President's Message

I hope you are having a great 2019/20 school year. These are definitely interesting times with Alberta's political landscape. You may feel exhausted, but we at MCATA want to remind you how pivotal you are to your students. Make no mistake,

- you are the brightest light for some of your students;
- you are the reason that some of your students smile every day;
- you are the reason that some of your students come to school every day to learn; and
- simply put, you matter and your students need you.

The MCATA executive is looking into how we can support you and the profession during these times to ensure you that public education is still a focus here in Alberta. How can you help? Stay informed through social media channels, ATA e-mail updates and your ATA local's reports. Share the joy you bring in your classroom through the same channels. Tag @MCATA tweets using the hashtags #abed, #abpoli and #ableg on Twitter to share how you support learners in your classroom.

As always, reach me at teacher.davidmartin@gmail.com to share any input, advice or questions you may have.

Below, I leave you with a problesm I have been playing with:

How many ways can you add 2 distinct positive whole numbers together and get 10? What about 3 distinct positive whole numbers? What about 4 distinct positive whole numbers that sum to 20? How many ways can you add n distinct positive whole numbers that sum to k, where k is a positive whole number?

Dave Martin

From the Editor's Laptop

The 2019/20 school year has definitely been a bit interesting for all teachers! All I want to say is I believe in public education, and I believe we are the ones who bring hope to our students, as for some kiddos, our classrooms and schools are the best place! Let's not lose sight of it.

A most recent issue that I have been thinking about is the ethical space in mathematics teaching and learning. What do you think that looks like?

Stacey Wu

Save the Date
October 23–24, 2020
MCATA Fall Conference
Red Deer, Alberta
Keynote speakers: Jon Orr, Kyle Pearce

Annual General Meeting

Annual Report and Election Results

No elections were required this year. The council will continue to have the leadership, by acclamation, of Rod Lowry as vice-president of professional development and Darcy House as treasurer. Carmen Wasylynuik, director of grants and awards; Sandi Berg, director of publicity; and Scott Seland, director at large, were appointed to continue in their roles. Merrick Fanning received the Dr Arthur Jorgensen Chair Award; there were no submissions for the Alberta Mathematics Educator Award.

An amendment to our Constitution regarding filling council vacancies was approved, as noted in the last newsletter. A proposed resolution to allow students to use "other technologies" during diploma exams was approved and will be sent forth to Provincial Executive Council for consideration at the 2020 Annual Representative Assembly (ARA) in May.

The council has updated its handbook. It is also looking at updates to the website to enable searchable access to all council publications, which are presently being digitized (newsletters, *delta-K*; problem solving).

We continue to invest funds into our members through reduced conference fees, original publications and professional development opportunities.

Barbara O'Connor

Dr Arthur Jorgensen Chair Award

To quote this year's Dr Arthur Jorgensen Chair Award recipient, "The power and profound beauty of mathematics and mathematical thinking has never failed to astound me." A University of Calgary graduate, Merrick Fanning, aims to foster positive conceptions of mathematics, eliminating the existence of society's negative stigmas, while shifting the paradigm to expose the irrefutable power, beauty and fun that can be found in mathematics. During his practica, he created a reflective space for ongoing professional development. Links to his personal website include having created a python computer programming project combining the curriculum from Math 10 with computer programming. Welcome to the executive Merrick!

His excellent level of academic success, leadership and interest in math support his ongoing commitment to making a difference in the learning and teaching of mathematics.

Carmen Wasylynuik

September 2019 Executive Meeting Summary

A special thank you to Lisa Everitt, who has been our ATA staff advisor for 13 years. We appreciate your guidance and friendship throughout this time; we look forward to working with Gaylene Schreiber. The guidance of Katherine Pritchard as our Provincial Executive Council (PEC) liaison was also invaluable. Thank you, Katherine; your sense of humour will be missed. We welcome Murray Lalonde as our new PEC liaison.

We are thrilled to report 100 per cent overall satisfaction from the Jasper conference survey. With 179 conference attendees, Francis Su and James Tanton's inspiring ideas as well as the playground of mathematics to engage in, great ideas were shared and ratings soared with over 90 per cent satisfaction for individual aspects in the schedule. A more refined mathematical playground is an idea that will likely return in the future with your suggestions.

The council was also well represented with presentations at both Beginning Teachers' Conferences, three members attending Summer Conference and one at ARA.

