

The IHLA Newsletter

Volume 18 Issue 2 Editor: Trudie Aberdeen

President's Message

Dear heritage language schools' principals, teachers, students and community,

The past month has been one of the busiest months for IHLA. Due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic IHLA made an uneasy decision to organize its very first MLD virtual event. It was a challenging task. Teachers and students had to perform from the confines of their homes and the IHLA board faced the challenge of bringing the recorded performances into a single piece.

IHLA schools' students and teachers were up to the challenge and on February 21st 2021 IHLA was streaming its [first virtual Mother Language Day](#) online. This year, IHLA was honoured to have His Worship Mayor Don Iveson and special guest Dr. Olenka Bilash to open IHLA's first virtual MLD celebration. For the first time, relatives and grandparents from motherlands around the world could watch their grandchildren proudly performing their mother tongue on Facebook online.

Even if recorded in isolation, 2021 Mother language day celebration connected the heritage language communities regionally, nationally, and transnationally. IHLA's online MLD boosted the visibility of heritage language communities as it reached 4, 017 people and had 641 engagements. Following the virtual celebration of MLD, number of IHLA's FB followers increased by one third from about 200 to 281. Our International MLD got a plug on CBC Edmonton and the announcement about IHLA's MLD was also published in the [Newsletter of Linguapax](#). (Note: *Linguapax International* is a non-governmental organization dedicated to the protection and revitalization of world linguistic diversity and in favor of dialogue and peace. IHLA maintains an excellent reputation in Linguapax International. In 2016, IHLA was awarded the UNESCO Linguapax prize for its long-time and outstanding contributions to the field of linguistic diversity and multicultural education.)



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Heritage language schools have been struggling to survive and yet despite all the challenges were on the front lines helping societies most vulnerable, particularly the elderly who do not speak English or temporary foreign workers. Our heritage language schools were relentlessly sewing face masks and distributing them, providing thousands of free meals to those who lost jobs and were financially strained. Despite the unprecedented crisis, IHLA's heritage language schools' communities continued doing what they were always doing – to be the first responders to the needs of the most vulnerable in our community. The altruism of IHLA's heritage language schools has always persevered.



HLS communities have many frontline workers to fight the pandemic, many are engaged in activities that assure the mental health and support of community members and some HLS communities members delivered food to the most vulnerable. Despite the financial strains, many of HLS continued to provide community support: translation services, early learning program (online and in person following social distancing rules), ESL classes and daycare (following social distancing rules). There have been plenty of acts of kindness and my sincerest thanks goes to all of you who reached out to the most vulnerable during these challenging times.

Nina

Upcoming IHLA Professional Development

Are you excited to learn something new about teaching?

Nearpod for Google Slides

Thursday May 6th, 7-8 PM

Liliya Sukhy

**Principal of Ivan Franko School of Ukrainian Studies and
Ukrainian LA and Science teacher at St. Brendan**

Program Nearpod is add-on to Google Slides. Nearpod helps teachers make any lesson interactive, engaging and more meaningful whether physically in the classroom or in the virtual world. It is user friendly. Teachers can create or change their existing lessons into interactive presentations. Teachers can access thousands of pre-built K-12 standards-aligned lessons or upload their existing lessons and make them interactive which can include quizzes, surveys, videos, to maintain meaningful connections and engage each student with whiteboards, and more. The students can access a teacher's presentation through a code and the teacher then moves the class through the presentation and lets students interact with the media as they go. Teachers can also opt for Student-Paced mode, where the student controls the flow of the lesson.

In this session, teachers will learn how to use Nearpod in language classes. It is recommended (but not required) that participants have 2 devices for the workshop. One device will be used to listen to the workshop, the second will be used to work on your own Nearpod while the session is going.

The Basics of Student Assessment

Tuesday May 25 7-8:30

Dr. Olenka Bilash

During this PD session teachers will learn the basics of assessment. This includes learning about assessment for learning, assessment as learning, and assessment of learning. Teachers can use multiple tools to look at their students' learning beyond tests and quizzes. Some of these include journals, blogs, notes, concept maps, rubrics, self-assessments, and presentations. Teachers will learn how to triangulate assessments by looking at the products students produce, conversations that they have with students, and observations of their students' learning. These all come together to give an accurate picture of students' progress. Dr. Bilash will share ways to collect this information for presenting to parents.

