning activities related to Indigenous education and truth and reconciliation into your school or local.

Relevant ATA PD workshops include More Than Words: The Significance of Land Acknowledgements on the Journey of Truth and Reconciliation; Indigenous Matriarchy – Balance Through Truth, Justice and Reconciliation; and The History and Legacy of Residential Schools (Histoire et séquelles du régime de pensionnats). [Contact pdworkshops@ata.ab.ca](mailto:pdworkshops@ata.ab.ca) for more information. ■

Activities to consider

- Plant a heart garden to honour residential school Survivors, families and your own call to action.
- Give students an opportunity to explore with local Indigenous people the land-based practices of the local Indigenous culture(s) prior to contact and those that are still being used (i.e., traditional games and/or land-based activities).
- Host the *Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada* Giant Floor Map for the entire school community.



Observers fear more attacks on 2SLGBTQ

Cory Hare
ATA News Managing Editor

It's a sign of things to come. That's what ATA president Jason Schilling thinks of a controversial meme posted by Red Deer Catholic trustee Monique LaGrange that compared Pride to Nazism.

"I think what we're going to see is a larger culture war around 2SLGBTQ issues that we're seeing in the United States, in states such as Florida, start to percolate up into Alberta and garner more attention," Schilling said. "And I think it's something we need to be aware of and we need to stand up against."

The LaGrange post came within a broader context of governments taking



Duane Bratt, Mount Royal University

aim at the use of chosen pronouns in schools. The governments of New Brunswick and Saskatchewan are each pushing for legislative changes around pronoun use while such legislation has already been passed in at least 10 American states.

Schilling noted that, back in June, there was so much negativity emerging around the various Pride events being planned around the province that the ATA felt compelled to issue a statement to push back. Now he believes there's a need for people with differing views to engage in dialogue.

"When someone is coming from a position of hate, there's no both sides of the story. There is calling it out and then getting to the root of what the issue is about and finding solutions that way," he said.

"I think there needs to be a conversation about what people are afraid of, of what they perceive that they're afraid of, because we're all coming from a place of wanting to make sure that school is safe for everyone, but some people are really taking it in a different direction."

Pronouns the latest target

Duane Bratt, a political scientist with Mount Royal University in Calgary, said the arguments being made around parental notification of chosen pronouns is reminiscent of previous arguments with respect to gay-straight alliances.

"The issue is now trans children, but the echoes around gay-straight alliances are right there. [Opponents have] just changed targets. The same dispute about parental notification

over whether a child joins a GSA is now about parental notification around pronouns."

Alberta premier Danielle Smith has stated that she won't follow New Brunswick or Saskatchewan.

"I have said that we don't really want to politicize these issues, because these issues are ones that are very private, family issues, so we're trying to avoid turning it into a political hot potato," Smith told the *Western Standard*. "Because we want to make sure that kids feel supported but we've also been clear that we also respect parental rights."

Bratt wonders how long Smith can hold off the more conservative segment of the UCP's supporters and stay out of public discussions around pronouns.

"I don't think she wants to drag herself into that, but she may be forced to. There may be forces around her that eventually draw her in."

Post reaction

Following the LaGrange post, the ATA issued a statement calling on the trustee to resign or, barring that, for the board to remove her.

"Attacks on sexual and gender diverse students and school staff are increasing to exceptional and troubling levels," the statement read. "Swift, decisive and highly visible action to combat this hatred is the only way forward."

The ATA's Red Deer Catholic local also issued a statement.

"Red Deer Catholic teachers remain committed to ensuring that all students are welcomed into a safe and caring environment that nurtures and values each individual."

Both the local and the provincial ATA said the post was a violation of section 33 of the *Education Act*, which requires schools to be welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments that respect diversity and foster a sense of belonging.

In a subsequent interview with the *Western Standard* (her only public statement), LaGrange said she does not intend to resign.

