



DR Report for Calgary District – March/April 2021
Barnett House: 1-800-232-7208 SARO: 1-800-332-1280

Karen.Nakaska@ata.ab.ca



[@nakaskak](https://twitter.com/nakaskak)



[@nakaskak.dr](https://www.facebook.com/nakaskak.dr)

MARCH/APRIL District Representative Activities – ZOOM		
<p>Guidelines for attendance of meetings for District Representatives as approved by ARA</p> <p>“28.6 The following shall be observed as the appropriate order of priority among Council member assignments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Council Meetings 2. Provincial Committee Meetings 3. Assigned Representation Functions 4. Organized meetings with members of the Association at any level involving government political leaders or Alberta Education officials at the Assistant Deputy Minister level or higher 5. Local Association Meetings 6. Specialist Council Liaison Assignments 7. Teacher Convention Association Meetings 8. Area Conferences 9. Consultants Meetings <p>(1981 12, 2006 04)”</p>	MAR 1	RV ARA Budget
	MAR 2	Foothills CSR
	MAR 2	RV Political Engagement
	MAR 2	Alberta Federation of Labour Budget Prospective
	MAR 3	CtR ARA Budget
	MAR 4	PEC Emergent
	MAR 4	RV Induction
	MAR 6	Women in Leadership Summit
	MAR 8	Online teachers’ workload discussion with CTBC
	MAR 9	Foothills TW
	MAR 11	RV Executive
	MAR 12/13	Political Engagement Seminar
	MAR 18	Finance
	MAR 20	CtR CSR
	MAR 20	CtR ARA Resolutions
	MAR 22	Local Presidents
	MAR 23	Political Engagement
	MAR 24	Foothills Resolutions
	MAR 24	Budget discussion P. Carriel
	MAR 25	RV CSR
	MAR 27	PDTCA Board
	MAR 29	RV ARA Resolutions
	MAR 30	Foothills Executive
APR 6	PDTCA Contract Review	
APR 7	CTF	
APR 12/13	PEC	
APR 13	Foothills CSR	
APR 14	RV Political Engagement	
APR 15	RV Executive	

1. Executive Secretary – PEC passed the following motions, focused on curriculum, unanimously:

- That the Alberta Teachers’ Association express to the minister of education its lack of confidence in the content and design of the Draft K-6 Curriculum as released by the minister of education on 2021 03 29 and the deeply flawed and opaque curriculum consultation and development processes implemented by government after August 2017 that gave rise to the Draft K-6 Curriculum.
- That the Alberta Teachers’ Association call upon the Government of Alberta to place a moratorium on the piloting and implementation of the Draft K-6 Curriculum as released by the minister of education on 2021 03 29 until such time as the draft has been submitted to an independent, full and open review and rewriting process led by and meaningfully involving a broad cross-section of certificated Alberta teachers and faculty members from Alberta postsecondary faculties and schools of education and is properly inclusive of Francophone, First Nations, Métis and Inuit perspectives; is developmentally, structurally and pedagogically sound; and enjoys the broad support of Albertans.
- That the Alberta Teachers’ Association call upon school authorities to refrain from participating in or directing or otherwise exerting pressure upon or inciting the teachers they employ to participate in piloting the Draft K-6 Curriculum as released by the minister of education on 2021 03 29.
- That the Alberta Teachers’ Association affirm the professional and moral right and responsibility of teachers to refuse to participate in the voluntary piloting of the new Draft K-6 Curriculum as released by the Government of Alberta in March 2021 should they believe that curriculum to be structurally and developmentally unsound and potentially damaging to student learning.

- That the Alberta Teachers' Association affirm and support The Guiding Framework for the Design and Development of Kindergarten to Grade 12 Provincial Curriculum published by Alberta Education in December 2020 and expect that any programs of studies proposed for adoption will meet the criteria set out therein.
- That the Government of Alberta delegate responsibility for the development, renewal and revision of the kindergarten to Grade 12 programs of studies to an independent and apolitical provincial curriculum development authority supported by subject-based program managers from Alberta Education and consisting of subject-matter experts from Alberta's universities, representatives from the Alberta Teachers' Association, active teachers from the field, and representatives from the Alberta School Councils' Association whose recommendations concerning the content, design and implementation of programs of study would be publicly disclosed at the time they are conveyed to the minister of education for potential implementation."