Multimodal Learning

Monday June 7 7-8:30

Dr. Olenka Bilash

How do you move beyond pen and paper activities in your classes? Do you want them to be actively engaged in their learning? How do you use all of your senses when learning? How do you develop your lessons in a way that each student gets the information that they need? In this session you will learn about multimodal learning. Pictures, texts, speeches, stories, dance, song, drama and expressions are great ways to make lessons interactive for all learners in a heritage language class.

What's Happening in IHLA Member Schools

CPLI Scuola Italiana Outdoor Art and Adventure
by Antonella Cortese

Every year, CPLI Scuola Italiana celebrates "La Festa del Papá" italiana (Italian Father's Day) on March 19th by preparing the traditional sweet, "Le Zeppole di San Giuseppe" (St. Joseph's Day cream filled sweet), for our fathers with a card and a hug. This year, as with most all events at the CPLI Scuola Italiana, our students took the outdoors for our Scuola all'Aperto (Outdoor School) day and created a special painting inspired by the poem, ***Papá Albero*** by Serena Riffaldi:

Alto, maestoso, gigante, possente, nella mia vita sei
sempre presente.

Hai lunghe braccia
che sembrano rami,



corro felice da te se mi chiami.
 Come una pianta
 abbraccio il tuo fusto
 e so di essere nel posto giusto.
 Tu mi proteggi, di te io mi fido,
 ovunque siamo mi sento in un nido.
 Se poi mi abbracci
 l'amore tuo sento,
 stringimi forte
 anche in questo momento.

Our giovedì' students ventured outdoors to find their "Papá Albero" which was taken from the poem. Students read the poem in class and then the class ventured into its CPLI "Foresta" to find and sketch out the tree that most reminded them of their individual father on canvas (using the technique we learned studying using our Papa's favorite colours.



Details included making the branches wide and "strong like Papá's" and like our Papá's personalities, colourful and vibrant, and in the case of one of our students, even adding an extra surprise: un GATTO! Yes! As one of our students (Aria) was sketching, she noticed what she thought was a "nido" (nest) in her tree only to find it was a cat in a high branch!



Thinking quickly, we called 311 and before we realized it, our Vigili del Fuoco di Edmonton (Fire and Rescue) came out to get our gatto down to safety.

After our sketching and cat rescue adventure in our outdoor classroom we returned indoors to complete our "quadro" (painting) for our fathers. Just like our Papá, our paintings were varied, colourful and The Edmonton Fire Department came to rescue our furry and fluffy friend from high up.



Figure 1 Aria painting her "Papá Albero" as she discovers that there is a little furry friend up in the tree.

IHLA's Past Professional Development Sessions

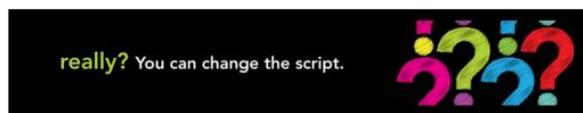
One of IHLA's main goals is to provide professional development for teachers. Below are the PD sessions IHLA has held so far this year.

Creating Positive Work Environments Renata Krawczyk, Alberta Health Services December 3, 2020

Renata Krawczyk is our IHLA Vice-President and lead in helping schools navigate challenging situations. In every school there are sometimes conflicts that arise. In heritage language communities and in heritage language schools finding ways to resolve these conflicts can be particularly challenging. Finding ways to manage difficult personalities with grace and compassion is essential for community health. Renata Krawczyk shared with us information about implicit bias and microaggressions in the workplace. These microaggressions can be met with micro affirmations. We can support those who feel attacked.

She also shared with us some very specific responses for how to respond when witnessing an act of discrimination. These tips come from:

Ishiyama, F.I. (2011). *The Anti-Discrimination Response Training (A.R.T.) Program: The Facilitator's Guide for Teaching Active Witnessing Skills*. (Unpublished manual) UBC, Vancouver, BC.



Anti-discrimination Response Training (A.R.T.) What can YOU do when you witness discrimination?

11 Response Categories

1. Interrupt (Assertive interjections)

- ✓ Stop it.
- ✓ Wait a moment.

2. Express upset feelings (Expressing personalized emotional reaction)

- ✓ I can't believe you are saying this.
- ✓ I'm surprised to hear you say this.

3. Call it "discrimination" (Calling it racism or sexism)

- ✓ That's discrimination.
- ✓ It's not fair.

4. Disagree (Disagreement)

- ✓ I don't think it is true.
- ✓ I must disagree.

5. Question validity (Questioning the validity of a statement or an over generalization)

- ✓ Everybody?
- ✓ Always?