"This meme is not comparing or attacking the LGBTQ community, it is about protecting our children and keeping parents as the primary educators," LaGrange said.

"The story meme is centred around indoctrination and how children are vulnerable to evil agendas (agendas coming from organizations like Planned Parenthood, the UN or SOGI 123) filtering through culture," LaGrange said.

SOGI 123 is a collaboration that includes the Alberta Teachers' Association that is aimed at helping educators make schools inclusive and safe for students of all sexual orientations and gender identities (SOGI).

"To call that evil says she doesn't understand what that is about, and I would categorically push back against those kind of comments because they don't make any sense to me," Schilling said. "Comparing SOGI 123 to Nazism is ludicrous." ■

Monique LaGrange told the *Western Standard* that her husband is a distant cousin of the husband of former education minister Adriana LaGrange.

Finding common ground

A Q&A with political scientist Jared Wesley

Jared Wesley is a political scientist with the University of Alberta who leads a project called Common Ground. One aspect of the group's work is to delve into the similarities and differences between progressives and conservatives in Alberta and the rest of western Canada.

The *ATA News* spoke to Wesley about the LaGrange meme and the broader socio-political climate in Alberta.

Is there common ground between Albertans who are pro-Pride and those who are afraid of or uncomfortable with that aspect of society?

We've come a very long way in a pretty short period of time, in the span of about a generation. We've got to the point now where most people who do not approve of the LGBTQ2+ lifestyle, many of those folks also deny the reality that is biology and extensive scientific research that you are actually born into these communities, you don't choose or opt into it. Those folks are now in a position in a lot of communities of at least saying "live and let live."

What's worrisome here in Alberta in certain communities and in other communities throughout Canada, the United States and elsewhere is that it's becoming more and more acceptable to voice views like the ones that we saw in the LaGrange meme. Some of that comes from victories by conservative parties that have not so subtly cozied up to socially conservative groups.

Folks think that victories by parties that afforded that vote means that now it's acceptable to express bigoted views like the ones we saw in that meme.

So it's incumbent on not just members of these marginalized and victimized groups to speak up but also mainstream Albertans, those that support the LGBTQ2+ community. They're the ones that need to speak up.

What are your suggestions for how people and groups who are on opposite sides of this can navigate their way going forward?

One thing would be to avoid writing off entire segments of society because you assume that they share the views of somebody who's extreme. There actually are people that are sympathetic to your side that you may not think about at first. There are a lot of people that are actually open to persuasion.

What happens if we do write off entire segments of the population as being, as Hillary Clinton put it, deplorable or incurable or unpersuadable? What happens if we say that? The result is that we don't attempt dialogue whatsoever and the only option we have is to marginalize those people, to try to remove them from the democratic discourse entirely, which is really what got us into a lot of these messes in the first place.

A lot of folks that are now speaking out and taking hateful and, in some extreme cases, violent approaches to



Jared Wesley, University of Alberta

resolving these issues didn't get there overnight. They got there because they felt marginalized and not heard. It's a bit too late to persuade a lot of these folks but that's a very, very small part of our society. A lot of people are persuadable on these issues and I think we need to do a better job of separating

the extremists from the folks that just need a little bit more information, a little more common understanding, to get them to where they have a more inclusive view of what it means to be part of our community. ■

Responses have been edited for length and clarity.

READY... SET...

This is the time of year when teachers turn their attention to (among dozens of other things) their professional growth plans.



TEACHERS' CONVENTIONS



Teachers' conventions enhance professional practice by providing teachers and school leaders with opportunities to share innovative practices, discuss professional issues and meet the learning goals identified in their professional growth plans.

Each of the Association's nine teachers' conventions is organized by a regional convention board. Members are assigned to conventions based on their employing school authority and ATA local.

Teachers' conventions will take place in person during the 2023/24 school year. If you have any questions, please contact executive staff officer Danny Maas at daniel.maas@ata.ab.ca.