Despite efforts to run a deficit budget, multiple factors led to a surplus. We continue as a council to use our surplus by investing in members' professional development, growth and engagement in mathematics. We also support local Alberta mathematics competitions in schools. Please note professional development funds are available to those wishing to bring back ideas to the council or conferences to grow our collective understanding of mathematics.

Barbara O'Connor

PEC Report

Congratulations math teachers on a very successful MCATA conference in Jasper! I followed the Twitter feed and wished I could be there. A lot of fantastic PD was enjoyed by all attendees.

Congratulations as all of your hard work paid off! Students are benefitting from your involvement in professional development, and your commitment to bettering your already fantastic pedagogy.

Your Alberta Teachers' Association is asking all teachers to update or create their ATA website account. Using a nonemployer/personal e-mail address, visit www.teachers.ab.ca and log in to get "behind the firewall." If you are receiving this publication, chances are you know where to find MCATA through your ATA website. Please visit this often, as we update the site with talking points and valuable information, especially regarding the following topics.

Recently, there have been a lot of questions and concerns about what has been happening politically, both at the Alberta Legislature and ATA. There has been a lot of information overload, leaving teachers feeling bombarded from all sides. Please rest assured that the ATA is working overtime on strategies to defend your interests.

The provincial budget and Bill 22 have resulted in legislation that requires ATRF to transfer its assets to AIMCo. Please know that we still have a retirement fund and that our pensions are safe. For more information, visit www.atrf.com.

The ATA's letter-writing campaign has received a lot of letters written by teachers. Please copy your letter regarding class size/composition to your school representative or local president. MLAs from both sides of the aisle in the legislature need to know what's happening in Alberta classrooms.

It is important to remember that the ATA is a nonpartisan organization. We have common interests as well as differences with any political party. Personally, I will always advocate for students and teachers, no matter which political party is in power. The Association works within the political system to influence decisions affecting education.

Thank you all for the amazing work you do. Everything we do is for the students! Please make sure to take time for yourselves and your loved ones, and take care of each other.

Is there anything that's worth more than peace and love on the planet Earth?

—Steven Universe

Murray Lalonde,
Central East DR

C^3: Current Commentary by the Council

A Comprehensive Education

It seems to me as though I've been convinced that there exists an ongoing fight between traditionalism and progressivism (Connelly 2013). Somehow, perhaps through the media or misinterpretation I've been stuck in an either/or competition with those who advocate for traditionalism and against good educators who have the best interest of their students in mind. Preferably, I would be interested in one thing: improving learning based off evidence just as Dewey and Schwab, ambassadors of education, have in the past (Connelly 2013). Connelly (2013) describes Dewey as someone who knew that "there were truths in the extremes of progressivism and traditionalism that needed to be dialectically brought together" (Connelly 2013, 628). Schwab is described as a "leading intellectual figure" and "the go-to academic" while "at the same time was the leading critic" (Connelly 2013, 625). Connelly (2013) reminds me that a good educator does not just critique the old, traditional ways and abandon teaching practices that have worked for many students, rather we work to improve them.

This debate about pedagogy has been raging in mathematics education for over 60 years (*Saskatchewan Bulletin* 1971). What is perceived as the past and future of mathematics education parallels the arguments of traditionalists and progressivists. But Connelly's (2013) description of a both/and existence supported by Schwab and Dewey nullifies any arguments made exclusively for or against either side of this mad debate. Connelly (2013) asserts that Schwab challenges the existing "theoretical privilege," essentially accuses his colleagues of talking nonsense, and encourages us to go back to the data (our students) to gain a both/and mindset (Connelly 2013, 629). He reminds me of what is actually important in my classroom—my students. What is more important than my students? They deserve a comprehensive education, both a prescriptive approach with traditional techniques when needed and progressive, motivational experiences when needed. When did we decide that we couldn't have both? When did I decide it was "an exclusive choice" (Pinar 1978, 211)?

References

Connelly, F M. 2013. "Joseph Schwab, Curriculum, Curriculum Studies and Educational Reform." *Journal of Curriculum Studies* 45, no 5, 622–39.

Pinar, W F. 1978. "The Reconceptualization of Curriculum Studies." *Journal of Curriculum Studies* 10, no 3: 205–14.

Saskatchewan Bulletin. 1971. "'New Math' Sparks Lively Debate." *delta-K: Journal of the Mathematics Council of the Alberta Teachers' Association* 10, no 4: 1–2.