6. Point out how it offends and hurts people (Pointing out hurtful and offensive nature)

- ✓ It's a hurtful comment.
- ✓ Ouch! That hurts.

7. Put the offender on the spot

- ✓ What? Excuse me?
- ✓ Could you repeat what you just said?

8. Help the offender to self-reflect (Empathic confrontation)

- ✓ You sound really annoyed.
- ✓ Would you mind telling me what's going on with you?

9. Support the victim (Approaching an supporting the victim)

- ✓ You are not alone. I'm with you
- ✓ This is terrible. I'll come with you. So, let's get help.

10. Ask others for involvement and help (Approaching externals: professors, friends, classmates, other third party members)

- ✓ You are one of the professors I can trust. Can I talk to you about something serious?
- ✓ I need to talk with you about what happened today.

11. Approach other witnesses at the scene (Approaching co-witnesses)

- ✓ Did you hear what I just heard?
- ✓ We can't just stand here, let's do something about this.

**Learning about Inuit Culture
Goota Desmarais
December 14, 2020**

Goota Desmarais came to speak with IHLA about Inuit culture and traditions. She shared with us much needed information about the Inuit people of Canada. She began her talk by sharing with us what it must have felt like to be a young Inuit student in Residential School. We learned about the Inuktitut alphabet and lots of vocabulary. She continued by sharing important artifacts that were essential to the Inuit way of life. Not only did the Inuit traditionally use igloos, they also used other forms of housing as well. One such type was a kind of tent called a tupiq. The hunt was an important part of the Inuit way of life. She shared how once an animal was collected people from all over the community would gather to share in the feast. Every single part of the animal was used, even drinking the animal's blood! This blood kept people warm in the winter due to the high iron content.

Many IHLA members were surprised to hear about the injustices faced by the Inuit people by the hands of the Canadian government. Many Inuit were forced into settlements and families were separated. Males who left to hunt were often punished and had their dog sled dogs culled. This resulted in a loss of the traditional way of life. Many challenges still exist in the North today including poor access to nutritious food, poor health care and a lack of medical

practitioners and facilities, and alcoholism. Inuit people are resilient and have adapted to changing ways of life according to Goota. There are now increased services and Inuktitut is a language taught in schools.

**Identity Texts in an HL Classroom
Renata Emilsson-Peskova, renata@hi.is
March 20, 2020**

Identity texts draw on personal resources and identities, and as a pedagogical tool, they help affirm the plurilingual identities, raise awareness about the roles that languages play in an individual's life, and promote a positive discussion about the value of languages and plurilingualism. Using identity texts in an HL classroom also promotes the cohesion of the class, as children and teachers learn to know each other in new ways.

Participants of the PD session learned about a wide range of identity texts. During the workshop, we created and presented language portraits, and in the end, discussed the pedagogical process, based on our own experience. We learned how to use identity texts and language portraits with a wide range of children and youth, from preschool age to adults.

**Utilizing Social Media for Indigenous Language Revitalization
Simon Bird, Director of Education of the Lac La Ronge Indian Band
March 17, 2020 and April 7, 2020**

Simon Bird has worn many hats over his life. He has been a teacher, a principal, a superintendent, a Vice-Chief, and a politician. He currently works as the Director of Education at the Lac La Ronge Indian band. He also uses his free time to run a Facebook group called CreeSimonSays. His group has over 20,000 followers. It is an important community for those looking to reconnect with their language and culture, especially for those who are far from their communities.

Simon shared with IHLA important information about Cree culture. He shared the importance

for Cree people to know where someone is from and how they are connected to one another. He taught us about the meaning of many Cree words and how knowing the language helps shape a Cree-view of the world. For example, the word for girl literally means little woman. He also shared how there are six seasons in Cree, but that the timing of these seasons differs across communities due to the migration of birds. Knowledge of the land is embedded within the community.

IHLA's Second Principals' Meeting April 13, 2021

IHLA held its second principals' meeting of the year on April 13, 2021. At our digital meeting we shared a wealth of information about topics of concern to our membership. Our president Nina informed us about the interim report we sent to Alberta Education about IHLA's accomplishments this year. She also expressed

the need for IHLA to create an anti-racism statement for our website. We also discussed concerns we had about the treatment of immigrants in the new proposed curriculum. Of particular concern was the social studies curriculum which treats many of our communities as "others".

At our meeting we also discussed Mother Language Day and the Mother Language Day book. Schools shared which topics they felt were most important for upcoming professional development sessions. These suggestions have been used to plan the remaining sessions for the year. Schools also learned of four spots available for a special professional development offered by The Alberta Human Rights Commission. We hope to be able to offer this opportunity to more schools when spaces become available.

