

## Introduction

# Teacher Education and Teaching: An Introduction to Special Issue #2

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Since the publication of the Alberta Journal of Educational Research's (AJER) *Teacher Education and Teaching Special Issue # 1* in Fall 2020, I report that in Spring 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic is still present and an enduring and grave global concern. Locally, in Alberta, the United Conservative Party government continues to put in place harmful policies, regulations, and laws that, as examples, reduce support for public education and health care, remove access to post-secondary education, dilute sustainable and fair labour, delist provincial parks, and discount clean environment enterprises. Nationally, as a tribute to the coast-to-coast implications for education and teaching that reside in this special issue, the events and happenings of this past year unequivocally remind us that the health and well-being of our citizens and land, all of them and every square inch, respectively, are reason enough to speak and act. One constant is the dedication of educational scholars, researchers, and teachers, as is evidenced in this AJER *Teacher Education and Teaching Special Issue # 2*. Similar to the first issue, the second theme issue explores topics designed to advance teacher education and teaching theory and practice.

The first article in this special issue, written by Marilyn Abbott, Kent Lee, and Marian Rossiter, is titled: *Research Mobilization in TESL Reading Groups: Benefits, Challenges, Supports, and Procedures*. A key aspect in this article is the findings of a longitudinal study. These authors document how professional reading groups, comprised of 76 English as Second Language instructors in Western Canada, networked to promote reflective and viable programming for their adult learners. The second article, *On the Uses of Keeping a Notebook: Autobiographical Narrative Inquiry and Marion Milner's A Life of One's Own*, authored by Christie Schultz, delves into the reflectiveness of journaling. The act of keeping a notebook becomes an examination of experience. This is a worthy technique for creating research-based notes, a means for researchers to consider their positionality in a study, and for educators to contemplate their practice in and out of the classroom.

*Exploring the Impact of an Anti-Homophobia and Anti-Transphobia Program on a Teacher Education Program: LGBTQ+ Pre-Service Teachers Identify Benefits and Challenges* is the third article in AJER's *Teacher Education and Teaching Special Issue #2*. The authors, Jennifer Mitton, Joanne Tompkins, and Laura-Lee Kearns, drawing on the group interview method in this multi-year qualitative study, investigate the responses of four pre-service LGBTQ+ students. These students were enrolled in an Eastern Canada Bachelor of Education degree program that overtly developed welcoming environments for LGBTQ+ individuals. Ellen Watson is the author of the fourth article. The article, *Saskatchewan Physics Teachers'*

*Epistemic Beliefs: A Glimpse Into an Under Examined Area of Teachers' Professional Education*, provides a distinctive introduction to the study of 35 grade 12 physics teachers' survey responses. Survey findings are bolstered by interviewing 16 of these Saskatchewan teachers. The teachers' belief experiences about physics knowledge substantiate the importance of examining educators' beliefs, connections to curricular interpretation, and the role of teacher education programs.

Connie Blomgren and Serena Henderson, authors of *Addressing the K-12 Open Educational Resources Awareness Niche: A Virtual Conference Response*, offer readers their perspective of an inaugural event, the 2018 virtual conference about kindergarten to grade 12 (K-12) Open Educational Resources (OER). These authors detail the significance of K-12 OER and possibilities for present and future consideration in school-based programming. The last article in this special theme issue is written by Melissa Tremblay, Tracy Mastrangelo, and Jacqueline Pei. Titled, *Building School Capacity to Support Students with Complex Needs Through the Wellness, Resiliency, and Partnerships (WRaP) Project*, this article communicates the capacity-building value of steadfast programming. Authors examine the experiences of school employees and success coaches as they implemented this program to advance family and school supports for youth with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) and later, other complexities.

I thank the authors of this *AJER Teacher Education and Teaching Special Issue # 2* for their willingness to commit to an extensive writing-to-publication process. Each step of this process relies on experts, all whom I offer my genuine appreciation: Editorial Assistant, Leah Spencer; Editor, Dr. Anna Kirova; and the reviewers who contributed numerous hours to promote and enrich the writings of this special issue's authors. To everyone: A healthy and safe 2021.

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