



March 2021

I know for many of you that may be bitter sweet. At this point in March many of us are usually looking forward to plans we have made for the break, trips we have booked, get-togethers with friends, etc.

This year, however you choose to spend your extended break, please use it to rest and relax. It's been a long school year, and it's been a long calendar year. Try to do something that will clear your head....give you comfort....or release some tension.

When you return, there will be 3 months of school remaining.....57 school days. Please do your best to hang-in there. 😊

I've included the additional information on various topics below. But before you jump to that, I would ask you to read the following:

This week the Alberta Teachers' Association is running an election for Provincial Executive Council (PEC). **Voting opened on March 8th and closes today, Thursday, March 11th at 5:00 pm ONLINE.**

To vote, you will need to set up a Member's Only Account - if you don't already have one please see the link below for step by step and VIDEO instructions on how to do this.

Once logged-in, voting will take you no longer than 2 minutes....tops.

I cannot impart on you enough the incredible importance in taking part in this election. It is vitally important to the work that we have ahead of us with a government that is appearing to be tone deaf to the needs of our publicly funded school system.

I understand that politics are not for everyone, and that there is little time at the end of most days to do much else than eat and fall into bed. However, right now, government leaders are relying on apathy. Apathy from the public. Apathy from parents. Apathy from teachers.

Should the election turn-out be low (as it usually is) they will surely use this

as a weapon going forward. If it appears that **we** do not care about our Association's work, then why should **they**?

Right now, there are major issues on the table:

- Talks of a wage role back
- Our pension dollars being moved to AIMCo with NO discussion with teachers, and no representation of teachers on the AIMCo board (most recent)
- New Curriculum being made with little to no teacher consultation, and zero acknowledgement of the concerns expressed around the composition of the advisory panel
- Central Table Bargaining talks that have already slowed (with a mediator already being called in to negotiate the "List of All Matters" (the items that the both parties agree on that they will bargain.)
- Increased funding to private schools with a STAY in funding to publicly funded schools for another year despite enrollment increases, Covid protocols, and deferred maintenance and infrastructure concerns.
- Cuts to PUF funding for some of our most vulnerable early learners
- Previous ideations of pulling our principal colleagues out of our association
- The complete disregard for teachers and all education staff for the work that we do

All of these things ARE POLITICAL. Public Education and it's funding IS POLITICAL.

You may think that you don't want to be/get political.... but trust me, if we as educators DON'T get political, there will be some VERY political people making choices and decisions about our classrooms, our students, our schools, our pensions, our compensation, OUR profession for us. And if we don't get political, those decisions will have future, long-lasting, and potentially irreparable damage.

There are exceptional people running to represent you around the PEC table. People that want to be political, that want to fight and represent YOU, their colleagues. Who you vote for or what your political ideologies or affiliations are, are your business. But, if you care about this profession and what we do in schools every day for our students and ultimately our society, **then now is the time to get involved.**

VOTE. And show the government that we ARE paying attention, we are active, we are organized, and that we will not take whatever they think that they can throw at us. Remember, in the words of Larry Booi.... "We don't get what is fair or what we deserve....WE GET WHAT WE FIGHT FOR."

If you have already voted.....thank you!

If you have not voted yet..... you will be voting in the **EDMONTON-MCMURRAY District**

Links to follow:

You can set up your online account here: <https://www.teachers.ab.ca/> <https://secure.campaigner.com/CSB/Six->

[great-reasons-to-get...](#)

(If you need your teaching cert # you can call Wendy at the local office, 780-455-2164, or you should be able to get it from your online file with the district)

ATA - 2021 PEC Candidates - Several candidates have been acclaimed in their run for a seat on the Provincial Executive Council—including the election for PEC President. www.teachers.ab.ca

TO VOTE: <https://elections.teachers.ab.ca/Pages/BigPulse.aspx>
(Again.....you will be voting for candidates in the **EDMONTON-MCMURRAY** District)

To close, I really want to ask you to remember something when you feel guilty for advocating for teachers and schools and funding and for the election of a government who is not tone deaf to the various needs of us as teachers and of our students....

