

Government

1. **We have three candidates - Robert Duiker, Greg Jeffrey, and Jason Schilling - running to be your next President. Please vote!**
  - a. Voting will occur from March 14 to 18, 2019.
  - b. Find the rest of the details about the status of PEC elections and acclamations here:  
<https://www.teachers.ab.ca/News%20Room/Campaigns/2019-PEC-Elections/Candidates/Pages/index.aspx>
2. The **ARA pre-meeting** - where ARA delegates sit in a room with the ATA Resolutions pull-out section and talk about PEC positions, what resolutions mean, etc. - will be held from 9 AM to 3 PM (hopefully we'll be done sooner) on Saturday 6 April at Centre 2000.
3. Anyone having trouble completing the **budget workbook** should feel free to call Barnett House and ask for support from finance regarding the document.
  - a. A reminder that a small (\$15) ATA fee increase has been proposed. Why an increase?
    - i. Inflation
    - ii. Staff collective increases (modest, but at a cost)
    - iii. Miscellaneous other matters
  - b. Specialist council grant structure was changed. ARA delegates will hear more about this, methinks.
4. <https://www.vote4kids.ca/> **Teachers are encouraged, strongly, to make best efforts to ensure that education and education funding is an issue in the upcoming election.** The ATA has produced "sardine can" pull-tab flyers to distribute during the election. The hope is that candidates of every party receive enough of these flyers - and questions and concerns about education - that every candidate and every party leader are compelled to draw one conclusion: education is too important to voters and education funding is too well-supported to be monkeyed with. Teachers should be aware that such election advocacy would be occurring from a position of strength; polling support is strong:
  - a. 59% of Albertans feel that class sizes are too big
  - b. 78% of Albertans are at least somewhat supportive of increasing funding to decrease class sizes
  - c. 73% of Albertans say that education is important when deciding how to vote
  - d. 84% of Albertans say that government education funding will be the education issue most likely to affect their vote
5. There is an attempt underway to create a Catholic specialist council. Currently Catholic issues are addressed via the Religious and Moral Education council, which has a significant representation of Catholic teachers. FYI: approximately 1/3 of the Association's teachers are Catholic/work in Catholic schools.
6. The ATA's member opinion survey is now up (until 8 March 2019). Make your voice heard! <https://surveys.teachers.ab.ca/s3/memberop19>

## **Professional Development**

1. The **Committee on Convention Review** survey will wrap up by the end of convention season, so if you've been procrastinating, get on it! And don't forget to comment!
2. Some of our students come to us having experienced **trauma**. This can manifest in many ways and create challenges for students and teachers. There is currently a lot of good work being done on this topic. This academic abstract is contains some useful links: [https://werklund.ucalgary.ca/gpe/files/gpe/edps\\_693.09\\_s05\\_hindes\\_f2017.pdf](https://werklund.ucalgary.ca/gpe/files/gpe/edps_693.09_s05_hindes_f2017.pdf)
3. Regarding the new **Leadership Quality Standards (LQS)**, administrators may want to get in on the upcoming LQS sessions during convention because, in the relatively near future, this option will disappear and training for Leadership Certification will become available only via post secondary institutions. Here is the registration link: <https://abedleadershipcert.ca/register>.
  - a. **Current principals will be “grandparented” into certification.** They are welcome to take part in one of the 2 day certification sessions this year but are not required to do so in order to get certified: the certification will occur in any event. Some (many?) are choosing to attend but, rest assured, they'll be certified whether they attend or not.
  - b. **VPs and APs**, on the other hand, **are the real target for the 2 day certification sessions** this year. Attending one of these sessions will allow those VPs and APs to “check off a box” on their way toward certification ... assuming that all goes well in terms of their future assignments.
  - c. **Aspirants for school leadership** - muggles, as it were - can theoretically attend these 2 day sessions but **will NOT be able to “check off a box” by doing so.** They also may find some resistance to their attendance at these sessions because, basically, they would be attending the session for (as the kids say) “shiggles.” These attendees would not even be eligible for a hero cookie, much less certification. Why not just have a nap? Or spend quality time with your family? There are a lot of better options, to my mind.
  - d. Before you ask, the circumstances outlined above were not created by the decisions of the ATA. The Association is a partner in the standards, but the Department of Education ultimately made the decision to attach certification to the LQS, and to require training (i.e. courses) for those attaining certification.
  - e. A more detailed description of the LQS process is available upon request.
4. A new resource for internationally educated teachers has been released: [https://www.teachers.ab.ca/\\_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc={12e06690-a640-4fb9-a309-fbd8fbc74a13}&action=view](https://www.teachers.ab.ca/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc={12e06690-a640-4fb9-a309-fbd8fbc74a13}&action=view)
5. A new resource on working with “Low German Speaking Mennonite Students and Communities” is also available, although it has yet to be posted, it seems.
6. There will be a **“Walking Together: Education for Reconciliation Gathering”** in Grande Prairie on 24 May 2018. Your district should get more information.

