Note: I thought that our limited time cut into the richness and depth of what is presented at PDAC, so these are my distillations of what speakers said and of documents I read. Much of this info was to have been posted on the ATA website, and I have written to the PD folks, asking for a clarification of steps to access them, and will pass that on ASAP so you can do your own reading and research in your PD time!

Please send me feedback about this format, better ways to disseminate the info, etc. Thanks!

Friday Evening

Welcome and Introductions from Michael Podlosky, ATA Coordinator for PD.

Greetings from Carol Henderson, ATA President.

**Stephen Murgatroyd,** “Rethinking Leadership Transforming Professional Learning in Alberta”

Murgatroyd is a consultant, author, and imagineer. He has been a keynote speaker at our LRSD Divisional Day. According to his website, his clients include the ATA , the government of Alberta, the government of Canada, and many others – if you’re curious, check out [www.stephenmurgatroyd.com](http://www.stephenmurgatroyd.com)

This is a list of some of his work with the ATA, Alberta, and Canada.

Alberta Teachers Association

* Critique of Alberta's accountability framework and practices (2007-2010); analysis of technology and the classroom (2009-10) strategy with respect to informed transformation

Government of Alberta

* Advanced Education & Technology (2010) – Genomics and Strategy
* Premiers Council on Economic Strategy (2009-2011) – strategic consulting on economic leapfrogging and also the future of the forest
* Task Force on Value Added and Commercialization (2007)
* Review of Intellectual Property (2007)
* Sustainable Resource Development, Development of a Strategy for Alberta's Forested Lands

Government of Canada

* Western Economic Diversification – Review of Innovation Investments

Stephen’s message was that transformation is happening in schools, in classrooms, and in teacher practice already, and that teachers need not wait for a mandate from the government telling us how to go about it. He hopes that PD can be shaped to give teachers the COURAGE to innovate collectively, and to lead others into transformative practice.

The ATA is in the process of developing a document titled “A Great School for All – Transforming Education in Alberta,” and we were shown a draft. J-C Couture, ATA Associate Coordinator- Research, Government, asked us to look at the twelve dimensions included in the document. Each is listed with the following headings:

Current Context, Drivers for Change, Core Values and Strategic Priorities, Getting Started, and Getting it Right – What will success look like in five years?

The dimensions are

1. Assessing and Reporting Student Learning

2. Curriculum Development and Implementation

3. Digital Technologies and Learning

4. Inclusive Education

5. Optimal Conditions of Practice

6. Differentiation for Learning

7. Professional Development and Autonomy

8. Public Assurance

9. School Leadership

10. Teacher Leadership

11. Early Learning

12. Governance and Vibrant Communities

Themes in the draft of the Dimensions were:

* teacher autonomy in the professional context,
* cooperation and collaboration among teachers, schools, school divisions, schools and communities, school boards and schools, the province and the ATA
* flexibility
* family engagement
* meaningful engagement with technology
* teacher leadership, as a process, encouraging internal leadership and a distributed leadership throughout the profession

We also looked at a document by Dennis Shirley from the “Lead the Change” Series. This can be found at [www.aera.net/Educational\_Change\_SIG155](http://www.aera.net/Educational_Change_SIG155). Shirley is an author whose recent books include *The Fourth Way: The Inspiring Future for Educational Change*. This article touched on ALL of the themes of the Dimensions mentioned above.

My favourite sentence was, “It may turn out that the most important 21st century skill of all is the ability to turn off one’s laptop, stow away the headset and the cell phone, and actually read a demanding book for several hours in a row or to engage in rapt conversation and debate without once yielding to the “continuous partial attention” that new technologies evoke.”

Saturday

Karen Hobbs and Bev Dekker, of The Society for Safe and Caring Schools and Communities presented their **Programming Needs Assessment**.

Philip Coppard, Stormy Lake Consulting presented a **Report on the Stakeholder Feedback to the Background Paper: *Professional Learning for Teachers in Alberta’s K-12 Education System*.**

Michael Podlosky presented the Provincial update, which included these:

* Curriculum and Program Update
* To show the benefits of collaboration and cooperation, he showed us
  + <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PtLPt-whLNs>
* Teacher Efficacy and Professional Learning Study Literature Review
  + This is expected to be completed in 2013.
  + The Research will lead to a better understanding of teacher perceptions of efficacy related to professional learning and development of a range of learning opportunities identified by teachers.
  + Five districts, 10 schools
  + First-year data results being reviewed.
* Professional Growth Web Service
  + Grant to to create and start an online service for teachers and administrators – basically a place to work on and assess your IPGP.
  + Significance: ensure access to professional growth and development support across the province; provide trend data; comprehensive assessment instruments
* Locally Developed Courses
  + Alberta Education review completed, awaiting ministerial approval
  + Moratorium has been lifted on approval of courses

deadline of Oct/Nov 2012 for LDC taught in Semester 2 of 2012-2013.

