

# ATA LOCAL 8 September Memo

September 1, 2025

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**Dear Members of Black Gold Teachers' Local 8,**

As we begin a new school year, I want to extend a warm welcome to each of you. I know this comes at a time filled with uncertainty and stress due to the current impasse in negotiations. Still, it is important to acknowledge the strength and commitment you continue to bring to your students and your profession.

During our first week back, I held off on sending an update, as I had no more information about bargaining than you did. However, at the end of the week, we learned that negotiations between the Teacher Employer Bargaining Association (TEBA) and the ATA's Central Table Bargaining Committee (CTBC) had reached an impasse. In other words, both sides felt that progress was stalled and no meaningful concessions could be made at that time.

After school on Friday, August 29, local presidents and Teacher Welfare Committee (TWC) chairs met virtually with President Schilling, CTBC chairs Sean Brown and Peter McKay, and members of the Provincial Executive Committee (PEC). The purpose of this meeting was to clarify some misleading comments made by the government and the media and to review possible next steps. These steps remain unchanged from when we voted on strike action: the government could choose to lock us out, which requires 72 hours' notice, just as we must provide 72 hours' notice should we decide to take job action.

No one in our profession wants to strike, lose pay, or step away from students, regardless of how brief or prolonged the disruption might be. Yet we cannot ignore that our current working conditions are unsustainable, and that student supports must be recognized not as luxuries, but as essential foundations for their success.

Like many of you, I've been navigating a flood of emotions—frustration, anger, worry, and even a sense of powerlessness. I've learned that when I feel this way, I need to step back, reflect, and focus on what I can control. For me, this has meant setting boundaries,

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including limiting time on social media, because the energy it drains from me can be better invested in areas where I can make a difference.

As we continue to go about our day-to-day work, this is the message I want to leave with you: In the face of uncertainty and the negativity directed toward teachers by this government, remember to focus on what is within your control—caring for yourself first, showing up for your students as you always have, and giving only what you have the capacity to give. That is enough.

Should you feel you want to do something and have the emotional capacity to do so, you can also provide others, who may be misinformed about the state of public education in Alberta, with truth and clarity about the teaching and learning in your classrooms. Please remember that something you don't ever have to do is apologize for or feel guilty about seeking fair, adequate compensation for the challenging and important work that you do.

Looking ahead, our local executive will meet for the first time this school year on Wednesday, September 3, followed by our first meeting of school representatives on September 17. *To ensure we remain connected and accessible, Kevin Haugjord, our TWC chair, Hardeep Rai, our vice-president, and I will be available every Thursday after school for our Local Coffee Talk from 3:15 - 4: 00 through [this link](#). We invite you to join us—to share your concerns, ask questions, seek clarification, or receive any updates about the negotiation process.*

Thank you for the meaningful and impactful work you continue to do each day, even under challenging circumstances. Your professionalism and dedication to students are genuinely appreciated and do not go unnoticed.

In solidarity and understanding,

Kim St.André



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### Important Dates

- September 3 at 4:15 pm: ATA Local Executive Meeting, in-person at the Holiday Inn & Suites Edmonton Airport - 1100 4 St, Nisku, AB T9E 8E2 (Kanaskis Room)
- September 5 at 7:15 - 8:00 am: **Local Coffee Talk** with Hardeep, Kevin, and Kim ([virtual link](#))
- September 12 at 7:15 - 8:00 am: **Local Coffee Talk** ([virtual link](#))
- September 17 at 4:30 pm: ATA Local CSR Meeting, in-person at the Holiday Inn & Suites Edmonton Airport - 1100 4 St, Nisku, AB T9E 8E2 (GlacierRoom)
- September 19 - PD Day
- September 26 and 27: Beginning Teachers' Conference at Barnett House
- September 30: Truth and Reconciliation Day, schools closed
- October 5: World Teachers' Day
- October 8 at 4:15: ATA Local Executive Meeting, virtual
- October 13: Thanksgiving Day
- October 14: PD Day
- October 17: Local Communications' and Political Officers meeting at Barnett House
- October 22 at 4:30 pm: ATA Local CSR Meeting, virtual

### Executive and CSR Changes

Back in May at our Annual General Meeting (AGM), some new people were elected to our executive. *Hardeep Rai* is vice-president, *Carmen Todosychuk* is treasurer, *D'Javon Brown* is local political engagement officer, *Megan Zarembo*, who is the local communications officer and social committee chair is now the Campus St. Jean Area Field Experience representative, and *Kristan Myers* is the substitute representative. Welcome to these individuals who will bring fresh ideas to our local!

