

**CONGRATULATIONS TO MARILENA SHIPKA (St. Vincent School)**

ATA has approved a project proposal made by Marilena Shipka (St. Vincent School) entitled *Using New Technologies to Promote Citizenship and the Democratic Process*. The project was approved for a grant of up to \$2,500 from the Helen Tkachenko Global Education Fund of the ATA Educational Trust. Congratulations, Marilena!

**MEMBER DIARIES:**

The Local has a limited number of ATA Member's Diaries available. If a staff member wishes a Member's Diary, please inform your Local Council Representative. Orders will be placed at the Sept. 18 Council Meeting. Diaries are being offered in both English and French.

**100 SUBSTITUTE DAYS:**

The draw for the 100 sub days granted through the Collective Agreement 6.2(b) to attend ATA Specialist Council Conferences will take place on Friday, September 21 at noon. All recipients, and those on the waiting list, will be notified by the beginning of October. Information on the Specialist Council Conferences is available from your mailing rep. If you would like to enter your name for one of these substitute days, please fax your name, your email address, and the name of the specialist conference you will be attending to the Local office on your school's letterhead (454-1250). Please indicate the day you will require the substitute. For detailed information about each conference, please visit the ATA's website: [www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca)

**PD GRANT APPLICATIONS:**

PD Grant Applications (salmon-1 per teacher) are enclosed with this week's mailing. The Local allots \$20,000.00 for PD Grants per year. A draw for the Grants-In-Aid will take place on Thursday, September 20, 2007 at noon. All applicants will be notified of their status by the beginning of October. Please note: you are only eligible for the Grant-In-Aid once every two years.

**12TH ANNUAL BEGINNING TEACHERS' CONFERENCE:**

The Association staff is planning the 12th annual Beginning Teachers' Conference. The conference will be held at the Fantasyland Hotel, West Edmonton Mall, Sept. 27 (eve) - 29, 2007. **Registration is limited**, so please apply early to avoid disappointment. There is NO registration fee. Breakfast and lunch will be provided on Friday and Saturday. Posters and information packages were sent to schools in an earlier mailing from the Association. For detailed information and registration forms, please visit the ATA website: [www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca)

**Words of Inspiration:**

*"Do not protect yourself by a fence,  
but rather by your friends." ~ CZECH PROVERB*

- Included in this mailing:**
1. Applications for **PD Grants-In-Aid** (salmon-one per teacher)
  2. Information on **Specialist Council Conferences** for 2007-2008 -(please post and share)

**Printed on the back:** **Welcome Back Message** from your Local President

**Important Meetings and Events:**

**Tuesday, Sept. 11, 2007**  
Executive Mtg. #01, 4:30pm,  
Room 406, Barnett House

**Thursday, Sept. 13, 2007**  
Substitute Meeting #01, 7pm,  
Room 502, Barnett House

**Tuesday, Sept. 18, 2007**  
Council Mtg. #01, 6pm,  
Auditorium, Barnett House.  
Sandwiches available at 5:15pm

**Sept. 27 (eve)-29, 2007**  
Beginning Teachers' Conf.  
Fantasyland Hotel. Visit  
[www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca) for info.

**Tuesday, October 2, 2007**  
Executive Mtg. #02, 4:30pm,  
Room 406, Barnett House

**Friday, October 5, 2007**  
WORLD TEACHER DAY

**Monday, October 8, 2007**  
THANKSGIVING - HOLIDAY

**Local Email:**

G. McHugh, Executive Director  
[gmchugh@telusplanet.net](mailto:gmchugh@telusplanet.net)

S. McElroy, Local President  
[smcelroy@telusplanet.net](mailto:smcelroy@telusplanet.net)

J. Bossmin, Office Manager  
[jbossmin@telusplanet.net](mailto:jbossmin@telusplanet.net)

**Website:**  
[www.local54.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.local54.teachers.ab.ca)

**Council Dates:**

Tuesday, Sept. 18/07

Tuesday, Oct. 23/07

Tuesday, Dec. 11/07

Tuesday, January 22/08

Tuesday, Feb. 26/08

Tuesday, March 18/08

Tuesday, April 22/08

Tuesday, June 3/08

# MESSAGE FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

## Government Budget Update and Response:

As you are aware the Government brought down their Provincial Budget on April 19, 2007. As teachers, being employed in the hottest economy in Canada, we were hopeful that adequate funding would be allocated to meet our needs and expectations. However, true to this government's history, it was not to be the case.

The following excerpt is from the press release sent out by the ATA at 4:00PM that same afternoon in which President Frank Bruseker states:

*"When you peel away all the rhetoric and slice through the numbers, this budget provides for a 3 per cent increase in the grants paid to school boards – this at a time when inflation in this province is running in excess of 4.5 percent across the province, and, in some communities, including Calgary, at over 6 percent. This amounts to a real cut in education funding at a time when the public education system is under extraordinary pressure and when the province has the means to make things much better."*

What is even more disconcerting is the communiqué President Bruseker received from Education Minister Liepert shortly before the budget was presented. In his letter Minister Liepert indicated that the Government would provide some relief from the Unfunded Liability (UFL) contributions for teachers with less than 20 years of experience. The relief formula would be on a sliding scale dropping from 100% for those in their first 5 years by 25% for each 5 years of experience to reach no relief after 20 years of teaching experience. This one year offer and further discussions on a permanent resolution of the UFL hinged upon a promise of no job action by any group of Alberta teachers in the upcoming round of negotiations.

This flies directly in the face of Premier Ed Stelmach's leadership campaign promise that he would resolve the UFL issue once and for all without tying it to salary negotiations.

**My request of you is that you write to Premier Stelmach and remind him of his September 26, 2006 campaign press release in which he stated:**

"I will separate the teacher liability pension issue from salary negotiations and resolve the issue once and for all. I will lead with integrity and will demand the same from my government. I will lead and I will always listen to you."

To assist you in your letter writing I have distributed copies of the Liepert letter and the ATA's, **Fact's About the Unfunded Liability of the Teachers' Pension Plan**, document to your school's ATA Local Representative. These items are also available on the ATA website, [www.teachers.ab.ca](http://www.teachers.ab.ca), click "Salary and Benefits" then click "The Unfunded Liability of the Teachers Pension Plan".

If you would like us to visit your school on this issue, call the Local office at 451 1196.

~Shannon McElroy, President