* Provincial Dual-Credit Course Strategy
  + Post-secondary credits awarded WITH secondary credits
  + create and expand regional opportunities
  + funding to support dual credit programming
  + explore funding support through existing initiatives
* Curriculum Redesign – Projected Timelines for Principles
  + draft for Principles was presented
  + did not include actual curriculum timelines
* Competencies Indicators
  + Student competency
    - Discussion included, “Isn’t this another layer on top of the outcomes we are assessing in the curriculum?”
    - and “The 7 levels of competencies may become a ‘huge distraction.’ “
* Research Colloquium: Dr. Michael Rich: *Finding Huck Finn: Reclaiming Childhood from the River of Electonic Screens* April 25 – includes webcast (I think this will be archived)

www.research4children.com/admin/content/defau8lt.cfm?Pageld=1000991

* AISI Cycle 5: School Community Engagement Rubric and Continuum
  + 2 main groups need to be engaged, in various ways, in the planning, implementing, evaluatin, and celebrating of AISI projects:
    - those who will implement the projet including teachers, administrators, students, and parents
    - those providing representation for key partner groups, including school councils, ATA local, student councils, and elected school officials
    - The School Community Engagement Continuum includes the following criteria;
      * Diversity
      * Opportunity
      * Understanding
      * Support
      * Ownership
      * Celebration
    - Rubrics for Planning and Implementation are included in this document.
* Professional Development Funds
  + do not pay for hardware (laptops, iPads, cell phones), because hardware items are TAXABLE benefits.
  + Other materials (books, teaching and learning resources) are not TAXABLE benefits, and therefore may be paid for with PD funds.
  + For further info, contact ATA Teacher Welfare
* Mentoring Program
  + Formal collaborative provincial/local and district teacher mentoring programs have been established in 6 of 7 provincial regions (including ours, F).
* DEHR (Diversity, Equity and Human Rights) Handbook
  + It is important to establish a local DEHR committee
* Distributed Professional Learning
  + Current Projects
    - ESL/ Early Language Learning
  + [www.albertapd.ca](http://www.albertapd.ca)
    - First Nations, Metis and Inuit webinars from various perspectives
    - Beginning teachers’ webinars
* The Changing Face of Special Education in Alberta
  + FAQ on inclusion
  + [www.ideas.education.alberta.engage/current-initiatives/inclusion](http://www.ideas.education.alberta.engage/current-initiatives/inclusion)
    - webcasts, videos, discussion forums
* [www.education.alberta.ca/admin/funding/2012jurisdictionfunding.aspx](http://www.education.alberta.ca/admin/funding/2012jurisdictionfunding.aspx)
  + New to this form is the Inclusive Education Model, which shows, for example, the number of children in care
* PD Survey (2012)

Sandra Marcellus, ATA Executive Staff Officer, Teacher Welfare

**Creating the Conditions for the Best Professional Practice**

This presentation included an emphasis on bargaining in 2012, relevant to changing ATA membership. These are the key points from Marcellus’s PowerPoint.

* 50% of ATA members have<10 years of experience
* EPC chairs are
  + new to position since 2007 (50%)
  + in profession 5 years or less (20%)
  + also serving on local PD committees (25%), which speaks to the overlap of volunteerism and a concentration of responsibility
* The Minister of Education has inserted himself into the bargaining process, which should be between the ATA and the School Boards. ATA is framing its response to this change in process.
* There is some complacency in this year’s bargaining, because the 2007 contract kept things quiet for 5 years (just do what you did then!), and because bargaining committees are more and more controlled by Central Offices (which compromises teacher autonomy).
* ATA’s goal is to improve the profession by promoting working conditions which make possible the best level of professional service, under the auspices of the School Act, Section 4.
* ATA reminds EPCs to “leverage our unionism” as professionals, employees, in public education under the Labour Relations Code.
* Conditions of practice which must be considered are
  + class size and composition
  + Hours of instruction and other assigned duties
  + Inclusion requirements
  + Pay
  + Benefits
  + Leaves
  + Professional Development (self-directed, autonomous, responsible
  + Hiring and tenure
* The Bargaining Process will include the following to lead EPCs to BUGMs
  + Surveys
  + Work logs
  + Focus groups
    - Special Interests
    - Schools
* Getting to settlement
  + ATA Regional Bargaining Agents support Negotiating Subcommittees to attempt to reach settlement including
    - conditions of practice plus compensation and watching for
    - break through settlements and establishments of trends.
  + Mediation by professionals may be necessary.
  + A strike/lockout vote WILL NOT happen this fall – it is too early in the process.
* RBAs (Regional Bargaining Agents) at every bargaining table will help ensure a level playing field because
  + negotiations are no longer just between trustees and teachers,
  + employers have all the employment data,
  + CO officials have time and training to negotiate, while EPCs are volunteers,
  + Expectations are higher now, and there is a Duty of Fair Representation.
* The procedure is NOT
  + about teacher pain: less work, workload or work life balance,
  + about the kids and all the “extras” teachers provide,
  + a substitute for the tripartite discussions – bargaining would have had to follow a tripartite agreement, by law.
* The procedure IS
  + teaching the profession expert knowledge and skills of negotiation, based around the Teaching Quality Standard,
  + negotiating the conditions under which teachers will employ their professional expertise for the benefit of students in a particular jurisdiction.

