

The IHLA Newsletter

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A Reflection on the 2020-2021 School Year

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

What a wild school year this has been. 2020-2021 has definitely been filled with multiple challenges and opportunities for change. And we are happy to say that both IHLA and IHLA member schools have risen to the occasion and achieved many wonderful successes.

Over this past year IHLA professional development has looked very different. Due to necessity, IHLA board meetings, principals' meetings, and professional development have had to move online. While this was definitely a steep learning curve, we rocked it. We learned that while being face-to-face is great, there are advantages with being online, too. We are now able to watch many of these PD sessions anytime we want. They are readily available on the IHLA website to watch any time we like.

And then there was Mother Language Day and the Mother Language Day book. These looked very different this year for certain. Initially we were not even sure if we would be able to rise to the occasion, but we put it online and it was fantastic. Some schools used older performances, others had students create celebrations individually. However schools chose to perform, it was a stellar celebration that will not soon be forgotten. The book was smaller this year, but still looks great. For those who would like to view it, it is on the IHLA website.

This was IHLA's year for research and conferences. Many conferences went online and IHLA members were able to attend conferences from around the globe. Thanks to all of the members who represented us literally everywhere!

On an even more positive note, IHLA has moved to the Edmonton Intercultural Center. This is a superb opportunity for our organization. It allows us to provide space to smaller schools and to interact with other multicultural organizations.

IHLA has an exciting 2021-2022 year planned and we are anxious to be with you again.

Trudie Aberdeen, PhD



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Upcoming IHLA Professional Development

Are you excited to learn something new about teaching?

1st Principal's Meeting

Wednesday, September 15, 2021 7-9 PM

Join us at: meet.google.com/vht-resm-nkp

It is time to get ready to get back to learning. This year's 1st Principals' Meeting will get you ready and excited for heritage language learning. For the first hour we will be discussing the upcoming school year and events for IHLA. This will include Mother Language Day 2022, professional development opportunities, and more. The second half of the meeting will include a *professional development session for school administrators on school recruitment*. This session is at the request of a school who suggested that schools may be struggling to get students back into physical classes post COVID.

Multimodal Learning for Teachers and Administrators

Exact date in September to be determined

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.

The New Professional Standards for Teachers and Administrators

Exact date in October to be determined

As teachers in heritage language schools we are always working hard to demonstrate our professionalism. This practical workshop will explore the newly created International Professional Standards Document and how teachers and schools can use it as a tool for professional and self improvement. This document was developed over a 12 month process by umbrella organizations of heritage language specialists from around the globe.

Understanding Trilingualism for Families, Teachers, and Administrators

Exact date in October to be determined

Dr. Martin Guardado

Dr. Guardado will share with our heritage language communities important information about raising trilingual children. He will share what is known in the research about these kinds of families and offer practical advice about keeping families multilingual. This workshop will be open to IHLA families, teachers, and administrators.

2nd Principals' Meeting

Exact date in November to be determined

It is time to get ready for Mother Language Day! This session intended for administrators will inform everyone about what needs to be done to get ready for our celebration in February. The second half of the meeting administrators will be examining safety protocols that are used in their schools for such things as fire drills, lockdown procedures, field trip forms and more. More established schools will have

the opportunity to review and compare their documents and older schools will have an opportunity to look at creating some of these protocols.

Who are YOU? Developing plurilinguistic identities
Exact date in November to be determined
Renata Emilsson Peskova

This PD session builds on the findings and ideas from my PhD research at the University of Iceland, called School experience of plurilingual students: A multiple case study from Iceland. Plurilingual students in heritage language schools possess unique linguistic repertoires that are both a part of their linguistic identities, and a valuable, rich linguistic resource. In this workshop, the participants will learn how to utilize their students' and their own linguistic resources to strengthen the plurilingual identities of their students, to scaffold HL learning, and to teach towards a better language awareness and transfer of language skills. At the end of the workshop, the participants will have a good understanding of the concept of linguistic resources and will have learned a few methods to utilize them for HL instruction.

What's Happening in IHLA Member Schools

News from Henryk Sienkiewicz Polish School

By Sylwester Furtak- Eighth grade teacher for the 2020/21 school year.

Aleksander Dudek, an eighth-grade student at the accredited Polish school named after H. Sienkiewicz in Edmonton, received a diploma for participating in the poetry competition "**Everything is poetry - everyone is a poet**" organized by the Main Board of the PNA in Canada.

This diploma can be obtained by a student who participates in school and non-school competitions and succeeds in them. Aleksander systematically attends school and is not late for classes. He cares about cultivating school traditions by participating in various school competitions and proudly represents our school.

Aleksander is distinguished by his high personal culture in contacts with friends and with adults. He always adheres to the rules of class and school regulations as well as safety rules.

Cooperates in a consistent and creative way in a group, is willing to help others and opposes symptoms of bad behavior. At the end of the school year, he achieved very high academic results from the obligatory educational activities. We wish him further success in his studies and in our school.