North Central Teachers' Convention

Dates: Feb. 8–9
Location: Edmonton Convention Centre, Westin Edmonton and offsite venues
Contact: Carryl Bennett, president, president@nctca.ab.ca
Website: <https://mynctca.com/>

Calgary City Teachers' Convention

Dates: Feb. 15–16
Location: Calgary TELUS Convention Centre, Hyatt Regency Calgary and offsite venues
Contact: Lisa Fulton and Shae Frisby, co-presidents, cctcapresident@gmail.com
Website: www.cctca.com

Endless Skies Teacher's Convention

Dates: Feb. 15–16
Location: Edmonton Convention Centre
Contact: Melissa Petruk, president, Estcapresident@gmail.com
Website: <http://estca.teachers.ab.ca>

Central Alberta Teachers' Convention

Dates: Feb. 22–23
Location: Red Deer Polytechnic
Contact: Evelyn Gotell, president, catcapresident2024@gmail.com
Website: www.mycatca.com

Southeastern Alberta Teachers' Convention

Dates: Feb. 22–23
Location: Medicine Hat College
Contact: Cam Bernhard, president_cam_bernhard@grasslands.ab.ca
Website: <https://seatca.atapd.ca/>

South Western Alberta Teachers' Convention

Dates: Feb. 22–23
Location: University of Lethbridge
Contact: Jessica Ens, president, ens.jessica@gmail.com
Website: www.swatca.ca

Palliser District Teachers' Convention

Dates: Feb. 22–23
Location: Calgary TELUS Convention Centre and Hyatt Regency Calgary
Contact: Jill White, president, president@pdtca.org
Website: www.pdtca.org

Greater Edmonton Teachers' Convention

Dates: Feb. 29–Mar. 1
Location: Edmonton Convention Centre, Westin Edmonton and offsite venues
Contact: Lloyd Bloomfield, president, president@getca.com
Website: www.getca.com

Mighty Peace Teachers' Convention

Dates: Mar. 7–8
Location: Charles Spencer High School, St Joseph Catholic High School
Contact: Laurie Dirska, president, mptcpresident@gmail.com
Website: mptca.teachers.ab.ca



FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information about teachers' conventions, visit <https://teachers.ab.ca/professional-development/teachers-conventions>.

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SPECIALIST COUNCIL OPPORTUNITIES

The Association has 21 specialist councils that organize annual conferences, workshops, webinars and other opportunities to help teachers and school leaders meet their professional development goals.

The information on this page lists the assigned dates for major specialist council conferences and events for the 2023/24 school year. For an up-to-date list of all specialist council conferences and events, please check out the ATAPD Sched site

<https://atapd.sched.com/>.



DID YOU KNOW?

Active ATA members are able to choose a no-cost membership in the specialist council of their choice. To choose yours, visit <https://L.EAD.ME/SC-SIGNUP>.

The ATA Educational Trust offers \$500 grants to members to help offset the costs of attending specialist council conferences. Apply by Sept. 30 at 11:59 p.m. at <https://L.EAD.ME/CONF-GRANT>.

Alberta School Learning Commons

No events scheduled at this time.

Career and Technology Education Council

Date: Oct. 26–28
Location: Canmore Hotel and Conference Centre, Canmore
Theme: Evolve
Website: <https://reg.unityeventsolutions.com/se/ATACTEMPLATE/ATT>

Council for Inclusive Education

Date: Oct. 12 (preconference); Oct. 13–14 (conference)
Location: Fantasyland Hotel, Edmonton
Theme: Weaving the Threads of Inclusive Education
Website: <https://reg.unityeventsolutions.com/se/ATACITEMPLATE/ATT>

Council for School Leadership

Date: Apr. 14–16
Location: The Fairmont Banff Springs Hotel, Banff
Theme: The Summit of Educational Leadership
Website: ulead.ca

Council of School Counsellors

Date: May 2024
Location: Pomeroy Kananaskis Mountain Lodge
Website: <http://www.ataschoolcounsellors.com/>

Early Childhood Education Council

Date: April 18–20
Location: Banff Park Lodge, Banff
Theme: Rejuvenate
Website: <http://www.ecec-ata.com/>

Educational Technology Council

Date: March 15–16
Location: Canmore
Theme: Plug Into Learning
Website: bit.ly/ETCATA2024

English Language Arts Council

No events scheduled at this time.

