
Multilingual Association of Regina

JULY-SEPTEMBER 2016 NEWSLETTER



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President's Message

I hope that everyone reading this message has had a relaxing summer and an exciting start to their 2016-2017 Heritage Language School year.

Needless to say, the summer was a stressful time for the MLAR board as we had to examine the budget and make some very difficult decisions. At this point in time, MLAR is receiving a total of \$20,000 from SaskCulture through the Multicultural Initiative Funding (MIF), which is the maximum annual amount. To date, we have not received any notice of what we will be receiving from SOHL, but in light of the provincial funding cut, we are anticipating a cut in the annual \$10,000 that we have received in the past. Our fixed expenses, which include rent, utilities and our office coordinator's pay, eats up 100% of these funds.

Our office coordinator has reported that approximately 75% of his duties involve the assigning of classrooms at Balfour and Campbell Collegiate, dealing with requests from Heritage Language Schools using these facilities or dealing with complaints from Balfour or Campbell Collegiate regarding the Heritage Language Schools. Based upon this information, the MLAR Board instituted a

“Utilization Fee” or classroom management fee of \$50.00 per classroom per school year (Maximum of \$500.00 per Heritage Language School) to help offset the cost of the office coordinator's salary as well as the hallway monitor's salary at Balfour Collegiate, which was instituted one year ago.

For the past 3 years, I have been negotiating with the Regina Public Schools to acquire a third facility but at our last meeting, I was informed that they are not prepared to offer another facility as they also have financial issues to deal with themselves. Therefore, the current number of classrooms, a precious commodity to the Heritage Language School Community, must be used in an efficient manner, hence the applied, nominal fee. Speaking of complaints, we are only a few weeks into the 2016-2017 Heritage Language School year and already we have had to deal with a number of complaints.

In speaking with our Saskatoon counterpart, the Saskatoon Heritage Language Schools were required to attend a mandatory meeting with the Principal of the Collegiate and sign a performance contract with the Collegiate. Under this scenario, the Saskatoon Heritage Language Schools utilization can be unilaterally revoked by the Principal of the Collegiate without intervention of SIA. This is significantly stricter than MLAR's policy of encouraging the Heritage Language Schools to attend our Heritage Language School Year Kickoff Meeting and to buffer the complaints regarding classroom utilization.

It is always darkest before the dawn and I believe that MLAR and the Heritage Language Community is struggling to navigate through this difficult time. I am confident that if we all pull together, we can emerge from these difficult financial times to become an even more successful organization.

Dr. Jim Leskun
MLAR President

August 29th 2016 was “Language Schools 2016-2017 Kickoff Meeting”

This very important annual meeting originally called the Heritage Language Schools Principals’ Meeting was again held at the Travelodge on Albert St South. The meeting was attended by 35 representatives from MLAR’s Language Schools as well as 7 MLAR Board Members; however a number of language schools did not have representatives at this meeting.

This year the meeting was of special importance because of the Saskatchewan Government’s earlier decision to discontinue all funding for the Heritage Language Program. As a result MLAR has lost close to 50% of its annual funding, close to \$20,000 lost due largely to the loss of the annual grant from the Ministry of Education (\$10,000). In addition, because the Ministry’s decision to also discontinue all funding to SOHL, (Saskatchewan Organization for Heritage Languages), SOHL has also already reduced funding to MLAR for MLAR’s annual Teacher Workshop reduced by one-third, and although the exact amount is not yet known, SOHL will also be reducing its annual grant to MLAR. In short, MLAR’s revenue for 2016-2017 will be almost 50% less than last year’s revenue.

As a result, if MLAR is to continue providing services to the Heritage Language Schools, new sources of revenue have to be identified. Since close to 50% of MLAR’s operating expenses are directly related to the services provided to allow language schools to use classrooms at Balfour and at Campbell Collegiates, the MLAR Board decided to pass some of those costs on to the language schools that use classrooms at those 2 Collegiates.

The Board’s decision was that for the 2016-2017 school year language schools using classrooms at these 2 Collegiates would have to help cover MLAR’s costs for providing those services. For a few language schools this decision was not well received as in the past there were no such fees charged by MLAR. However, MLAR at this time has few other choices but to find ways to increase its annual revenue. The fees charged in total only cover less than one-fifth of MLAR’s costs to provide these services. The MLAR Board will have to identify alternate sources of revenue before long or face the possibility of dissolution within a few years at most. Reasons for this new classroom management fee were discussed at the above “Kickoff” meeting. This explanation is included here for language schools not represented at this year’s Principals’ meeting.

This meeting is also very important because of other reasons which include the following:

1. The allocation of classrooms (schedules) for the year for schools using Balfour and Campbell are covered at this meeting so that if there are any changes to be considered that can be dealt with following this meeting.
2. Rules that Balfour and Campbell want language schools to follow when using their facilities are also covered at this meeting. This is important because MLAR each year has to deal with a number of complaints from regular Collegiate teachers about rules that are not being followed by some language schools when using their classrooms.
3. Dates when language classes will have to be cancelled are somewhat different for each Collegiate due to various school activities that require cancellation of language classes. Dates that are identified by each Collegiate for the 2016-2017 are provided to language schools that attend the Kickoff meeting.
4. Where students should go to reassemble in case of Emergencies at either Collegiate is another matter that is presented at this Kickoff meeting.
5. Date(s) or approximate dates for the following special meetings/functions are also presented:
 - International Heritage Day event at Balfour sponsored by SOHL always in February.
 - SOHL Annual Conference (Regina this year)
 - SaskCulture Annual Conference
 - MLAR’ Annual Teacher Workshop
6. Deadline for Language Schools to renew MLAR Memberships to qualify for access to Collegiate classrooms – deadline is August 31st each year, and annual membership fees remain at \$ 20.00.
7. Language school representatives are also given the opportunity to inform the MLAR Board members at the meeting regarding any concerns or other matters that may not have been covered on the Agenda, including providing their input on topics on the meeting Agenda. It is especially important for representatives of any new language schools to attend this annual meeting as part of planning prior to each new school year, also so that they know what is expected of them.



