

FAQ

Faced with questions about what's happening in schools, you need to connect with what you are experiencing in the classroom. Here are a few ways to answer frequently asked questions.

WHAT ARE THE PROBLEMS IN CLASSROOMS RIGHT NOW?

- Alberta's spending on education is the lowest in the country, even as classrooms are more complicated than ever.
- That means crowded classrooms, lack of one-on-one supports, and great programs being eliminated when kids need them most.
- We're losing too many great teachers because the work just keeps getting more challenging.
- And instead of working on solutions, the government is attempting to pit parents and teachers against each other.

WHAT ARE TEACHERS ASKING FOR IN BARGAINING?

- Smaller classes
- More supports in classrooms, like educational assistants, counsellors, speech-language professionals and more
- Manageable workloads to stop the burnout
- Wages that help teachers stay in the profession

HOW MUCH MONEY ARE TEACHERS ASKING FOR?

- Teachers aren't alone in needing a raise right now—everybody is struggling with the cost of living.
- Teachers have had only four raises in the past 12 years—totalling less than 6%.
- We need to keep great teachers in the classroom. That means wages that catch us up and keep us with inflation.
- But teachers aren't just fighting for a raise. We're fighting for investments in kids. Too many kids aren't getting their needs met in Alberta's schools because our per student spending on education is the lowest in the country.

WHY DO TEACHERS NEED A RAISE?

- Everyone is struggling with the rising cost of living—teachers are no different.
- Classrooms are getting more challenging every year. Teachers' salaries need to reflect the increasingly complicated classroom environment and to catch up after years of falling behind. That will help us prevent even more teachers from leaving the profession.

WHAT HAS HAPPENED WITH TEACHER SALARIES IN RECENT YEARS?

- Teachers have had only four raises in the past 12 years—totalling less than 6%.
- With the cost of living rising quickly, we can't keep going this way

DON'T TEACHERS GET SUMMERS OFF?

- That's just not the reality for most teachers I know. In fact, a study done a few years ago showed that the average teacher in Alberta worked the equivalent of 50 weeks a year.
- That means we end up with about two weeks of vacation when you include unpaid work throughout the year and time during the summer preparing.

BUT WE CAN'T AFFORD THIS, RIGHT?

- We can't afford to miss this opportunity to fix the issues in our classrooms. We need the next generation of Albertans to live up to their potential—and help ensure that Alberta is strong into the future.
- Alberta had a big surplus last year, even while continuing to spend less per student on public education than any province in the country.
- It's bad and getting worse. Teachers are burning out. Kids are missing opportunities.
- Parents and teachers know there are big problems and it's past time to take real action to address them.

Not sure what to say?

Connect from the heart about what's happening in schools!

StopTheExcuses.ca



The Alberta Teachers' Association