

Multilingual Association of Regina

JULY-SEPTEMBER 2013 NEWSLETTER



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Jul.-Sept. 2013
ISSN 1483-9660

President's Message



The beginning of the 2013-2014 school year is now upon us, and I hope that every one of you has had a great summer vacation! You knew that school was just around the corner when the sun started to set before 8 o'clock at night.

MLAR is very excited about the upcoming school year. We now have 33 active member schools with the addition of the Kinyarwanda (Rwandese) School with Principal Pauline Nzararamba; the Shining Land Chinese School: Principal Li Dong; and the Bahr el Ghazal South Sudanese School: Principal Parek Anei. Welcome or should I say - **MooRahKahZah NayZa, Huānyíng, ahlan wa sahlán?** All 3 new language schools will be offering classes in their respective language at Balfour Collegiate starting this September 7th.

The Professional Development Committee chaired by Mary Kolitsas is beginning to plan for its first teacher workshop to be held in November. The topic of the workshop is "Language Teaching Techniques" which will be a valuable resource to many of our heritage language teachers, as a follow-up to the 3 workshops on Curriculum Development held during school year 2012-2013. We hope to see all of our teachers at this upcoming workshop.

The Regina Multilingual Schools Committee chaired by Ved Arora hosted the annual Principal's meeting on August 26th at the Travelodge on Albert Street South, the usual location for such meetings. The meeting was attended by a total of 33 Principals/Coordinators and Teachers representing 19 of MLAR's currently active language schools.

The RMS committee is doing its long range planning for school visitations as well as for the Teacher Award Night which this year will be held on May 5th, 2014 at the South Travelodge. Stay tuned for details as they become available.

And by the way, have you been to the new website that MLAR has launched? This is the place to get the up-to-the-minute happenings of MLAR. Please log onto the website regularly for more information on the workshop, Teacher Award night and conferences hosted by SaskCulture and SOHL.

Good luck with the beginning of classes and I hope to visit all of your schools this fall.

Dr. Jim Leskun, MLAR President



The above photo was taken at the end of the Principals' meeting held at the Travelodge on August 26th. Although some 4 or 5 persons left before the picture was taken, you can see that the meeting was very well attended with 19 of the active language schools represented.

For the schools not able to attend this important annual meeting, always set just before the beginning of a new school year, following is a summary of some of the matters dealt with at the meeting.

Annual Teacher Award Night: As mentioned by RMS Committee Chair Ved Arora, the date for Award Night 2014 is Monday May 5, 2014. Teachers and Principals/Coordinators of MLAR Language Schools are eligible to attend this Award Night free of charge. More information will be sent out to all schools early in 2014 as part of the planning for this annual event.

At the Principals' meeting it was also mentioned that because over the last 2 or 3 years, MLAR has only received a handful of nominations from language schools for the 3 annual awards, the Board is considering some changes to these awards. The MLAR Board's thoughts are that perhaps only 3 awards per year may not adequately represent the contributions of the growing number of volunteers who devote a great deal of time and energy to the tasks required to teach an increasing number of heritage languages now being taught in Regina and area. More details will be provided to all Principals later, as the Board considers various options for these annual awards.

Classroom allocations at Balfour and Campbell
Handouts provided to all participants included a full listing of the days, time periods and classrooms allocated to each language school at each of the above Collegiates for 2013-2014.

Dates when Collegiates will not be available
Also included in the handouts was a listing of all the known dates when each of the 2 Collegiates would not be available for use of Language schools during 2013-2014. It was also mentioned by President Jim Leskun that he plans to discuss related concerns about the loss of teaching time because of the above, with the Principal of each Collegiate, with the hope that it may be possible to reduce the number of cancellations, perhaps through the re-allocation of some classrooms when events such as Tournaments are the reason for cancellations. If some of the cancellations can be dropped, all affected School Principals will be so notified.

Professional Development for Teachers
Mary Kolitsas, Chair of the Professional Development Committee (consisting also of the following members: Raphael Hwang, Damodar Pokhrel, Olatundun Adebogun, Judith Kocks, Jim Leskun and Emile Carignan) informed Principals of the Committee's plans for the next teacher workshop which is planned for either Saturday November 16th, or November 23rd and the Committee will try its best to hold the workshop on a Saturday that Collegiates are not available for language classes, to reduce the loss of teaching time.

Refer to more details under Announcements

Visitations of Language School Classrooms

It was also announced that MLAR will again visit each language classroom twice during school year 2013-2014, once before the Christmas Break, and once following the break. This is a requirement of SOHL and of the Ministry of Education as a condition of funding to Language Schools. While in past years, such “unannounced” classroom visits were made by several MLAR representatives, SOHL who is responsible for funding for language schools which it receives from the Ministry of Education, has decided that more consistency was required in relation to classroom visitations, so in 2013-14 visits will all be the responsibility of one person. President Jim Leskun will likely be the one to visit all classrooms in 2013-2014.

SOHL Deadlines

MLAR works closely with SOHL for the services provided to Language Schools. SOHL has certain deadlines that Language Schools must meet in order to qualify for funding and other services. If in doubt, Principals should contact Tamara Ruzic of SOHL for details.