English as a Second Language Council

Date: Oct. 21
Location: Microtel Inn and Suites in Red Deer AB 126 Leva Ave, Red Deer, AB T4E 1B9
Theme: Annual General Meeting, guest speaker TBA
Website: <https://www.eslcata.com/>
Please email presidentelect@eslcata.com to register your intent to participate.

Fine Arts Council

Date: Oct. 21
Location: U of A Edmonton North Campus
Theme: Connecting Through the Arts
Website: <https://reg.unityeventsolutions.com/se/ATAFACTEMPLATE/ATT>

Global, Environmental and Outdoor Education Council

No events scheduled at this time.

Health and Physical Education Council

No events scheduled at this time.

Indigenous Education Council

Date: Nov. 17–18
Location: Barnett House, Edmonton
Theme: Soaring with Knowledge
Website: <http://www.indigenouseduc.ca/soaring-with-knowledge-annual-conference.html>

Le Conseil français

Date: Nov. 28–29, SARO, Calgary
Nov. 30–Dec. 1, Barnett House, Edmonton
Theme: French reading and writing instruction
Website: <https://www.leconseilfrancais.com>

Math Council

Date: Oct. 19–20
Location: Delta Hotels Calgary Downtown, Calgary
Theme: Dare to be Creative, Curious and Courageous Mathematicians
Details: <https://reg.unityeventsolutions.com/se/ATAMCTEMPLATE/ATT>

Middle Years Council

Dates: April 25–27
Location: Banff (Banff Park Lodge)
Theme: Managing the Madness
Website: www.ata-myc.com

Outreach Education Council

Date: Nov. 16–18
Location: Delta Hotels by Marriott Edmonton South Conference Centre
Theme: Exploring Alternatives
Website: <https://reg.unityeventsolutions.com/se/ATAOECTEMPLATE/ATT>

Religious and Moral Education Council

Date: Oct. 13–14
Location: Banff Centre, Banff
Theme: Braiding Together: Dialogue Towards Truth and Reconciliation
Website: <https://reg.unityeventsolutions.com/se/ATARMECTEMPLATE/ATT>

Science Council

Date: Nov. 2–4
Location: Coast Canmore Hotel and Conference Centre
Theme: The Truth is Out There
Website: <https://reg.unityeventsolutions.com/se/ATASCTEMPLATE/ATT>

Second Languages and Intercultural Council

Date: Oct. 21
Location: Zoom
Theme: Best practices in additional language learning
Website: <https://slic.teachers.ab.ca/Pages/Home.aspx>

Social Studies Council

No events scheduled at this time.



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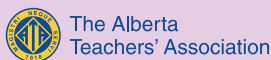
*disponible en français

CALLING ALL FIELD MEMBERS

Contribute your voice to the Strategic Planning Group

Apply online now! This committee has one vacancy for a field member. The complete application information is available in the Volunteer section of the ATA website.

If you have any questions, please contact Lindsay Yakimyshyn at lindsay.yakimyshyn@ata.ab.ca, 780-447-9425 or 1-800-232-7208.



Application Deadline:

OCT 2



DIGITAL NEWS

The ATA News is available in a digital format.

For the latest issue, visit www.teachers.ab.ca/news.

Subscribe to receive an email when a new issue is available.

<http://bit.ly/ATAeNews>

DO YOU TEACH GRADE 12 FRANÇAIS?