J-C Couture, ATA Associate Coordinator, Government -- Research

**Teachers’ Professional Work Life:**

**Implications for Professional Development**

J-C presented two publications: “Transforming OUR FUTURE Together: The Conditions of Professional Practice in Rocky View Schools” and “The New Work of Teaching: A Case Study of the Worklife of Calgary Public Teachers.”

“Transforming Our Future Together” lists conclusions drawn from the research shown in survey results and in its final pages. Appendix A includes the The Survey Instrument.

Under the heading “Building Capacity Through a Culture of Trust”

* Work intensification, over time, leads to poor work – life balance and damages employees’ physical and mental health.
* Knowledge workers and professionals (including teachers) are more likely than other employees to work long hours and experience work intensification.
* Technology tends to increase work intensification by speeding up the pace of work and blurring boundaries between work and non-work time.
* Project overload – the attempt to carry out several initiatives simultaneously – leads to excessive task switching. The consequences are initiative fatigue, fragmented attention and poorer quality of work on any given project.
* If workers feel pressured to perform, they will not take advantage of provisions designed to support a work-life balance. For teachers, this pressure can take the form of unreasonable demands from administrators, a sense of loyalty and concern for colleagues, and an unwillingness to let students down.
* Beginning teachers and teachers on temporary contracts experience the additional pressure of insecure employment. When asked to take on additional responsibilities, teachers seeking permanent contracts are often afraid to say no for fear of damaging their chances of future employment.

“Advocation for Conditions of Practice That Will Support Transformation”

The top two bargaining and advocacy priorities of Rocky View teachers are (1) reducing the intensification of their work and (2) getting more embedded collaboration and preparation time.

A footnote on this page: Brante (2009, 430) has this observation: “As teachers have been given more tasks while none have been taken away, we can expect teachers to have less time available to complete each task.” (Brante, G. 2009. “Multitasking and Synchronous Work: Complexitiies in Teacher Work, *Teaching and Teacher Education* 25, no 3:430-36.

This document recommends that “Alberta Education and school boards need to (1) embed in the school day time and space for teachers to plan, work and learn together and (2) trust that, given the time, space and support they need, teachers will work hard to meet their students’ needs.”

“The New Work of Teaching” spends more time showing how participants spent their work week, and examining how teacher time is divided into various tasks.

Appendix A shows the Time-Diary Codes teachers in this study were asked to use: Instruction, Planning, Reporting/Communication, Assessment, Meetings & consultations, Attending school-hosted activities, Assigned PD, Supervising Students, Professional documentation, Administration, Clerical work, Personal-choice PD, Extracurricular activities. Also included were Home activities, Driving, Rest and Relaxation, Sleeping, Recess and lunch (non-work time)

Appendix B: Summary of Canadian Teacher Workload Studies

Includes qualitative highlights from several studies, and this, from the Canadian Teachers’ Federation’s 2005 *Canadian Teachers’ Federation National Teachers’ Poll*: **Average number of hours worked per week: 55.6 (up from 51.8 hours in 2001)**

Implications and Recommendations include

* Negotiating Assignable Time
  + This includes clear definitions of what is assignable, as well as an overt understanding of a school’s cultural expectations as to extracurricular expectations. Respect for life circumstances and situations of individual teachers must be considered.
  + Principals should “buffer” teachers from unreasonable expectations from central offices.
  + “Reducing the intensification of teachers’ work likely involves a combination of two strategies: (1) negotiating with the school board to revise practices and place limits on assignable time and (2) changing the school culture.”
  + Research showing similar results dates back at least 20 years – what we must now do is use Alberta data to convince Alberta Education and Albertan school boards to take action to protect teachers.
* Teacher Workload and Informed Transformation are linked, but will require vigilance and continued conversations to lead toward meaningful change.