Book Review

Envisioning a collaborative response model: Beliefs, structures, and processes to transform how we respond to the needs of students

Kurtis Hewson, Lorna Hewson, and Jim Parsons
Review by Trudie Aberdeen

The book *Envisioning a collaborative response model* shows Alberta schools how they can develop a plan for whole school development. The authors state "Our goal is to make sure that all students are engaged learners and that no student slips through the cracks (p.2)". To achieve this goal the authors have developed a comprehensive plan to ensure that all school staff are working together to create a desirable learning environment that meets the needs of all students. This plan is called a collaborative response model. It is less about which instructional methods to use, but rather a format for teachers to come together to have data-informed discussions about student progress. Teachers need to develop a "whole school" versus a "my class" philosophy to student education.

The 3 elements of the collaborative response model are collaborative team meetings, student assessments, and a pyramid of interventions. Schools need to find ways to bring these three elements together. According to the authors the collaborative team meeting is where teachers engage in conversations about students in ways that are purposeful and focused on creating solutions and goals. There are eight norms that need to be established for successful collaborative team meetings (p.81):

1. Focus on a common goal
2. Action oriented
3. Maximum staff involvement
4. Time embedded in the school timetable and calendar

5. Formalized process
6. Visual display of students
7. Team meeting notes and tasks
8. Team meeting norms

In Chapter 4 the authors describe how assessments should be used and they advocate for “data-informed” decision making as opposed to “data-driven decision making” (p. 128). Teachers should use data to collect information about their students and use this data to develop their instructional methods and strategies. If they notice that certain students are experiencing problems with their learning, then teachers should use these data to come together and figure out how to best support these students. When teachers come together they can share ideas and experiences at collaborative team meetings to discuss which students are of concern and about what has worked with similar students. When thinking about assessments, the authors describe types of assessments (benchmark assessments, progress monitoring assessments, teacher assessments, and school wide assessments) and how to use these assessments to support student learning (flagging students, scheduling assessments, and using assessments).

In Chapter 5, the authors describe how to use a pyramid of interventions. The authors explain that different students need different levels of support. Schools can support student learning by examining the supports that they can offer students and by arranging these supports from least to most intense. Interventions might happen as regular classroom instruction (instruction that benefits all students)-> classroom intervention (instruction that benefits some students in the classroom by the classroom teacher)-> school intervention (instruction by a specialist teacher in the school)-> intensive school intervention (instruction outside of the school) (p. 185). Once teachers are aware what supports are available, they can guide students to the most appropriate instruction. Through discussion, teachers can figure out which students have similar issues across grade levels and bring them together for specialized grouping.

Bringing all of the pieces together is a complex process. Teachers need to be able to work outside of their classrooms. They need to collectively decide which resources and assessments they need to make decisions about students, and they need to steer discussions to which supports are available and best meet their learning needs.

For heritage language schools the biggest challenge in instigating a model such as this is time. As heritage language teachers we often only meet for a short time each week. Teachers who work in our schools are only there for a few short hours each week and our time is devoted to our students.

The benefits of implementing a collaborative response model are great. First, we are only able to spend a few short hours each week with our students. If we had a system in place so that we can benefit from learning as much as possible from the previous teacher, we could maximize our time spent in class. Second, I believe that heritage language teaching is one of the most complex forms of teaching. As heritage teachers we have few people with whom we can discuss challenges that we might have in the classroom. By setting up a systematic time to discuss students’ needs, we have the opportunity to learn from one another. Finally, establishing a collaborative response model demonstrates to parents and stakeholders in our school our level of commitment and dedication to our school.

The way we were... Professional Standards... Again!

Trudie Aberdeen, IHLA Coordinator

As IHLA embarks on a new era of professional standards documents, it is an excellent time to reflect on the work that has been done before.

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The Way we were about ... Professional Standards

by Trudie Aberdeen



educational environments to facilitate the learning of language and cultures at the community levels, building communities of learners of all ages and interests.

In 2009, IHLA began the process of writing and adopting professional standards. This 18 month process was an opportunity for reflection and goal setting as an organization. Though out the process IHLA members looked at what was important to them in terms of professional conduct and standards. IHLA settled on creating standards in

FROM THE STANDARDS DOCUMENT:

Commitment to the Community

Professionalism and Leadership

Professionalism and Leadership

IHLA member schools act in highly professional ways in all their activities

In 2009 IHLA began the 18 month process of developing a professional standards document under the then coordinator, Valeria Pallidino. These standards were written in conjunction with heritage language teachers and were finalized in 2011. The document contained three areas: commitment to students, commitment to community and professionalization and leadership.