**7. Recommended speakers:**

- a. Aaron Paquette (<http://www.aaronpaquette.net/>) spoke at NETCA and was a very compelling and passionate storyteller and advocate for reconciliation.
- b. Kevin Lamoureux comes highly recommended. He is a faculty member at the University of Winnipeg and has served as the education lead for the National Centre on Truth and Reconciliation:  
<http://www.trcm.ca/public-education/speakers-bureau/speakers-bureau-member-profiles/kevin-lamoureux/>

**Member Services**

1. Expect to see an advertisement for a **new MS staff officer position** in the very near future.
2. The Minister of Education recently announced a **ban on seclusion rooms** for the fall. The decision may have unintended consequences. What of other types of rooms used in schools to address student behavior and student needs: sensory, quiet, calming, time-out, etc? Also, as teachers know, the use of isolation or seclusion rooms is a symptom of a larger problem facing schools: extreme student misbehaviour and how to deal with it in a way that considers the needs and safety of all students and staff.
3. As our classrooms become more diverse teachers are seeing more unfamiliar names on their class lists. Knowing how to **pronounce the names correctly** can be a challenge, but doing so can be a crucial part of making a positive first connection with a student. Some teachers are using this resource - <https://hearnames.com/pronunciations> - to help meet that challenge.
4. **OHS Workplace Health and Safety Committees** continue to be a concern for many Locals. Again, Local representatives are strongly encouraged to seek Member Services advice and to proceed carefully in the interest of workplace safety. Keep in mind that these are JOINT committees and that support from the workers - i.e. the union, in this case the ATA Local - is crucial. It's the Local that speaks for the teachers; Boards should not be "going around the Local" to seek support from teachers directly.

**Teacher Welfare**

1. Expect to see an advertisement for a **new TW staff officer position** in the very near future. Consider applying!
2. Keep a close eye on that [Central Table Bargainer's Blog](#). Very close.
3. There are **6 (and dropping) local tables still engaged in bargaining for the agreement that ending in August of 2018!** Hopefully they get done before the current central table negotiations lap them.

4. The **processing of agreements into a single unified document continues!** Here's where Northwest local agreements stand as of 26 February 2019 ("received" means "received by TW at Barnett House"): Fort Vermillion received and sent back to the board; GP Public received; GP Catholic completed and posted (but not on the app, for some reason), High Prairie completed; Holy Family completed; PRSD revision sent to school jurisdiction 18 December 2018; Peace Wapiti signed; Northland - school board has signed, teachers will need to ratify
5. There are **two financial planning/retirement sessions coming up**, both co-ordinated by ATA Pension Consultant Robert Simard; [oilers11997@gmail.com](mailto:oilers11997@gmail.com) is his email
  - a. A pre-retirement session for teachers with 5 or fewer years until retirement at Jeffrey's Cafe Co, 10645 West Side Drive, Grande Prairie AB, Saturday 6 April 2019 9 AM to 4 PM
    - i. Registration at 8:30 AM
    - ii. No cost for teachers of Trumpeter, Northern Spirit, or GP Catholic Locals; spouses of those teachers also welcome
    - iii. [Fill out your registration in this google form](#)
  - b. Capital Estate Planning Session for teachers further from retirement; 6 April 2019; 11 AM to Noon, Ecole St. Gerard School 9724 - 88 Ave Grande Prairie AB

### **Other Stuff**

1. Peter MacKay's Northwest District Representative Calendar:
  - a. <https://calendar.google.com/calendar?cid=bWZvNWdkODdwc21wczFhMW05cjFjN2I0YWNAZ3JvdXAuY2FsZW5kYXluZ29vZ2xILmNvbQ>
2. Upcoming Dates of interest:
  - a. March 7/8 Mighty Peace Teachers Convention
  - b. March 11 Budget workbook deadline
  - c. March 11-15 sub teacher appreciation week
  - d. March 15 Resolutions mailing to locals
  - e. April 6th - ARA resolutions "pre-meeting" at Centre 2000 9 AM to 3 PM
  - f. March 23-31 my spring break!
  - g. April 4/5 Provincial Executive Council
  - h. April 12 deadline resolution submission
  - i. April 12/13 TWAC Westin Calgary
  - j. April 26/27 PDAC Sheraton Cavalier Calgary
3. Check the ATA Events Calendar for more dates:
  - a. <https://www.teachers.ab.ca/For%20Members/Events%20Calendar/Pages/default.aspx>