

Government

1. **The annual ATA Member Opinion Survey will be distributed to 7000 randomly selected teachers in February.** There will also be a duplicate survey open to all members behind the login screen on the ATA website.
2. **The ATA has FOIPed the Government of Alberta** for the results of the Choice in Education survey. We are waiting for the Choice in Education Act to be announced in the Legislature.
3. We are also waiting for the result of the **Curriculum Review Panel**. The panel delivered their report to the Minister before Christmas. It has not been publicly released.
4. The ATA has also **requested that the Auditor General review the provisions of Bill 22**. We shall see if the Auditor General likes that idea or not.
5. Provincial Executive Council discussed the upcoming **Annual Representative Assembly**. The agenda includes a hard stop at 9:30pm on Sunday night. In previous years Sunday evening has been extended into the early hours of Monday morning. This will not happen this year.
6. Council spent many hours discussing **the budget to be presented to Local Presidents in February**. The budget is based on 33300 teachers, a reduction of 1500 members, representing approximately \$2 million less in revenue. Finance Committee went over every line of the budget and made reductions where they could. For example, there will only be one Beginning Teachers' Conference next year, committees that usually meet four times a year were reduced to three meetings, conference attendance by executive staff and council was reduced, there is no proposed new hiring. However, council decided that now is not the time to decimate services to members, believing that fewer teachers will actually result in more work for Member Services and Teacher Welfare (layoffs, transfers, sick teachers, stressed teachers, discipline cases will all increase.) We must remain strong in the face of uncertain times. **The proposed annual fee for a full-time teacher is \$1362. This is \$96 increase, mostly driven by reduced revenue, increased taxes and insurance costs.** This will be debated at Annual Representative Assembly in May.
7. **Council voted to cancel the Education Decision-Makers seminar at summer conference.** This program has seen MLAs from all parties and other influential people attend Summer Conference and learn about the ATA. Last year no UCP MLAs accepted our invitation.

8. Please encourage teachers to continue participating in the **letter writing campaign**, and encourage parents to take part in the **parent letter writing campaign** which went out to school councils.
9. The ATA will be trying to focus on “timeless” ATA branding when getting **ATA shwag**, rather than campaign-focused items (which are often left undistributed and embarrassingly difficult to unload.
 - a. Free (in the sense that you’ve already paid for them via your dues) **public education decals** are now available from the ATA.
10. NW ATA Presidents Michael Aldridge and Myrna McLean joined me in **meeting with MLAs Dan Williams and Todd Loewen** at Loewen’s Fairview MLA office. The meeting went well, with a focus on maintaining a respectful dialogue and on advocating for the needs of schools and students in the north.

Professional Development

1. **Council received the convention review implementation plan, which was approved in principle.** The major goals to be achieved are organized into three broad categories based on their level of risk, complexity and cost. Council authorization staff to proceed in principle, with the specific goals, by progressing through the Association’s normal operational and approval channels. Goals that require the amendment of administrative guidelines will be presented to Table Officers and Council; bylaw changes will require the preparation of an electoral ballot to be debated at the Annual Representative Assembly; and cost items will be considered in future emphasis / prognosis and budgeting cycles.
2. **Staff have received a number of requests related to the presence of MLAs and political parties wanting convention booths, the possibility of them attending convention social events and the potential of them organizing their own events for teachers during conventions.** These matters were referred to Table Officers Committee. A memorandum was forwarded to convention associations outlining Association direction.
 - a. The main takeaway: “involving MLAs in convention related events is generally not appropriate and is to be discouraged.”
 - b. Engagement with MLAs is, of course, something which might be of considerable benefit to teachers and to the profession. MLAs will also be attracted by the chance to engage with so many teachers in a single time and place. **If such events occur, they should be organized by ATA**

Locals - not Convention Boards - and should occur outside of Convention hours and away from Convention sites.

- i. Also, don't pay for MLA expenses or give the MLAs gifts. Doing so is a real legal rat's nest.
 - c. Contact Jonathan Teghtmeyer (jonathan.teghtmeyer@ata.ab.ca) if you have questions.
3. **61.6% of teachers are now members of at least one ATA Specialist Council, an all-time high.** Given that one such membership is free to every teacher in the ATA this number probably should be higher, but it tracks with the percentage of teachers who leave HSA money unspent every year. Perhaps teachers just aren't that focused on money. It really is about the kids ...
 4. The good folks in PD are engaging in a **two-year study on the new TQS and LQS**. This research will examine new dimensions in the standards (all dimensions are new for the LQS, which is a newborn still wrapped in swaddling clothes), in particular the standards related to Indigenous knowledge and the supports needed to achieve those standards. A survey is expected in March.

Member Services

1. **Phone Member Services for advice on anything that concerns you as an individual** (contracts, transfers, terminations, collegial conflict...). See number below.
2. The **Code of Conduct** can be found [here](#). If you require the assistance of Member Services please don't hesitate to call.
3. **Teachers are advised to be careful on social media.** Teachers are urged to avoid getting into online discussions about illegal labour action including work to rule. Teachers might also consider revising their personal information on social media: identifying yourself as a teacher is probably better than identifying yourself as a "teacher in school division x."
4. **Teachers should also not allow themselves to be silenced or intimidated on social media.** More than any time in recent history, Alberta teachers need to speak up and advocate for the profession. If you run into choppy water when doing so, please call MS for advice.

Teacher Welfare

1. **Phone Teacher Welfare for advice on anything that relates to the Collective Agreement** (pay, leaves, benefits...).
2. **27 out of 61 bargaining units have completed local bargaining.** This list includes Lethbridge Public and Holy Spirit who have BUGMs in early February. Edmonton Catholic is the first of the large urbans to settle. Edmonton Public has voted to go to mediation. The 2018-2020 Collective Agreement template is ready for the input of local data.
3. **ATRF has released its [annual report](#).** The fund did very well last year and has paid off a deficit early. As a result, contribution rates will go down by 1% in September. This 1% is split between teachers and government. **This means your pension deduction will decrease by 0.5% of salary (about \$400-\$500/year depending on where you are on the grid.)** ATRF is busy negotiating an Investment Management Agreement (IMA) with AIMCo. On a positive note, they have secured continuing employment contracts for 50 ATRF staff with AIMCo. When assets are transferred, the staff will move with them.
4. The **Financial Wellness 101** session, held on 11 January 2020 was very well received. Teacher Welfare has picked up the idea - the session was focused 50/50 on managing debt and on how to save - and you can now book similar sessions for you local by contacting Teacher Welfare.

Other Stuff: Peter MacKay's [Northwest DR Calendar](#) and the [ATA Calendar](#)

As many of you know, my father, Jack MacKay, passed away recently. I just wanted to say how much my family and I appreciate the kind words and thoughts that have come our way.

Special thanks to my fellow DRs Katherine Pritchard, Brenton Baum, and Murray Lalond for sharing their DR reports with me. I missed the last PEC meeting and they were kind enough to share the info above with me, allowing me to provide you folks with some info.