Alberta Education Français 30 Diploma Examination Advisory Committee

needs your voice.

This committee has one vacancy for an ATA field member with expertise teaching Grade 12 Français to serve as the ATA's representative.

If you have any questions, please contact Lindsay Yakimyshyn at lindsay.yakimyshyn@ata.ab.ca, 780-447-9425 or 1-800-232-7208.



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The Alberta Teachers' Association

The Alberta Teachers' Association invites applications for the position of

EXECUTIVE STAFF OFFICER, TEACHER EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Competition: ESO3/23

Location: Edmonton

Position Overview

This position will assist in the work of the Teacher Employment Services (TES) program area, supporting both teacher employment and collective bargaining functions. Duties may include the following:

- Being responsible for organizing and providing direct service to members as part of the Teacher Employment Services team, including handling teacher employment field service requests, acting as a representative of the bargaining agent in collective agreement negotiations and providing support to Association subgroups
- Advising members on teacher personnel problems and collective agreement entitlements
- Representing teachers in employment matters and/or related hearings
- Handling collective agreement grievances and board of reference appeals
- Participating and carrying out presentations and workshops for TES conferences
- Serving as an Association resource person in specific areas of expertise
- Carrying out special projects from other areas of Association operations as assigned

Qualifications

Candidates must demonstrate:

- Effective communication, including effective writing and presentation skills
- Strong organizational skills, attention to detail and good judgement
- Superior leadership, interpersonal and collaboration skills and political acumen
- Ability to foster effective working relationships with both internal and external stakeholders
- Awareness of where to find and apply relevant legislation and policy
- Appreciation of the strategic context of collective bargaining and member representation

Additional competencies:

- Facility in the French language is considered an asset
- School leadership experience is considered an asset

In addition, the following are required:

- A valid teaching certificate and a minimum of five years of successful teaching experience in public education
- Proven commitment to public education
- Ability to undertake travel and evening/weekend work

A demonstrated commitment to the Alberta Teachers' Association (or other Canadian teachers' organization), course work in employee and labour relations, experience in and/or knowledge of pensions and benefits are considered assets. The Association is committed to reconciliation and a candidate's knowledge and experience of related issues and/or membership in an Indigenous community is considered an asset.

Who We Are

As a professional organization and the voice of the province's teachers, the Association is dedicated to advancing the cause of education and to building the teaching profession in Alberta. The Association represents all public, separate and francophone school teachers in the province of Alberta.

The provincial Association, its locals and subgroups perform both union and professional functions. As a union, the Association negotiates and monitors collective agreements and represents teachers in matters of employment. Effective January 1, 2023, the Association has begun representing members who may be subject to regulatory processes relating to professional conduct and practice administered by the Alberta Teaching Profession Commission.

In its professional role, the Association promotes and supports the preparation of candidates to the profession, provides ongoing professional development to members, makes representation to the government on matters of education policy, advocates for public education, and works with like-minded organizations provincially, nationally and internationally. To better achieve these ends, the Association actively promotes the representation and participation of member teachers in its governance and the delivery of its programs.

What This Position Offers

Total compensation for this position includes a starting salary of \$138,720, pensionable service under the Teachers' Pension Plan of the Alberta Teachers' Retirement Fund Board and employer-paid benefits as stipulated in a collective agreement. The initial location will be in Edmonton, but future assignments may be to any present or future Association office. Duties will commence on December 1, 2023 (negotiable).

Applicants should quote position ESO3/23 and include the names, phone numbers and e-mail addresses of at least two references who are not Association employees or elected officials of its provincial executive. Applications must be received by **1600 on Wednesday, October 4, 2023** and should be addressed to

Ms Kathryn Dick
Human Resources Director
The Alberta Teachers' Association
11010 142 Street NW
Edmonton T5N 2R1
E-mail: hr@ata.ab.ca

For more information, please see our website at www.teachers.ab.ca.