Associate Executive Secretary Brian Andrais is retiring effective 2022 06 30. Competition open to internal and external candidates begins 2021 04 26.

2. Government – The Association and ASCA discussed common areas of advocacy, which include publicly elected school boards; pandemic-related loss and supports for students and teachers; curriculum implementation and funding; standardized testing; and educating parents on the differences between teacher competency and conduct.

The fifth pandemic pulse survey will run for one week in late April to early May 2021 and focus on the following key themes: well-being, equity, curriculum/assessment impacts, quarantines/isolations, K–12 concerns/opportunities that have been accelerated by the pandemic, and top issues for a return to school in September 2021. In addition, the survey will include questions on identifying class sizes, along with impacts in the online or blended learning environments, and the extent of school leadership contact tracing activity in the third acute wave of the pandemic.

Staff continue to monitor the pandemic situation and will work with partner-organizations so in-person teacher exchanges can resume when the situation allows. The Educator Exchange Programs (EEP) has pivoted from an in-person short-term exchange program to a virtual format in the 2020/21 school year. With in-person exchanges paused, virtual exchanges offer creative collaborative opportunities within the profession and have had strong uptake.

3. Teacher Employment Services – TES continues to deliver presentations on a wide range of topics of interest to teachers with “Dealing with Volatile Situations” and “OH&S and Back to a Safe and Healthy Future” most in demand.

4. Professional Development – Curriculum: in response to the draft curriculum released 2021 03 29, staff is preparing for the committee to undertake a curriculum engagement project, consisting of two components – survey open until May 17 (<https://surveys.teachers.ab.ca/s3/curriculumreview>) and Invitational Online Curriculum Circle, a one-day workshop that will engage a select group of expert teachers in a collaborative analysis and assessment of the draft curriculum. The success of this project will require engagement of teachers with subject specialization and leadership expertise. The following specialist councils have been invited to partner with the Association to promote member engagement in the project: Mathematics, Science, English Language Arts, Social Studies, Fine Arts, Health and PE, Early Childhood Education, Middle Years, Indigenous Education, Le Conseil francais, Council for School Leadership, Council for Inclusive Education, Education Technology Council. These specialist councils have been asked to identify subject/grade level specialists to participate in the Curriculum; provide a written response to the draft curriculum from the council's perspective; and assist with project communication. Additional participants will be identified from the list of teachers previously nominated by specialist councils and the Association to participate in previous curriculum working groups. Teachers involved in the Alberta Education 2020 Curriculum Working Group signed a non-disclosure agreement so these teachers are deemed ineligible to attend the curriculum circle. Participants in the Circle will represent a stratified sample of members, from diverse teaching contexts, including: grade level teachers, subject-discipline expert teachers, elementary school leaders and elementary curriculum system leaders. Participants invited to attend the one-day, online curriculum circle will be provided with release time. Association facilitators, staff and teacher leaders will be trained and serve as small group facilitators and recorders.

The K-6 Draft Curriculum is out of alignment with criteria set out by the government itself in The Guiding Framework for the Design and Development of Kindergarten to Grade 12 Provincial Curriculum, published by Alberta Education in December 2020. This document contains the Ministerial Order on Student Learning as well as the following guidelines for drafting curriculum: <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/guiding-framework-design-development-k-12-curriculum>

1. Be consistent with the Ministerial Order on Student Learning 2. Require developmentally appropriate high academic standards 3. Support opportunities for student to reach their personal best 4. Have content that is logically sequenced within each grade and from grade to grade 5. Encourage students to examine a rich variety of ideas and viewpoints 6. Respectfully include Indigenous histories, contributions and perspectives 7. Respectfully include Francophone histories,

contributions and perspectives 8. Be developed in English and French 9. Be scientifically rigorous while respecting a variety of beliefs in our pluralistic society 10. Be developed in six subject areas 11. Reinforce knowledge and skills across subjects 12. Be clear and concise, avoiding specialized jargon so it is easily understandable by parents and teachers alike 13. Focus on content (curriculum), not teaching methods (pedagogy)