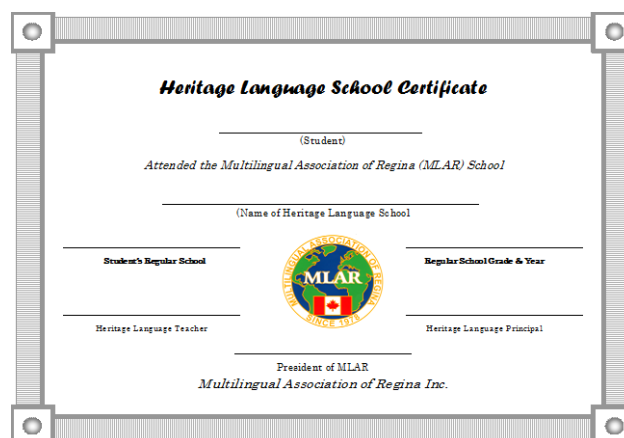
Interest in MLAR Board Elected Positions

MLAR holds its Annual General Meeting (AGM) for election of Board Members usually in late November each year. Any language school wishing to nominate one of their members for election to the MLAR Board may do so. MLAR will let all Principals know prior to the date of the AGM for 2014 as soon as that is known, along with more information about nominating candidates for the Board elections.

MLAR's New Website mlar.ca

MLAR has recently changed its website provider and “spruced up” the appearance and content of the website. Plans are to provide more frequent updates to the website, including key information about MLAR activities: information about the various Language Schools, dates and details about workshops, teacher award night, principals’ meeting, etc. Principals and Teachers should access the website regularly for updated information, and may also provide MLAR with some of their data to add to the website.

Language School Student Certificates



In June 2013, some language schools reported that the method of distributing the above student certificates to some of their students through the Regina Public or Catholic schools attended by their language school students was not done in a way that gave the students any real recognition for giving up some of their free time to attend heritage language classes.

At the Principals’ Meeting, following exchanges about the above topic, it was reported that only about 25% of the language schools requested certificates from MLAR for their students, so not all schools have shown interest in making use of these certificates for distribution through the regular Regina Public or Catholic schools attended by their language school students.

There was also acknowledgement that it may not be realistic to expect staff of Public and Catholic schools to hold a “formal” school event to hand out language school student certificates, that is to officially give recognition to heritage language school students, especially at a very busy time of the school year (June) when there are so many things for the school to deal with at year-end. It would be more realistic for each language school to hand out the certificates themselves, and some of the language schools at the meeting indicated that this is what they are already doing.

Consideration might be given to having two different Student Certificates, one designed for the language schools to hand out to their students themselves, and continuing to use the present certificate for those schools wishing to continue the present practice. This is yet to be decided.

Concern about Food Allergies

There was concern expressed about the possibility that language students taking language classes at Campbell could face problems with available food from vending machines, for example, if allergic to peanuts. Language schools should ensure that their students are made aware of this danger.

ANOUNCEMENTS

Dates when BALFOUR Collegiate Will Not Be Available:

October 12-14, 2013: Thanksgiving Day Holiday

November 9-11: Remembrance Day Holiday

December 14, 2013: Basketball Tournament

December 21-January 6, 2014: Winter Break

January 18, 2014: Basketball Tournament

February 15-17: Family Day Holiday

April 18-28: Good Friday, Spring Break

May 17-19: Victoria Day Holiday

Last Day of School: June 26, 2014

Dates when CAMPBELL Collegiate Will Not Be Available:

Tuesday Sept 17: Campbell Open House

October 14, 2013: Thanksgiving Day Holiday

November 11: Remembrance Day Holiday

December 12: School Dance

December 23-January 5, 2014: Winter Break

February 1, 2014: Basketball Tournament

February 8, 2014: Cheer Leading competition

February 17: Family Day Holiday

March 15: National Debate Tournament

April 21-28: Good Friday, Spring Break

May 19: Victoria Day Holiday

Last Day of School: June 26, 2014

MLAR MEMBERSHIPS 2013-2014

Most Heritage Language Schools have now renewed their MLAR Membership for 2013-14. However, there are still 4 or 5 schools that have not. This is a reminder that memberships have to be renewed annually, and this should be done before the beginning of a new school year, to ensure MLAR insurance coverage if some unfortunate accident should result in legal action while using Balfour or Campbell colleges.

Teacher Workshop

The next workshop is being planned for November 16th or 23rd 2013 at the Travelodge as in the past. The topic will be "Language Teaching Techniques" and should be of interest to all Heritage Language Teachers, to follow up on the 3 Curriculum Development Workshops held in 2012-2013. More details will be sent to all language school principals as soon as a final date is decided.

The Multilingual Association of Regina (MLAR) gratefully acknowledges **funding assistance** from the following:

**SaskCulture Inc., Saskatchewan Lotteries,
Saskatchewan Organization for Heritage
Languages, (SOHL)
Saskatchewan Education.**



**Saskatchewan Organization
for Heritage Languages**



**Saskatchewan
Ministry of
Education**