Darcy House

National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM)

Are you a member of NCTM? Is your school? Did you know that MCATA is an affiliate of NCTM? There are many benefits to being a member of NCTM as an individual including an award-winning journal, access to online interactive math tools, lessons, activities and problems, as well as access to e-seminars. www.nctm.org/uploadedFiles/Membership/indvmbr_brchr0617_PP.pdf

NCTM also offers school memberships. Is your school a member? If not, take a look at the school membership brochure and discuss it with your administration. www.nctm.org/uploadedFiles/Membership/k8mbr_brchr0617_PP.pdf

NOMINATION FORM FOR MCATA EXECUTIVE

Ensure an active executive council by nominating teachers who will take an active role in making the Mathematics Council benefit all mathematics teachers. Nominators and nominees must be current members of MCATA and the ATA.

Nominations for the following offices for the 2019–2021 term are now being accepted:

Treasurer, Vice-President (Professional Development)

To nominate a candidate, complete the form below, and mail to
    Returning Officer,
    c/o Gaylene Schreiber, Executive Staff Officer,
    11010 142 Street NW,
    Edmonton, AB T5N 2R1.

Nomination deadline is May 15, 2020

If an election is necessary, it will be conducted at the Annual General Meeting of the MCATA, which is run during the council's annual conference. A special newsletter featuring the platform of each candidate will be sent to all members near the beginning of the 2019/20 school year. If a candidate wishes to include their platform in the newsletter, it should be sent to Returning Officer, c/o Gaylene Schreiber, Executive Staff Officer, 11010 142 Street NW, Edmonton, AB T5N 2R1 by June 15, 2020. Platforms should be a maximum of 500 words in length.

We, the undersigned members of MCATA, nominate _____
(name)

of _____ Teaching Certificate Number of nominee _____
(address)

for the position of _____

Signatures and addresses of three nominators:

Name _____ Teaching Certificate Number _____

Address _____

Signature _____

Name _____ Teaching Certificate Number _____

Address _____

Signature _____

Name _____ Teaching Certificate Number _____

Address _____

Signature _____

I _____ accept this nomination _____
(print name)   (signature of nominee)

By completing this form, you are voluntarily providing your personal information and consenting to its collection, use and disclosure for all purposes connected with your participation as a member of this council.

JOY, FASCINATION
AND HOPE.

They are the faces of education.
We are the Alberta Teachers' Association,
and we believe in them.

The Alberta
Teachers' Association

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The Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) requires consent to publish personal information about an individual. Personal information is defined as anything that identifies an individual in the context of the collection: for example, a photograph and/or captions, an audio or video file, and artwork.

Some schools obtain blanket consent under FOIP, the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. However, the *Personal Information Protection Act* (PIPA) and FOIP are not interchangeable. They fulfill different legislative goals. PIPA is the private sector act that governs the Association's collection, use and disclosure of personal information.

If you can use the image or information to identify a person in context (for example, a specific school or a specific event), then it is personal information and you need consent to collect, use or disclose (publish) it.

Minors cannot provide consent and must have a parent or guardian sign a consent form. Consent forms must be provided to the Document Production editorial staff at Barnett House together with the personal information to be published.

Refer all questions regarding the ATA's collection, use and disclosure of personal information to the ATA privacy officer.

Notify the ATA privacy officer immediately of any incident that involves the loss of or unauthorized use or disclosure of personal information, by calling Barnett House at 780-447-9400 or 1-800-232-7208.

Maggie Shane, the ATA's privacy officer, is your resource for privacy compliance support.

780-447-9429 (direct)
780-699-9311 (cell, available any time)

Consent for Collection, Use and Disclosure of Personal Information

Name: _____ (*Please print*)

☐ I am giving consent for myself.

☐ I am giving consent for my child/children or ward(s), identified below:

Name(s): _____ (*Please print*)

By signing below, I am consenting to The Alberta Teachers' Association collecting, using and disclosing personal information identifying me or my child/children or ward(s) in print and/or online publications and on websites available to the public, including social media. By way of example, personal information may include, but is not limited to, name, photographs, audio/video recordings, artwork, writings or quotations.

I understand that copies of digital publications may come to be housed on servers outside Canada.

I understand that I may vary or withdraw this consent at any time. I understand that the Association's privacy officer is available to answer any questions I may have regarding the collection, use and disclosure of these records. The privacy officer can be reached at 780-447-9429 or 1-800-232-7208.

Signed: _____

Print name: _____ Today's date: _____

For more information on the ATA's privacy policy, visit **www.teachers.ab.ca**.