SUPPLIED

Teachers from Sherwood Park and Westlock recently competed in *Family Feud Canada's* Teachers' Week. Taped over the summer, the episodes are scheduled to air Sept. 18-21.

Alberta teachers hit the screen on *Family Feud Canada*

Lindsay Yakimyshyn
ATA News Staff

Who recently competed on *Family Feud Canada*? Survey says ... Alberta teachers!

Hosted by comedian (and former teacher) Gerry Dee, *Family Feud Canada* opened its fifth season with the show's first-ever Teachers' Week. Teams from eight Canadian schools appeared on the show, with teachers from École Westlock Elementary School (Westlock) and Salisbury Composite High School (Sherwood Park) representing Alberta.

"Taping the show and being on set was so surreal and so much fun," recalled Salisbury team member Max Latte. "Meeting Gerry Dee and representing Sal was an absolute blast."

After learning about the opportunity from a district communication, the Salisbury staff decided to put a team together and apply. With only a week's notice that they would be contestants, the team members flew to Toronto this past summer for the taping.

The Westlock Elementary team also enjoyed the whirlwind of being on the show and seeing production come together.

"As it was the first episode filmed for the season, we were able to see the magic of the stage light up, audio checks, producers vibing and the excitement of a live audience," said Westlock team member Jenna Thompson.

Along with the excitement came nerves, as \$10,000 toward equipment and supplies for their schools was on the line. To take home the prize, contestants had to guess the top responses to survey questions. This was sometimes easier said than done.

"Gerry loved chatting between taking responses to questions so trying to remember what your answer was going to be to the question was so hard," recalled Thompson. "We wanted to engage with him but also wanted the best answers!"

Whether they had the best answers remains to be seen, as the outcome of their respective games could not be shared at the time of publication. Regardless, taking part in *Family Feud Canada* Teachers' Week strengthened collegial bonds.

"Our whole Sal staff is a pretty close and great staff, but this just brought the five of us even closer together," said Latte.

Westlock team member Bailey Johnston echoed this.

"It showed us that we are not just teachers in an itty-bitty town, but are capable of doing great (and scary!) things when we work and support each other as a team," she said.

Win or lose, the experience also gave both teams an opportunity to set a positive example for their students.

"We wanted to show our students that you can create your own adventures and opportunities if you put yourself out there," Latte said. ■

On the air Teachers' Week on *Family Feud Canada* is airing Sept. 18-21 on CBC and CBC Gem.



SUPPLIED



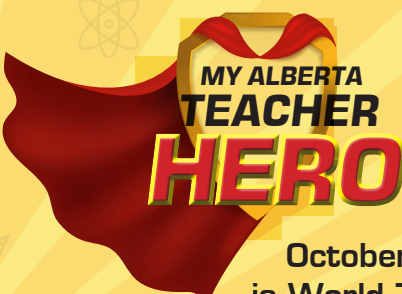
The Joy of Teaching

October 20(eve)–21, 2023

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 Registration deadline—October 15, 2023



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October 5 is World Teachers' Day.

You and your favourite Alberta teacher can win amazing prizes!

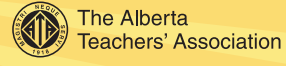

To celebrate, send us a 60-second video sharing how an Alberta teacher inspired you. You'll be entered to win one of 25 \$100 Visa gift cards.

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THE TRUTH IS OUT THERE

ATA Science Council Conference #ATASC2023
 November 2–4, 2023 @ the Coast Salmore Hotel & Conference Centre




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Weaving the Threads OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

OCTOBER 13-14, 2023
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The Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of Alberta

Are you interested in facilitating Indigenous education workshops?

BECOME AN INDIGENOUS EDUCATION PD FACILITATOR!



The Alberta Teachers' Association is seeking outstanding classroom teachers representing all grade levels and subject areas from across the province. The three-year appointments for these assignments will begin in the 2023/24 school year.