Teachers ARE NOT to blame. Education staff are NOT to blame. It is NOT our fault that the province's budget is weary or that oil prices fell. It is not our fault that a pandemic hit and that financial planning and budgeting is heavy, costly and hard to do. It is NOT our fault that we have a wage deferral agreement that allows us to have a pension contribution that includes our own money and that the private sector does not have this. It is not our fault that many jobs in the private sector were lost. We are not to blame, do not feel guilty.

This does not mean that we have no compassion for the many Albertans that are struggling right now. Many of us have members of our own family that have been financially impacted by these factors.

Instead, it is a statement of reminder that it is we, as civil servants and "front line workers", who show up no matter what is going on and are forced to pivot, manage and carry on through whatever is thrown at us. We are reliable, important and vital. We deserve respect and acknowledgement because we have EARNED IT.

Edmonton Public Local Information

Local Magnet & Communications Survey:

You will soon be receiving a magnet with information about what you can find on our Local website. We have also included a single piece of paper with a **QR code** that will take you to a survey from our communications committee. We are looking for feedback on how to best communicate with you...our members. Please take 5 minutes to do the survey, as this will assist us in moving forward with our communication strategy and plans.

Substitute Teacher Appreciation Week & Thanks:

A huge thanks to our colleagues that come into our schools and classrooms everyday, that work along side of us and our students, that fill-in and are ready to assist at a moment's notice.....we could not do this job without you, this year especially. Thank you...from the bottom of our hearts for all that

you do!

April 21st Teacher/Self-Directed PD day:

Just a reminder that the PD day on April 21st is the second of two **self/teacher-directed** professional development days this year.

This is a day that teachers have the autonomy to choose their own PD activities that best align with their own goals in their Professional Growth Plans (PGP). These days are about professional growth and learning, and it is **your choice** as to how to best spend those days so as to work towards those PGP goals.

With that said we also know that there are many different options you could choose on those days, and we suggest letting your principal/DU admin know how you plan to spend your self-directed PD day.

As previously mentioned, some of those options include (but are not limited to):

- Professional in-services being offered by the district (through PDR system)
- Sessions being offered by your Local PD committee (also through the PDR system...more on this below)
- Sessions being offered by the Edmonton Regional Learning Consortium (ERLC)
- Self-Directed options being offered by the Alberta Assessment Consortium
- Sessions/courses being offered by outside agencies (ie. free U of A courses through Coursera)
- Catchment group collaboration
- Subject-specific or grade-level (horizontal) collaboration
- Collaboration with colleagues
- Online learning opportunities (recorded or live)

The choice is yours but must be tied to your goals in your PGP.

Upcoming Local Events

Please see local37.teachers.ab.ca for links to register.

Pre-Retirement Seminar #2 - March 13, 2021 - Interested in retiring in 5 years or more? The second Pre-Retirement Seminar will be hosted via Zoom on March 13th beginning at 9:00 am. The next session will be held in the fall.

Paint Night (via Zoom) with "Bob Ross" - March 24, 2021 - Join the Social Committee's own "Bob Ross" for another fun paint night on March 24th from 7:00 to 9:00 pm. The \$5 fee includes all materials sent to your school.

Finding our Way in Indigenous Education - Connecting Hearts and Minds Online Workshop - April 13, 2021 - The PD Committee presents Finding our Way in Indigenous Education - Connecting Hearts and Minds on

April 13th from 3:45-4:45 pm.

***My Name is Trauma* Online Workshop - April 21, 2021** (Teacher/Self Directed PD Day) - The PD Committee presents *My Name is Trauma* on April 21st from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm - a self-directed PD Day. This workshop will help educators and administrators understand the nature of trauma and its impact on everyone's physical and mental health. Participants will leave the session with effective resilience building techniques, proactive classroom management, and positive support coping strategies.