This year will be important for members to stay informed about central table negotiations and, once those conclude, local table bargaining. The role of school representative is key in ensuring strong communication and support.

If you are currently a school rep and find the time commitment challenging, consider job-sharing with another teacher at your school. If your school already has a representative and you are interested in the role, two options exist: (1) a vote can be held at your school to select the rep, or (2) the role can be shared between two people.

If you are interested in serving as a school representative or would like more information, please contact me at [president.ata8@gmail.com](mailto:president.ata8@gmail.com).

### ATA Local Executive and CSR Meetings At A Glance

- ☐ September 3, **Executive in person** (4:15 - 6:15)
- ☐ September 17, **CSR in person** (4:30 - 6:30)
- ☐ October 8, **Executive virtual** (4:15 - 6:00)

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- ☐ October 22, [CSR virtual](#) (4:30 - 6:00)
  - ☐ November 5, [Executive virtual](#) (4:15 - 6:00)
  - ☐ November 19, [CSR virtual](#) (4:30 - 6:00)
  - ☐ December 3, Induction (5:00 - 8:00)
  - ☐ January 7, [Executive virtual](#) (4:15 - 6:00)
  - ☐ January 21, [CSR virtual](#) (4:30 - 6:00)
  - ☐ February 4, [Executive virtual](#) (4:15 - 6:00)
  - ☐ February 18, [CSR virtual](#) (4:30 - 6:00)
  - ☐ March 4, [Executive virtual](#) (4:15 - 6:00)
  - ☐ March 18, [CSR virtual](#) (4:30 - 6:00)
  - ☐ April 8, [Executive virtual](#) (4:15 - 6:00)
  - ☐ April 22, [CSR virtual](#) (4:30 - 6:00)
  - ☐ May 6, [Executive virtual](#) (4:15 - 6:00)
  - ☐ May 20, [AGM and CSR in person](#) (4:30 - 6:30)
  - ☐ June 3, [Executive in person](#) (4:15 - 6:15)

### **ATA Local 8 Committees**

Are you interested in being involved in Local ATA committees? There are several committees you can be a part of to share your knowledge, help shape our activities, and provide guidance in our decision-making process. If you're interested, please fill [out this form](#).

### **Post-secondary Scholarship**

Black Gold Local #8 is offering a \$1000 scholarship for a child whose parent is an active member of the Black Gold Local #8. This child must be entering the first year of a recognized Bachelor of Education program in the year the scholarship is awarded. The parent must be a full-time or part-time teacher the first year the student is attending post-secondary studies.

To be eligible, individuals must:

- have a parent who is an active member of Black Gold Local #8
- [submit this application form](#)
- submit a copy of the letter of acceptance to a Bachelor of Education program from the postsecondary institution they are attending.

A fund of \$5000 will be set up each year for the scholarship. A scholarship of \$1000 will be awarded to each applicant unless there are more than five, in which case the \$5000 fund will be divided evenly between the applicants.

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### Follow us on Instagram

Follow atalocal8 on Instagram to stay up to date with our local! Be sure to tag us and send us your teacher highlights.

### September Giveaway and June Winner: \$50 Gift Card Draw

June's draw winner was Mindy Lankers! For September, our Local will be offering a \$50 gift card for Staples, Dollarama, Education Station or Amazon as per the winner's choice. Please enter the draw by filling out [this form](#).

## Welcome Back!

Please know, if ever you have any questions or concerns, suggestions or ideas, you can email me at [president.ata8@gmail.com](mailto:president.ata8@gmail.com)



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The following has been borrowed from a fellow local president, Evelyn Chan, from Red Deer City Local 60:

- How do you talk to parents when you get asked questions? (You need to access your ATA account to view this). [Use this link.](#)
- Where can you find updates from “Now Communication” to help you talk to people about the issues we are facing? [Use this link.](#)
- If we had full funding or even the same funding as other provinces, what would that look like? [Use this calculator.](#)
- Where can you find current data that reinforces and shows Alberta is the lowest-funded education system in Canada? [Use this link.](#)
- Where can you find information about new developments regarding the “Aggression and Complexity in Schools” team? The next meetings are Sept 10 and 17. [Here is the website.](#)
- If you need help understanding the process we are engaged in and what it means to “Strike” or “be in a legal strike position” - Check out the “Central Strike FAQ” (You will need your ATA log-in credentials). [Use this link.](#)