The application process has two parts:

1. Provide a letter of interest, including the following:
 - Areas of interest and expertise in Indigenous education
 - Experience leading professional development
 - Reasons for applying
2. Provide a resumé outlining education, work experience, leadership experience, publications, presentations and volunteer experience.

Successful candidates are expected to deliver 7–10 workshops per year and are required to attend two training sessions per year. The Association covers release time and associated expenses and provides an honorarium for workshops delivered.

As a courtesy, please advise your superintendent and principal that you will be applying prior to doing so. All applicants must be active or associate members of the ATA, have at least five years of teaching experience and hold an Alberta teaching certificate.

APPLICATION DEADLINE IS OCTOBER 18, 2023.

Send your letter of interest and resumé to Indigenous education
 Alberta Teachers' Association
 11010 142 Street NW, Edmonton AB, T5N 2R1
 or e-mail information to walkingtogether@ata.ab.ca.

In making application to become a Indigenous Education PD facilitator for the Alberta Teachers' Association, you are voluntarily providing your personal information to the ATA. Visit the ATA website for more information.

 The Alberta Teachers' Association

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TALENT

September 19, 2023 | Volume 58, Number 2



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MEANINGFUL MOMENTS

It was hard going to school the first day knowing I have a class of 29 Grade 4 students. A new student to our school gave me a bouquet of flowers. This was a first for me. It made the first day a little more bearable.

*Rhonda Schneider, Bonnyville
Centralized High School, Bonnyville*

A former student who graduated a few years ago popped in and had a nice conversation with me. I was pleasantly surprised!

*Lorelei Gertz-Cummins, Alexander Forbes
The Academy School, Grande Prairie*

My high school students (two) returned today and informed me they want to graduate in January and set in right to work! They finished their first assignment and did awesome work. They wrote a rant. The first student wrote about high food prices and the other one about how much he dislikes the Oilers, my favourite team! It was a fantastic day!!

*Laurie Jean, Breaking Point Colony
School, Manning*

A new-to-me Grade 9 student drew a lovely picture today with a note in cursive that said they were happy to be in my classroom because they didn't feel judged. They dropped it on my desk while I was dismissing the others. It made my day.

*Megan Carnegie, Westwood
Community High School, Fort
McMurray*

On the first day of school, one of my kinders from last year brought me a note telling me how much they are going to miss me being their teacher.

*Helyn Akranis, Gift Lake School,
Gift Lake*

A student is using our Grade 1 and 2 classroom regulation space appropriately, staying regulated better and getting more work done than in previous years.

*Teresa Andersson, Donalda School,
Donalda*

I have taught elementary school for 20 years. This year I decided to challenge myself and move into junior high. I have used community circles and restorative practices for over a decade with the little ones and decided to do the same with my bigger kiddos. I was worried they would hate it and think it was babyish. At the end of the day on Friday, several Grade 9 students wanted to make sure we were still going to be using circles after the getting-to-know-you period was done. I asked the class what they thought and got a resounding "yes, we love it." Made my day!

*Melissa Joy, Dr. Donald Massey School,
Edmonton*

I teach online for our alternative ed school. One of my Grade 11 K&E students from last year popped up on my morning "meet" and visited, and informed me he would be there every day just to hang out. Who says they don't love you when you teach online?

*Lori Karoly Szmul, Peace Wapiti
Enterprise Centre, Grande Prairie*

What is one wonderful thing that has happened to you at school so far this year?

A new student is teaching me! She has an allergy and together we are learning how to accommodate my foods course for her needs.

*Carmen Beverly, Chestermere
High School*

During music class, a sweet dumpling raised his hand only to say, "I love you."

*Alana Janine, Hilwie Hamdon
School, Edmonton*

My school community is coming together so that our school can raise goats! We've been working toward it and at a school council meeting last night made big strides!

*Jennifer Eileen, Worsley Central
School, Worsley*