FOCUS: Fundamentally, the K-6 Draft Curriculum is not developmentally appropriate for children ages 5 to 11. Its design and content do not reflect the current research on elementary student learning, brain development and student engagement. It is poorly structured and fails to create the cognitive framework necessary to facilitate meaningful learning, and the specific content identified is disjointed and decontextualized.

As a result, students subject to instruction based on the proposed curriculum, including its mandated subject matter and approaches to teaching it, are likely to experience poor achievement, frustration and disengagement from schooling. Students' success in the early grades is a significant predictor of their success in later grades and, ultimately, of school completion. The alarming conclusion is that this curriculum may actually harm some students and undermine their learning for years to come, to the detriment of all that derives from or is dependent upon success in primary and secondary schooling. This is why the release and proposed implementation of the draft curriculum, even as a limited pilot, constitutes an emergency and resisting its implementation, a moral imperative. As teachers share a common commitment to ensuring to the greatest extent possible that students come to love learning, are excited to come to school and achieve to the best of their potential, any requirement to teach the curriculum in its current form is, therefore, an affront to teachers' professional status and obligations.

The Indigenous Education and Reconciliation Circle (IERC) meetings held provided updates and information related to the IERC's 2020/21 workplan on participation in curriculum development, anticolonial and antiracist initiatives; and developing a communication strategy with key messages to promote and support a strengths-based model of Indigenous student success.

Conventions – Overall, online conventions this year were very well received due to the ease of access of both live and pre-recorded sessions as well as the high quality of speakers. Some members missed the social connectivity of a live convention but most mentioned participating in more sessions. Convention boards were sent a memo on 2021 03 12 advising them to prepare a written statement for their member locals outlining their financial objectives over the next three to five years, and have offered support from our Finance team for a financial review and in preparing these statements

Upcoming Specialist Council Presentations: <https://202021scevents.sched.com/>

5. TES, Collective Bargaining – The 61 bargaining units in the 2018–20 round of bargaining are now settled which finally includes Sturgeon, Conseil scolaire FrancoSud, and Wetaskiwin. All bargaining units now have a Wellness Account with the exception of Medicine Hat who has a 2% HSA.

Concerns about the Alberta School Employee Benefit Program (ASEBP) short-term disability management pilot (STDM) continue to be expressed.

6. Table Officers – Commencing in the 2021/22 school year, all local award programs be discontinued and replaced with a non-competitive local showcase program, featured primarily at Summer Conference, but also through other events and communications channels.

The First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Council (FNMIEC), has changed its name to the Indigenous Education Council of the Alberta Teachers' Association (IECATA). "FNMI" is an acronym used in many educational publications and is considered offensive by many and is often misunderstood. The change of name better aligns the council with current language and practice in meeting the needs of Indigenous peoples and related issues.

Two-day virtual 2021 Summer Conference: 2021 08 10–11.

The Government of Alberta plans to establish a working group comprised of representatives of the ATA and department representatives to have discussions regarding strengthening the teaching profession. The objective of the working group is to have focused discussions on specific deliverables related to matters of professional discipline and governance for Alberta certificated teachers and teacher leaders that will inform the development of policy on these priorities. Given that the ATA plays a lead role in teacher discipline matters, it is critical to work together in order to improve the system.

7. Finance – **1. Administrative Guideline 14.38 Addition** Ensuring that the Association has at all times the required liquidity to operate effectively is critical. As such, through this recommendation, the Association aims to ensure operating liquidity is not compromised and does not fall below a threshold level. "14.38 The Association shall maintain throughout the fiscal year a current ratio above 1.2, calculated as the organization's current assets divided by its current

liabilities. This ratio will be reviewed at each Finance Committee meeting held throughout the year.” As background, it is worth observing the trend in the year-ending current ratio over the last few years: 2017 – 0.90, 2018 – 0.76, 2019 – 0.59, 2020 – 1.4 Regular monitoring of this ratio, its trend and impact would likely have helped inform financial decisions made over the period.