IHLA's Mother Language Day Event

Mother Language Day 2021 was definitely a different experience for IHLA. While we normally get together and meet in person, this year we held IHLA's MLD online. It was a huge success. We were able to share our schools and their successes around the globe. The event was hosted on Facebook and is posted on the IHLA website. We had 4.017 views on Facebook alone. Relatives overseas were able to watch MLD for the first time. Our mayor, Don Iveson, tweeted the event and shared it with the entire city. Dr. Olenka Bilash offered a great presentation about the history of IHLA.

The IHLA board is still discussing the form that this year's MLD will take- online, in person, or a hybrid of the two. One thing is certain though, we know the importance of us getting together to celebrate. This event is an important showcase of undeniable talent in IHLA schools.

The theme for this year's Mother Language Day has been selected by popular vote at this year's Annual General Meeting. In order to get your creative juices flowing, the theme is "Wisdom from our Ancestors". The same theme will be used for the 2021-2022 MLD Book. For those who would like a preview of this past year's book, it is available online at <https://ihla.ca/mld>. The paper copy will be available for pick-up mid-August.

Past Mother Language Days

Mother Language Day is a cornerstone in our organization. Each year since 2004 IHLA has created a celebration of plurilingualism and multiculturalism for its students, teachers, administrators and community. While it is always important to look forward to imagine what could be, it is equally important to look back to see how far we have come.

Thanks to the hard and dedicated work of Matteo Zorzetto-Vermeire, IHLA members are now able to do just that- look back on past Mother Language Days. Matteo has created a collection of slideshows that contain photos of past celebrations from Valeria Palladino. These photos range from 2004-2015. Take a look and enjoy. You might just even see yourself!

These videos can be found on the website at <https://ihla.ca/mld>.

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.

The IHLA AGM

IHLA's AGM was held on June 14, 2021. In this meeting we discussed IHLA's highlights over the year which included IHLA's 10 PD sessions, IHLA's contribution to conference fees for the National Coalition of Community-based Heritage Language Schools, fees for a workshop offered by the Alberta Human Rights Commission, MLD, creation of videos about past MLDs that are on the website, IHLA's research agenda, publications done by IHLA, conferences attended that promote IHLA, and a treasurer's report.

Nearpod for Google Slides

Liliya Sukhy

For this session Liliya Sukhy walked us through an important add-on for Google slides called Nearpod. This programme allows teachers to create powerful and meaningful slideshows for students. Most importantly, with a few clicks teachers are able to create fun and interactive lessons. Teachers begin by taking a slideshow that they have created and add features to it such as quizzes, surveys, videos, and more. When the teacher offers the lesson, the students participate by completing online tasks. This is somewhat different from games such as Kahoot! as that tends to work better in more face-to-face situations. This program also works for student self-paced lessons where the student is alone with the program. All participants had the opportunity to create their own account and make a lesson. This is available on the IHLA website.

The Basics of Student Assessment

Dr. Olenka Bilash

Figuring out how to assess students in heritage language classes is not without its challenges. In this workshop Dr. Bilash. In this workshop, Dr. Bilash gave us a crash course about student assessment. She described the language proficiency weaknesses that many heritage language students have and described ways that we can build students' capabilities and academic registers. She described how teachers can use Bloom's Taxonomy to make meaningful lessons. She described the importance of three kinds of assessments: *for* learning (to help teachers plan), *as* learning (to assure that the lessons are meaningful), and *of* learning (to assure that students have mastered the material). She describes the importance of authentic assessment; that is ensuring students are able to do real-world tasks that support them in their heritage language lives such as answering phone calls or writing simple messages. This recording is available on the IHLA website.

Multimodal Learning

Dr. Olenka Bilash

Many of our teachers often wonder how to make lessons more meaningful for our students. Dr. Bilash shared insights with us about how to make lessons more interactive. She taught us how to scaffold lessons so that students move from creating simple dialogues to more complex ones. One way that this could be achieved was through the use of pictures. This excellent session will be repeated and recorded next school year. We can't wait!

The Mentorship Programme

Each year IHLA offers a mentorship programme for participating schools. This programme allows for newer schools to be matched with more established schools. The requirements that selected schools meet with one another to observe their lessons, discuss methods and strategies for self-improvement, and put together a final report. The purpose of the programme is that schools find ways to meet their own needs and goals and to learn from one another. This year 3 schools were matched. Below are summaries of what they gained from the programme. Both the mentor and the mentee report how much they have learned from one another.

St. George's Hellenic School and Marathi Shala

St. George's Hellenic School is one of IHLA's oldest schools. It has been in operation for over 50 years! The Marathi Shala is one of IHLA's youngest. They have been in operation less than 10. When the schools got together they observed each other's classes. They also focused on understanding the shared values they hold. The next steps for these schools was to take a critical look at the examination of language teaching objectives and develop approaches for language teaching.

Ivan Franko School of Ukrainian Studies & Gurukul Nepali Pathshala School

Ivan Franko School of Ukrainian Studies has also been a long-standing member of IHLA and one of our founding members. Gurukul Nepali is one of our two Nepali language schools and has been a member of IHLA for almost 15 years! Together the two schools discussed many logistical issues that make the operation of their schools possible. These discussions centered on bylaws, not-for-profit status, salaries/honoraria, funding and tuition. A second stream of conversations included programming and pedagogy. Specifically, the schools discussed learning outcomes, textbooks for courses, approaches to instruction and school-wide activities.