Above, photo of Chinese School at Balfour Collegiate, photo taken just prior to the end of the 2015-2016 school year.

For school year 2016-2017, there are 16 different language schools using Balfour classrooms. This includes two new schools that have joined MLAR this summer: the MCNA Arabic School, and the Kirundi (Burundian) School. Because of the heavy demand for classrooms especially on Saturdays, MLAR a few years ago had to establish fixed classroom schedules which are (1) from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM; (2) from 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM, and (3) from 3:15 PM to 5:15 PM at Balfour Collegiate.

MLAR also now has a University student on contract to unlock classroom doors for each language school only when the teacher for that class arrives and to ensure classroom doors are locked if a language school does not show up for classes. This was done to reduce the complaints received from regular Balfour teachers about things that were happening in their classrooms that should not be happening when language schools are allowed to use their classrooms. When classroom doors are left unlocked and a language school does not hold classes, anyone can go into such a classroom and cause problems and the language school or schools that were allocated such classroom(s) are then considered responsible.

Counting all classrooms utilized at Balfour on Saturdays the total adds up to 33 classroom periods, so Balfour is a very busy place on Saturdays with parents dropping students off for different scheduled classes and then coming back to pick them up.

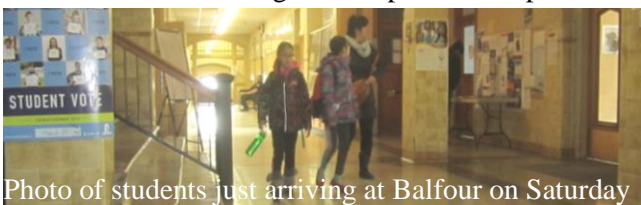


Photo of students just arriving at Balfour on Saturday

At Campbell Collegiate there are 7 different language schools using classrooms. 4 of the schools hold classes in the evenings, some on Mondays, some on Tuesdays, some on Wednesdays, some on Thursdays - most from 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm. All but 1 of the above 4 also hold classes on Saturdays and there are 2 other language schools that hold classes only on Saturdays. The number of classroom periods per week for language schools using Campbell totals 48.

In addition to the 23 language schools using Balfour or Campbell Collegiates for their language classes, so far for school year 2016-2017 there are also 6 MLAR member language schools that hold language classes at other locations which include Cultural Club facilities and churches, bringing the total of MLAR Language schools to 29 for school year 2016-2017.



Above is a photo provided to MLAR by the Ridna Shkola Ukrainian Language School, previously registered with MLAR as the Ukrainian National Federation Language School. This language school holds classes in Ukrainian at the Ukrainian National Federation of Canada Hall located at 1737 St. John Street, Regina on Saturdays, 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM.

For contact information on the different language schools that are or have been members of MLAR, anyone can look this up on MLAR's website mlar.ca. Language school principals are encouraged to review the information currently available on the website.

Every year there are always some language schools that either change the name of their language school and/or change the Principal of their school. Principals are MLAR's main contact, so it is important to have accurate and up-to-date contact information. If any information currently on the website needs to be updated, language school principals should contact MLAR office via email and indicate what information needs to be updated. MLAR will then contact the website administrator to have the information updated.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MLAR'S Annual General Meeting (AGM)

The AGM is always held near the end of November, at which time Board Elections are also held.

Up for election this year are the following, all for a 2-year term of office:

- President
- Vice President
- 2 Board Members

Member Language Schools are allowed 2 voting delegates each. More information will be sent out shortly to all members.

Language Schools' 2016-2017 Teacher Workshop

This year the workshop which is always held on a Saturday will be held on the first Saturday following the Labour Day Holiday, that is on November 19th. The topic selected for this year's workshop is "Emphasizing ORAL language Learning". This topic was selected based on a number of recommendations MLAR received on the evaluations provided by teachers who attended previous workshops.

Language classes at Balfour and at Campbell will be cancelled on November 19th so that Teachers and Principals can attend the workshop.

Teachers attending the workshop can claim 2 hours as equivalent to class time according to SOHL requirements for funding.

The Multilingual Association of Regina (MLAR) gratefully acknowledges funding assistance from
**SaskCulture Inc.,
Saskatchewan Lotteries,
Saskatchewan Organization for Heritage Languages (SOHL)**

Dates BALFOUR NOT AVAILABLE

A reminder that Balfour Collegiate will **NOT be Available** for Heritage classes for the 2016-2017 school year as follows:

Classrooms available only after Sept 5 2016

Known dates when language classes cancelled:

Monday October 10:	Thanksgiving Day
Friday November 11	Remembrance Day
December 21-January 4	Winter Break
April 14 to 21	Good Friday and Spring Break
Monday May 22	Victoria Day Holiday

There will be other dates when classes will not be available due to Balfour school functions. As soon as these are known, affected language school principals will be notified of those dates.

Dates CAMPBELL NOT AVAILABLE

A reminder that Campbell Collegiate will **NOT be available** for Heritage classes for the 2016-2017 school year as follows:

Classrooms available only after Sept 5 2016

Known dates when language classes cancelled:

Monday October 10:	Thanksgiving Day
Friday November 11	Remembrance Day
December 21-January 4	Winter Break
April 14 to 21	Good Friday & Spring Break
Monday May 22	Victoria Day Holiday

There will be other dates when classes will not be available due to Campbell school functions. As soon as these are known, affected language school principals will be notified of those dates.

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