2. Administrative Guideline 14.39 Addition Through this addition, the Association seeks to add specificity and clarity with respect to how the Association will address accumulated cash balances. “14.39 Considering year-end cash balances, anticipated requirements and long-term fiscal sustainability, the Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer will present to Finance Committee each January options for reallocating higher than expected cash balances for the fiscal year ended August 31. These options shall include, but will not be limited to, increased contributions to the Special Emergency Fund or Capital Fund and expedited payments to principal on any outstanding debt obligations. Finance Committee will then make a recommendation to PEC, with ARA then being informed accordingly.”

The Association will transfer \$1M from the main operating account to the Special Emergency Fund (SEF) investment, as a part of the partial restitution for monies withdrawn from the SEF in 2019 to address organizational liquidity. As the drawdown was made in a period where liquidity was compromised, it is fiscally prudent that now this situation has considerably improved, a transfer back to the SEF be expedited. The original plan was to repay back the SEF over 15 years. Along with keeping up the annual proposed repayment, this expedited payment will allow the Association to pay back the drawdown in 12 years.

8. President – Schilling continues to advocate on behalf of teachers on a wide variety of topics. He has now surpassed 500 interviews, while still in his first term in office.

9. CTF – PEC endorsed the candidacy of Jenny Regal for a 3rd term as vice president of the Canadian Teachers’ Federation

10. DRs: Calgary District and Edmonton District: Currently, the names Calgary District and Edmonton District create confusion for members as to their jurisdiction. Staff will undertake a process to examine how to rename Edmonton District and Calgary District with Indigenous names. This would be in keeping with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Calls to Action, which the Association already considers in its activities.

11. Steering Committee – Parliamentarians will conduct an information session for ARA delegates regarding procedures, request for information and a Q&A on 2021 04 26 and 2021 05 10 (time to be determined). These sessions will be recorded and posted to the ARA share site. A closed captioning feature will be provided at the virtual 2021 ARA which will run May 22: 0730-1730, May 23: 0900-2130, May 24: 0900-1300.

12. Indigenous Education – Staff will organize and host multiple webinar sessions throughout the end of May and June, with an Alberta focus, to celebrate and recognize National Indigenous History Month.

Two Indigenous Education Awards will be presented in 2020/21. Deadline to apply is May 25:

<https://www.teachers.ab.ca/For%20Members/Professional%20Development/IndigenousEducationandWalkingTogether/Pages/Indigenous-Education-Award.aspx>

13. School Leaders Issues and Concerns – LQS: <https://www.alberta.ca/professional-practice-standards.aspx>

The CASS/WellAhead Advisory Committee has been established. The committee meets three times per year to support and advice regarding workplace wellness in Alberta School Authorities. The wellness directors met with the leadership groups from almost every Alberta School Authority, Francophone leadership and Indigenous leadership. Work continues with the Coaching/Mentoring/Supporting school authority leadership.

COVID contact tracing and pressure to do the work of AHS has been added to the “plate” and nothing has been taken off. Final session of Speaker series in place of Leadership Essentials for School Leaders – Online 2021 05 18.

14. Scholarship Subcommittee of Teacher Education & Certification – AG 2.7. 1 a. amended to read— “2.7 The Association offers the Nadene M Thomas Graduate Research Bursary annually in the amount of \$5,000. 1 The conditions of eligibility for the bursary shall be as follows: An applicant shall be registered **in any year of the program** as a graduate student in a specialty in education at a recognized Canadian university.”

15. Central Table Bargaining – The Central Table Bargaining Committee (CTBC) met to prepare for the arbitration on the list scheduled before the end of the school year. CTBC has been pressing for earlier meeting dates.

16. DEHR – The 2021 DEHR Conference will be held jointly with the spring PDAC, with a keynote on 2021 04 23(eve) and breakout sessions, regional meetings, and a closing keynote on 2020 04 24.