Nebula Academy & The Bangla School

Nebula Academy is an elementary school in Edmonton that teaches multiple languages. The Bangla School is IHLA's newest member, although the small school existed before finding IHLA. The schools were a great match because they both teach languages that are considered "less commonly taught". This means that finding materials is much more challenging that it can be for other languages. Together the schools discussed how IHLA PD sessions are a great benefit for schools and support school

development. Following this they described how to create engaging and meaningful lessons for students. They talked of the challenges of finding the most qualified teachers and how to secure funding in order to be able to pay them.

IHLA has moved!

IHLA has moved to the Edmonton Intercultural Centre, located at the former McCauley School. This new space opens up a world of possibilities for IHLA. We are now in the heart of multicultural Edmonton and surrounded by supportive organizations such as Multicultural Health Brokers, the Intercultural Child and Family Centre, the Centre for Race and Culture, and the Edmonton Multicultural Coalition. IHLA would like to especially thank Dr. Antonella Cortese who applied for this rental space 5 years ago!

Looking for School Space?

The IHLA office is now available for use! Our space comfortably holds 20 students. Each school will also have its own “office” with access to a desk and storage. We are located at the Edmonton Intercultural Centre. Space is available on weekends and evenings. Please call to make arrangements.

Upcoming Conferences

IHLA offers not only in-house professional development opportunities, but strives to provide you with chances to learn from experts around the world.

 **COALITION of Community-Based Heritage Language Schools**

Coalition of Community-Based Heritage Language Schools Annual Conference 2021

REGISTRATION OPEN

Friday and Saturday, **October 8 & 9, 2021**
Theme: **The Power of Community**

REGISTRATION is open!
REGISTER NOW and let your colleagues know!

Conference will be held **ONLINE**
Registration fee: \$25

Coalition of Community-Based Heritage Language Schools

2021 HERITAGE LANGUAGE SCHOOLS CONFERENCE

October 8-9, 2021

Format: ONLINE

<http://www.HeritageLanguageSchools.org>

This annual conference takes place every year in Washington, D.C. Last year the conference went online for the first time. This allowed for participation around the world. Many people from IHLA were able to attend and make global connections. We hope this year is similar. For \$25 you get to listen to world class scholars discuss best practices in heritage language education.

For more information check out <https://www.american.edu/soe/iie/heritage-language-conference.cfm>



FOHLC Europe

Forum of Heritage Language Coalitions in Europe

FOHLC Europe is an exciting new collaboration between several organizations involved with heritage language education in Europe. We are initiating an annual conference that we hope will become a new tradition of creating connections. It will be a chance for all involved in this area to come together once per year to share expertise and to discuss the needs of our organizations.

The FOHLC Europe is excited to offer its first conference on November 19-20, 2021. This conference is free and open to all heritage language teachers, administrators, and friends. This year has two plenary speakers, Dr. Anthony Thorpe and Lia Tedesco. As well there will be wonderful workshops and talks about many different areas of need specific to heritage language learning in Europe and beyond.

For more information check out <https://www.hlenet.org/fohlce2021>.

Register Your School

Each year IHLA member schools are asked to register their schools online. In the online form, you are asked to let us know about your school's location and timetable so that we can add it to your website. We also ask for a list of teacher names so that we can update our professional development list. This information helps us to get the newsletter and information about professional development to your teachers. This process is simple and takes no more than 10 minutes.

We kindly ask that you register your school by September 15, 2021. You can register online at <https://ihla.ca/ihla-schools>.

Upcoming
Research
Opportunities.

Do you know of a family that is trying to teach children TWO different heritage languages in Canada? This important research looks at trilingual families and hopes to understand how families make this important feat possible. If you know of any families, please encourage them to participate. The children DO NOT need to attend Saturday school, but it is great if they do. Thank you for your consideration.

ARE YOU A PARENT FROM A MIXED-LANGUAGE FAMILY?



Participate in a one-hour Zoom interview and receive \$50 as compensation

Dr. Martin Guardado, a researcher at the University of Alberta, is conducting a study to understand the dynamics of mixed-language parents raising children in at least two other languages (besides English).



For details, please scan the QR Code or contact Silvia Begin at sabegin@ualberta.ca



Ongoing IHLA Research

The International Professional Standards Group

Trudie Aberdeen, Renata Emilsson-Pescova, and Gisi Cannizzaro

Since January 2021 IHLA has been partnering with other heritage language groups around the globe to create a professional standards document. These standards have explored a multitude of different documents and has resulted in the creation of a document that we believe fits the needs of heritage language schools across the globe. The document targets 4 key areas for heritage language schools: Core values: Principles of professionalism, Organization: Governance & leadership, Educational programs: Teachers & instruction, and Community outreach. The group is in the process of finalizing a draft. Once completed, the draft will be shared with two other umbrella organizations for a final vetting. The finalized copy is expected in October 2021!

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.