"We Rise by Lifting Others" with Michael "Pinball" Clemons - April 21, 2021 (Teacher/Self Directed PD Day) - The PD Committee welcomes Michael "Pinball" Clemons virtually on April 21st from 1:00 to 2:15 pm - a self-directed PD Day. "Pinball" is a much sought after international speaker who will bring a message of hope, going through COVID and bringing together communities with a short Q&A to follow.

Disc Golf at Rundle Park - April 23, 2021 - Join the Social Committee for this fun, outdoor activity. A disc-golf pro will be giving a lesson/workshop for each grouping, so no experience is necessary! Two time slots available - 4:30-5:30 pm and 5:30-6:30 pm! Space is limited!

Maternity/Adoption Information Session - May 31, 2021 - Expecting? Adopting? Plan to attend the virtual maternity/adoption information session on May 31st beginning at 5:00 pm. Our next session will be held in the fall. If you are unable to attend on the 31st and the fall is too late, contact Catherine LeBlanc in the Local office by email or 780-455-2164 for assistance.

Outdoor Yoga - May 31, 2021 - Join the Social Committee for this refreshing outdoor activity. This class is suitable for all levels - no experience necessary! Space is limited!

Collective Agreement Reminders

As schools start looking at scheduling and planning for the fall, please be sure to remind your Principal and Assistant Principals about two things:

1. You are entitled to a **30-minute uninterrupted break every day**. You as an individual can choose for that to be 2 x 15-minute breaks instead. This cannot be decided for you, nor can it be a majority decision by a staff. This 30 minutes must fall before the end of your first 5-hour "shift." It also should not be in the first or last 30 minutes of the day. And it should be COMPLETELY duty free (should not include cleaning duties, supervision, opening your classroom, etc.). Your "shift" begins when you are required to be in the school. (For many, as an example, this could be 8:45 am when you are expected to have your classroom open for students.)
2. You have a maximum number of assignable minutes in a week...1800 minutes. That means, that whatever you are scheduled for (instructing, supervising, staff meetings, collaboration meetings, transition times, parent-teacher interviews, etc.) must fall within those 1800 minutes every week.

This cannot be averaged from one week to the next, nor can it be averaged over a week, month or year.

Assignable-Time Calculator: In relation to the above reminders, we have put together an Assignable-Time Calculator that is located on the Local's website to assist you in calculating where your minutes are. There are a few intricacies in working with it, so please reach out to us if you need help and we will walk you through it.)

It can be found here: local37.teachers.ab.ca (you must log in to access it)

Additional information

ATA Financial Wellness Seminars: The ATA is hosting two Financial Wellness sessions planned for Saturday, April 10th and Saturday, May 8th, both beginning at 10:00 am.

Links to register for one of these sessions are as follows:

April 10th: <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/financial-wellness-101-with-capital-estate-planning-and-mnp-debt-tickets-145113573605>

May 8th: <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/financial-wellness-101-with-capital-estate-planning-and-mnp-debt-tickets-140149353489>

The two-hour Financial Wellness 101 session presented by Capital Estate Planning and the MNP Debt Group is built to give you tools to take control of your financial situation:

- How to start saving and investing.
- Easy steps on where and when to put your money.
- Tips for budgeting and saving.
- The importance of an emergency fund.
- Tips for maintaining a good credit score.
- How to handle debt and how to address it.
- Tools you can access if things get out of control.

A Zoom link to your session will be sent out to all registrants closer to the date of the session.

GETCA Convention Survey/Evaluation: If you haven't yet completed the GETCA Survey about this year's convention, please do so here: <https://surveys.teachers.ab.ca/s3/2021-Teachers-Convention-Annual-Review>.

Second order of #Red4EdAB masks: The original order of these masks went so well, we've had numerous requests from our members and other locals for more of these masks.

We've placed a second order, without our logo, so that other locals can benefit from our purchasing power in trying to keep the cost down.

These masks will be available on a cost-recovery basis to those that would

like to order more. There will be an announcement once they arrive so that people know where and when to order!

Contact Us!

Questions? Need some assistance?
Call us at 780-455-2164 or email us at info@edpub.org.



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