Safe Spaces materials are being redesigned. The design goals of the new materials included: clarifying the messaging to make it more student-focused, including the colours of the Pride Progress flag in the tree graphic, developing a commitment statement and signature line so students can identify allied adults in rooms that are used by multiple teachers, and developing wearable alternatives to the poster so teachers can signal their support to students even when they are outside the walls of their classrooms.

17. Alberta School Employee Benefit Plan Insurance Board – ASEBP has launched a mental health campaign entitled “It Takes a Village,” which will promote mental health supports – provided by ASEBP, along with those available in the community. <https://www.asebp.ca/mentalhealth> Premium rates will be increasing.

18. Political Engagement – The Association will be producing “I Love Alberta Public Education” lawn signs for locals who wish to be involved in this campaign. Locals will be directed to the Community Relations Grant if they are looking for funds to help support the purchase of lawn signs. The CRG offers grants in the amount of \$250, plus \$1 per member, to support activities that promote public education and/or show teachers as active and concerned citizens. School boards election plan underway. Vote for Kids website will be setup and the handbook revised in preparation for the 2021 04 30 Local Political Engagement Officers’ (LPEO) meeting.

19. Communications, Advocacy and Public Education (CAPEC) – In light of many teachers not knowing who their elected officials are, the ATA will create and provide a poster with a picture of elected officials for each school.

Face of Education – Two new ads have been added. A revised campaign in the fall will see a blend of teacher and student ads. Can We Talk Update – The new TV ad is in circulation. Hats On for Mental Health day will be the first Wednesday in May and new posters will be sent in the April school mailing. There will also be a new Can We Talk website developed that may be hosted in a different web space.

Wear #RedForEdAB on Fridays!

How to stay informed?

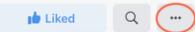
Provincial Website: <https://www.teachers.ab.ca/Pages/Home.aspx>

Twitter: @albertateachers

Facebook: @ABteachers

Follow [nakaskak.dr](#) on Facebook for updates between DR reports.

(Be sure to change your notifications on this Fb page to indicate you want all posts, or you will get only highlights.)

1. Click on the three dots in the navigation Bar on the right-hand side of the page under the cover photo. 
2. Select **Follow Settings**.
3. Below **Notifications**, select what types of posts you want to be notified about: **Standard**, **Highlights**, **All Notifications** or **Off**.
4. Click **Update**.

Family Digital Wellness Lab (Harvard) – comprehensive resource developed to address parents’ and caregivers’ concerns, clarify confusion and empower families to be actively involved in their children’s digital lives at every stage of development. <https://digitalwellnesslab.org/parents/family-digital-wellness-guide/>

DEHR ANTIRACISM & ANTIOPPRESSION SPEAKER SERIES

- *Interrupting, Disrupting, and Countering Single Stories* - Muna Saleh, PhD: <https://sched.co/fNcW>
- *Considering the Emotionality of Antiracist Education* - Cathryn van Kessel, PhD: <https://sched.co/fQaN>
- *Teaching Difficult Histories: Challenging but Necessary Conversations* - Carla Peck, PhD: <https://sched.co/fQSw>
- *Amplifying Black Voices: A Conversation with the Black Teachers’ Association*: <https://sched.co/gime>
- *How did we get here and where do we go now? Critical engagements for antiracist classrooms* - Farha Shariff, PhD: <https://sched.co/iSOz>
- *It’s Time to Get Real About Antiracism!* - Farha Shariff, PhD: <https://sched.co/gimt>
- *Unconscious Bias* – Tanya (“Toni”) de Mello, PhD: <https://sched.co/i9Wm>
- *Allyship* – Tanya (“Toni”) de Mello, PhD 2021 04 24 from 14:30-15:30 – Available at <https://sched.co/i9Uo>
- *June Session Announcement Coming Soon!* – Save the Date 2021 06 05 from 11:00-12:00 (TBC)

Up-to-date list of recorded and upcoming sessions at <https://atapdwebinars2020.sched.com/overview/type/Antiracism>