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The Alberta Teachers' Association

**Date** 2016 09 24

**To** Palliser District Teachers' Convention Association Board Members

**From** Dan R Grassick, Executive Officer, Professional Development

**Re** Provincial Updates

Apologies for not being able to meet with you in person at your first Convention Board meeting of the new school year. Please accept the following information in lieu of the report which would ordinarily be delivered in person by a member of Provincial Executive Council or Association staff. If you have any questions about the following, please feel free to contact me at [dan.grassick@ata.ab.ca](mailto:dan.grassick@ata.ab.ca).

## **Convention Attendance Guidelines**

Every year, Alberta Teachers' Association staff field hundreds of calls and emails from teachers, principals, and central office staff regarding attendance at teachers' conventions. In the hopes of alleviating some of this correspondence volume, a letter was sent to the superintendents of all school districts which attempts to address all the who, when, what, why, and how questions that are often asked about convention attendance. All the important information and FAQs are also available at <http://tinyurl.com/ConventionAttendance>.

## **Bargaining Update**

Central bargaining has resumed. Your representatives met with their provincial counterparts Monday and Tuesday of this week and continue to work towards an understanding on those issues that were determined to be of importance province-wide. All members will need to vote on these terms once they are finalized. Voting will occur through the ATA website. For up-to-date information on bargaining or to update your Alberta Teachers' Association online services account so you can vote, please visit <http://tinyurl.com/ATABargaining>.

## **Leadership Essentials for Administrators**

The Leadership Essentials for Administrators (LEA) conference is an excellent conference offered each year for administrators who are in the first two years of their appointment and those who are new to the province of Alberta. There is no registration fee for this conference, but release costs must be absorbed by schools or districts. LEA 2016 will be held on November 21-22 at the Fantasyland Hotel, Edmonton. Register online at <https://atapd.ca/initiative/lea>.

## **Walking Together**

In late August, six professional development consultants were hired by the Alberta Teachers' Association to deliver the Walking Together: Education for Reconciliation Professional Learning Project. The Walking Together project, funded by a \$2.5 million grant from Alberta Education, is designed to provide teachers with the professional learning support they need to meet a

new “applying foundational knowledge of First Nations, Métis and Inuit” competency which will be included in soon-to-be-released revision of the Teaching Quality Standard (TQS).

The Walking Together consultants will develop resources and facilitate professional development activities across the province, engage local First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities by establishing regional advisory, and train school board and teacher leaders to deliver reconciliation education programs on their own.

### **Orange Shirt Day**

Please wear an orange shirt on September 30<sup>th</sup> to honour and bring awareness to the experiences of residential school students. Although specially-designed orange T-shirts are available through the ATA, any orange shirt will do. Get your students and colleagues involved!

### **Webinars**

Some ATA professional development workshops are available as webinars. New webinars will be offered during the school year. Check out the ATA website in early October for this year’s webinar schedule; (just in time to add a webinar to your TPGP). You can access recorded webinars from previous years at [www.tinyurl.com/teacherwebinars](http://www.tinyurl.com/teacherwebinars)

### **Fall PDAC**

The fall Professional Development Area Conference (PDAC) will be help the evening of November 4 and all day on November 5 at the Lister Centre on the University of Alberta’s North Campus. The theme for this conference is “Standards Unplugged: Intimate and Interactive” and designed to help the Association’s PD leaders strategize how best to help their members take action on the emerging matters related to inclusive education, assessment, and education for reconciliation. Invitations to convention associations, specialist councils, and locals will be in the mail shortly.

### **Working with Convention Associations: Struggles and Strategies**

The relationship between locals and teachers' convention associations is not well understood, even by members who are actively involved in both subgroups. This lack of clarity can lead to outright frustration when convention fees are raised and locals don’t feel like they are properly consulted. This year Association staff will be developing a program of support to help clarify the roles and relationship of locals and conventions, identify ongoing successes and struggles that exist between both subgroups, and brainstorm possible ways to improve the local-convention relationship in the coming months and years. A session on this topic will be offered at the upcoming Local Presidents’ Seminar and a series of infographics are being developed to help make the more complex aspects of convention governance, funding, and operations more accessible to all members.

As always, local and convention executive members should continue to communicate directly and professionally with each other; secretary to secretary, treasurer to treasurer, and president to president. At any time, please feel free to contact me at the email provided on the previous page.