



The Alberta  
Teachers' Association

# School Representative Program

## Module 3: Advocacy

©2014 ATA



## Module Goals

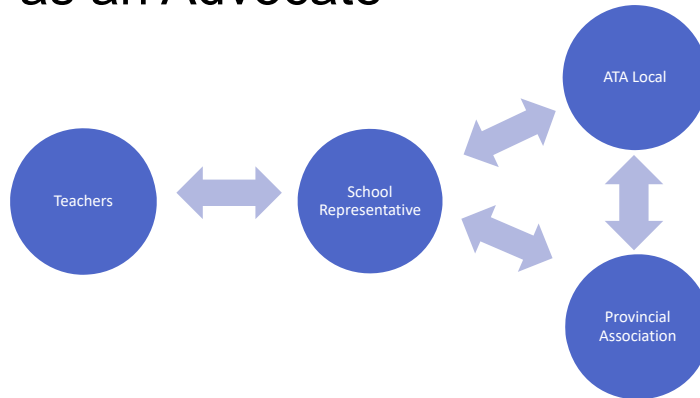
- Understand the nature of advocacy within the Association.
- Understand the role of a school representative (SR) as an advocate.
- Consider ways to promote advocacy through involvement.

2

The goals of this session are to:

- Understand the nature of advocacy within the Association
- Understand the role of a School Representative (SR) as an advocate
- Consider ways to promote advocacy through involvement

## The School Representative as an Advocate



3

The school representative is the key link between the Association and its members.

Advocacy can be described through the diagram.

- Teachers can raise issues and concerns to their SR.
- The SR can raise issues and concerns to the ATA Local.
- The ATA Local can advocate for local issues and challenges through the Provincial ATA.
- Issues and concerns can also flow in the reverse. For example, issues of provincial concern may flow through the provincial Association to the local, and then to teachers via their SR.

## Linking School–Local–Provincial

- Attend meetings of local council (LC) or the council of school representatives (CSR) and provide a report to school staff.
- Take any staff issues or concerns and raise them at the local.
- A form for reporting at the school is available in the toolkit and is also available in PDF.

4

As a SR, you will:

- Attend meetings of local council (LC) or the council of school representatives (CSR) and provide a report to school staff.
- Distribute or Post Association correspondence/documentation and call attention to significant items.
- Take school issues and concerns back to meetings of the local.



## Advocacy Is

- Supporting public education.
- Advocating for the profession in your school and community.
- Speaking to specific Association interests.

5

- As a school representative, you can help by supporting public education and advocating for the teaching profession in your school and community.
- From time to time, targeted messages from the provincial Association will be sent out for communication and discussion in your school and community.

## Advocacy Is (cont'd)

Understanding and promoting the objects of the Association:

- To advance the cause of education
- To improve the teaching profession
- To increase public interest in and support for education
- To cooperate with other bodies having similar objects.

6

The Association has four objects that are the focus of its advocacy:

- to advance the cause of education
- to improve the teaching profession
- to increase public interest in and support for education
- to cooperate with other bodies having similar objects.

## Advocacy Is Not

- Criticizing your employer.

For further information call 1-800-232-7208.

7

- Advocacy can be defined as support for or a recommendation of a particular cause or policy.
- It is a positive action toward a particular cause and a school representative is advised not to be critical of their employer.
- Engaging in such criticism may cause employment issues.



## Promote Events

- Local induction events
- Beginning Teachers' Conference
- Leadership Essentials
- Teachers' Conventions
- Annual Representative Assembly (ARA)

For further information call 1-800-232-7208.

8

- The Association hosts a number of events throughout the year and as a school representative, you can promote engagement and participation by teachers on your staff.
- Participation in such events raises awareness of topics of interest at the local and provincial levels and is therefore critical that these events be highlighted to all teachers.
- Examples of some events for teachers include induction events at the local, the Beginning Teachers' Conference, Leadership Essentials, Teachers' Conventions and the Annual Representative Assembly.



## Promote Opportunities for Advocacy Through Involvement

- Local ATA
- Diversity, Equity and Human Rights (DEHR) and other committees
- Association corps (instructors and administrator instructors)
- Specialist councils
- Grants, awards and scholarships

9

- As the SR, you can also be influential in helping your colleagues learn about the many ways in which they can become involved in their professional association.
- For example, please highlight local general meetings, and positions open for election.
- There are many provincial committees in which members can become involved, including local Diversity, Equity Human Rights (DEHR) committees.
- The provincial Association also has a number of corps in which members can become involved, including those in professional development, where teachers receive training in workshop facilitation and then become workshop facilitators around the province.
- The Association also has 21 specialist councils, corresponding to subject areas and interest areas. Every ATA member can select a no-charge membership by logging onto the ATA website and signing up. Each council also has many opportunities for involvement.
- The Association also has a variety of grants, awards and scholarships available. Flyers are sent out to highlight them during the year and detailed information can be found on the Association website.

## Promote Services

- Available services through the three program areas
- Research
- Workshops, courses and presentations
- ATA library
- ATA website—[www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca)

10

- The ATA also provides many services in the three provincial program areas: government, professional development and teacher employment services.
- For example, there is an active research area of the Association and publications related to current research are sent to schools and available on the ATA website.
- Workshops courses and presentations are available to school staff at no cost, or a nominal fee, depending on the nature of the session. Updated listings can be found on the ATA website and posters are sent to schools each year to advertise such sessions.
- The ATA Library is an excellent source of professional books, media and web resources. Teachers can order materials online and have them sent to their home or school at no charge.
- The ATA also houses the 2Learn.ca website that has a wealth of digital resources related to programs of study and other topics important to Alberta teachers.



Provide time for school reps to ask their questions and solicit feedback from experienced SRs.



Thank school representatives for the critical role they will play in helping colleagues to be informed and to understand their connection to the local and to the provincial Association.