



Q & A
GORDON THOMAS
Executive Secretary

Can the school rep attend a meeting with the principal?

Question: A teacher has indicated that he is uncomfortable about a

meeting he has been asked to attend with me, the principal. The teacher has asked the ATA local council representative for our school to attend the meeting. Is it appropriate for this third person to attend the meeting?

Answer: Occasionally, school representatives are invited by an administrator or by a teaching colleague to sit in on a meeting where it is perceived that difficulties may occur. School representatives should decline such a role and refer the teacher or administrator to ATA Member Services for advice. School representatives do not assist or advise fellow teachers about matters related to their practice, nor do they mediate relationships among colleagues or with administration.

The function of school representatives is to keep their fellow teachers informed about the ATA. They advise members to contact the Alberta Teachers' Association if an issue is troubling. ATA school representatives do not have a shop steward function, which may be present in teacher organizations in other provinces. The Association includes both teachers and administrators, and school representatives do not assist either party.

Member Services executive staff officers are pleased to reflect with teachers and administrators about an issue that leads to a meeting. When a serious matter will be addressed, teachers are often advised to contact the Association by the principal or other officials arranging the meeting. Member Services executive staff will discuss meeting protocol and help the teacher or the administrator clarify issues. If the meeting is for the purposes of discipline or if a central office director or superintendent will be present, it may be appropriate for a Member Services executive staff officer to attend.