

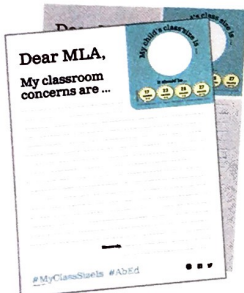
# Important Information for Parent Council Chairs

Alberta's classes are too big and lack the support required for successful inclusion.



## MLAs need to hear about the learning conditions in your children's classes!

The Association has organized a coordinated MLA engagement activity that advocates for class size reductions and improved supports for inclusion and classroom complexity.



**Please arrange to have your fellow parents take a few minutes to write a quick letter to their MLAs.**

**DIRECTIONS**—Parents should return their completed letters to you. Please collect those letters and return them to the

ATA school representative in your school. From there, we will arrange to have them sent to Barnett House in Edmonton, and they will mail them to the MLAs' offices.

If parents know the name of their MLA, they should put it on the back of the letter. Alternatively, they can provide their postal code, and we will look up the MLA name. MLA names can be looked up at [streetkey.elections.ab.ca](http://streetkey.elections.ab.ca).

If you would like to order additional pads, please contact [distribution@ata.ab.ca](mailto:distribution@ata.ab.ca).

**Your activity will help ensure that public education remains a priority for our elected officials. Thank you for your support.**

### Helpful tips for parents:

- Keep your letter factual and short.
  - Tell your story. What are the barriers faced by your child's teacher or students in your child's class?
  - Try to be constructive: advocate for what your school needs, preferably without aggressive criticism.
  - You do not need to identify the school or board that your child attends. These issues
- are present across the province, and this activity is about letting your MLA know that you are a voter and you share these provincial concerns.
- Please avoid using this letter to criticize individual teachers, schools or school jurisdictions. Schools are forced to make difficult decisions as a result of limited funding, and the purpose of this letter is to advocate for provincial support.





# Crowded and complex classrooms

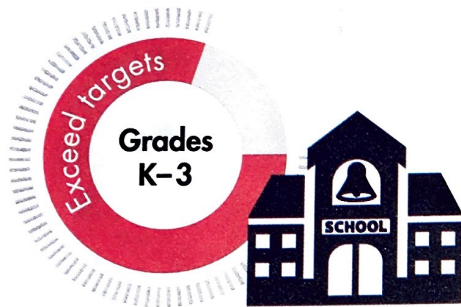
Alberta has a world-renowned public education system. Our teachers and other school staff work hard to provide outstanding educational opportunities.

Unfortunately, students and teachers are not provided with the best supports and, as a result, too many children are falling through the cracks.

OPTIMAL LEARNING HAPPENS when students and teachers have reasonable class sizes and when supports are available to assist students with special learning needs.

Class sizes are larger *now* than 15 years ago, when the government first agreed to tackle the problem.<sup>1</sup>

## Class Size



**80%** of K-3 classes are larger than the approved target.<sup>1</sup>



**66%** of Albertans believe that class sizes are **too big**.<sup>2</sup>

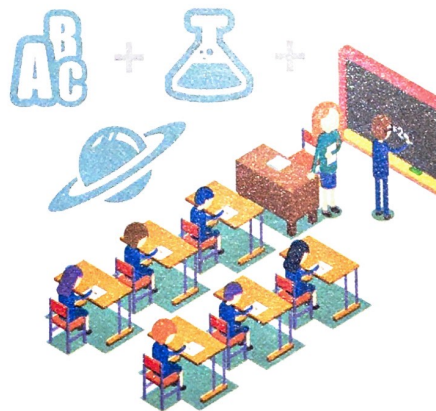
**81%** of Albertans would support increased **funding to reduce class sizes**.<sup>2</sup>

## Class Composition



When compared to classrooms elsewhere in the world, Alberta's classes are

- twice as likely to include a significant number of **students with special needs** and/or students who are learning in a language that is not their mother tongue (ESL).



In rural areas, class sizes may be smaller, but classes often include students from multiple grades or courses learning **different programs of study in the same room at the same time**.

## Support for Special Needs

**50** school boards \$\$\$

incurred costs related to supporting special needs that **exceeded** the amount of funding they received—a **total \$119 million shortfall**. \$\$\$

Even so, teachers say that **many students are not receiving the support they need**. \$\$\$

**7 in 10** Albertans

continue to express some level of concern about the amount of **in-class support for students with special needs or English-language learners**.<sup>2</sup>



**81%** of Albertans would **support increased funding** to better address these learning needs.<sup>1</sup>