Teachers and school leaders attended workshops in how to implement the professional standards in their schools. Information about this document can be found in the IHLA newsletter, Volume 15, Issue 1.

In 2018, IHLA revisited the professional standards again under Trudie Aberdeen. The purpose for the revisit was never intended to change the spirit of the standards, but rather to simplify and streamline them. A committee was formed at the AGM in 2019. They reduced the document from almost 20 pages to 1. The committee condenses the standards to make them easier to read and follow. After much consultation with school leaders, the finalized version was accepted in 2020.

The current standards are as follows:

IHLA members are committed to students.

1. IHLA members plan lessons and activities which foster students interest and abilities
2. IHLA members stay up-to-date and be active in professional development and professional reading
3. IHLA members communicate with students and their families about student progress
4. IHLA members treat all students with dignity and respect
5. IHLA members are committed to their schools by fulfilling the expectations set out for them in their school contract

**IHLA
PROFESSIONAL
STANDARDS**

Attend collaborative and interactive workshop to talk about the IHLA Professional Standards document and how it can support your school activities and planning. This session is specifically indicated for community leaders and administrators as well as IHLA member school teachers. During the session participants will:

- review the document and engage in collaborative tasks to add to its interpretation
- listen to and share concrete practices at the community level that IHLA schools engage in to uphold professional standards
- learn about a new project idea that IHLA will work on for the 2012-2013 school year

The session will fill fast, so do not waste anytime registering online today.

The session will take place at the IHLA office - 10010 105 street - second floor - on Thursday, April 26, 2012 from 6:00 - 8:30 p.m.

Parking at the IHLA parking lot is free after 5:00 p.m. (free on the street after 6:00 p.m.)

register online

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/profstandardsIHLA2012>

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IHLA members are committed to their communities.

1. IHLA members share information with others and collaborate.
2. IHLA members promote their schools and promote IHLA through positive example
3. IHLA members participate in events which foster community such as Heritage Days, Mother Language Day or other community celebrations

IHLA members are committed to values.

1. IHLA members promote democratic behaviour through active participation.
2. IHLA members promote multiculturalism and mutual respect.
3. IHLA members promote plurilingualism and the love of language learning.

IHLA Research

The International Professional Standards Group

Trudie Aberdeen, Renata Emilsson-Pescova, and Gisi Cannizzaro

January 31, 2021, brought forward an historic moment for heritage language schools. This day marked the first meeting of the International Professional Standards group. Representatives of five organizations from different countries met to discuss the benefits of developing a professional standards document for heritage language schools that could potentially be used across the globe. Participants were from Móðurmál in Iceland; Heritage Language Schools Eindhoven, Netherlands; Mother Tongues, Ireland; The National Coalition for Community-based Heritage Languages, United States; German Heritage Language Schools in the United States, as well as the International and Heritage Languages Association. The group is comprised of teachers/managers from programs offering Bulgarian, Chinese, Czech, German, Italian, Japanese, Slovak, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

Our group began with a question about the establishment of professional standards for heritage language teachers in heritage language schools that was brought forward by Renata Emilsson-Pescova. Before our first meeting, our organizations shared our professional standards documents so that we could discuss them. We realize that while each country has laws that govern the specifics of legally operating a heritage language school, excellent teachers across all contexts share many core values. Thus, our agenda was formed to address the following items:

1. What should be included in a professional standards document for those who work in a heritage language school?
2. Why would having a professional standards document be important?
3. How should these standards be used?
4. How can we connect with other heritage languages organizations across the globe?

Our second meeting on February 23, 2021, began with a literature review conducted by Gisi Cannizzaro. She analyzed seven different standards documents from Alberta, Ontario, Iceland, and Australia. From this we launched into a discussion about our audience and purpose for our proposed document, the benefits of having a professional standards document, challenges to its implementation, formatting and technical issues, and dissemination.

During our third meeting we began to discuss the content of the document and the plans for ongoing communication among heritage language organizations.

Being a member in good standing

To be an IHLA member in good standing your school needs to a) complete a registration form, b) pay IHLA membership fees, c) participate at MLD through a table (and a book or presentation), d) volunteer at IHLA fundraising events, and e) participate in at least 3 IHLA sponsored professional development sessions.