

# Multilingual Association of Regina

## OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2014 NEWSLETTER



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### President's Message



It is hard to believe that I am completing the second year of my two year term as President of the Multilingual Association of Regina. The past twelve months have been very busy for both myself and for the Board of Directors of MLAR.

Once again this year, I have had the opportunity to bring greetings to several functions sponsored by our member organizations. I attended the Salvadorian Spanish School's 21<sup>st</sup> Anniversary celebration, the Chinese Language School of Regina's New Year celebration, the Heritage Language Day celebration and the India Canada's Gandhi Jayanti celebration.

I will continue to honour my promise to the MLAR membership that I will make every effort to attend each and every function that your organization is holding. All that your organization has to do is inform the MLAR office of the details of the event.

I made efforts this year to continue improving the relationship that we have with the Principals of Balfour and Campbell Collegiate. I am pleased to note that we

have been able to further reduce the closure dates at both schools, so that our member schools can meet the required number of teaching hours.

I have had the privilege to attend and represent MLAR at a number of Annual General Meetings and Conferences. They have included the Metropolis Conference in Gatineau, Quebec, SaskCulture's AGM in Regina, SOHL's AGM held in Saskatoon and the Regina Multicultural Council's AGM held in Regina.

With the changes implemented by SOHL regarding visitations, MLAR has not been conducting formal visitations with our member schools. MLAR's Board of Directors has realized the importance of maintaining informal visitations so that MLAR remains visible to our members. I have asked the Board to visit each member school a minimum of twice a school year, once in the fall and once after Christmas. If you have any concerns or suggestions, please bring them to the attention of any member of MLAR Board of Directors. That is one reason why I have asked all Board Members to visit Heritage Language classrooms in operation twice each school year.

One significant change that MLAR undertook in 2014 was the transition to Service Pins, awarded to all qualifying volunteer teachers, in lieu of recognizing only 3 individual teachers each year. We received overwhelmingly positive feedback on this program change to the Teacher Award Night. We will continue with this Service Pin recognition in the upcoming 2015 Teacher Award Night to be held on May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015.

I would be remiss if I did not recognize and thank the efforts of our Office Coordinator, Emile Carignan, who is truly the backbone of the organization. He works tirelessly in carrying out all of the day to day business of MLAR. Emile has been contemplating retirement and I truly know that his successor will have very big boots to fill.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dr. Jim Leskun

## Attendance at SOHL Workshop October 4, 2014: Language School Student Assessment Initiative



Above, Nadia Prokopchuk, Senior Program Manager of EAL and Languages, Saskatchewan Ministry of Education, makes a presentation to Heritage Language School Teachers and Principals from across the province, about a new initiative that all language schools must implement during school year 2014-15.

The purpose of this Language Student Self-Assessment initiative is to assess the skill level of each student in terms of 5 language skills: Listening, Conversation, Speaking, Reading and Writing. Nadia explained that there are 10 different assessment forms: 1 for students at the Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten level; 3 forms for students at the Grades 1 to 5 level; 3 forms for students at the Grades 6 to 9 level; and 3 forms for Grades 9 to 12 and Adults. Language Teachers are to select the appropriate form for each of their students based on their current skill level.

Nadia mentioned that 5 of MLAR's Language Schools were involved in an initial Pilot of this initiative during the latter months of the 2013-14 school year. Now the initiative is to be piloted by all language schools receiving funding from SOHL and/or from the Ministry of Education. Every student will have to be assessed and the results reported to SOHL by the end of the 2014-2015 school year. SOHL will submit a summary report to the Ministry of Education.

Prior to knowing of above SOHL/Ministry of Education initiative, MLAR's Professional Development Committee had selected Evaluation as the topic for its 2014-2015 Teacher Workshop. Since Student Assessment is an important part of Language Program Evaluation, MLAR postponed its workshop on Evaluation until more was known about this new SOHL / Ministry of Education Student Assessment initiative.

Unfortunately, not all of MLAR's Heritage Language Schools were represented at the above SOHL workshop on October 4<sup>th</sup>.

MLAR's Professional Development Committee has yet to finalize its plans for the 2014-2015 Teacher Workshop on Evaluation in view of the above, since some language schools have already attended a workshop on Student Assessment while others have not. Current plans are to include Student Assessment as part of its Evaluation topic, to be presented by Nadia Prokopchuk. The other workshop topic is likely to deal with Student Record Keeping, which is a requirement if student achievement is to be assessed. Workshop date will be in January or in February. All schools will be informed once exact date is known.

Below is a reduced version of part of the student self-assessment form for the Listening Skill for the first level [A1.1] for students in Grades 1 to 5.

<b>Listening - A1.1</b>	<b>With a lot of help</b>	<b>With a little help</b>	<b>With no help</b>
I can understand hello and goodbye and when someone calls me by name			
I can recognize and understand the words for people and things around me (teacher, book, chair)			
I can understand simple questions about me, such as "How old are you?"			
I can understand simple instructions such as "Close your book," "Put on your coat."			
I can identify common colours by pointing to them			
			<b>/5</b>

Photo of all those who attended MLAR's AGM at the Travelodge on November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2014



Below are the results of Elections that took place at MLAR's AGM, November 24<sup>th</sup>, indicating the New MLAR Board



Jim Leskun  
Re-elected as **President**



Bob Friedrich  
Elected as **Vice President**



Indu Jaiswal  
Continuing as  
**Past President**



Iftekher Kahn  
Continuing as  
**Treasurer**



Damoadar Pokhrel  
Continuing as  
**Secretary**



Stephanie Schaefer



Olatundun Adebogun



Fatima Pirbhai-Illich



Chidi Igwe  
Re-elected Board Member



Jashim Uddin  
Newly Elected to Board



Judith Kocks  
Retiring Board Member



Raphael Hwang  
Appointed Board Member





Steffie and Andreas Schaefer



Nurun and Iftekher Kahn



Shobha and Damodar Pokhrel



Lawretta and Chidi Igwe & 2-month-old daughter



Ved and Santosh Arora



Mary and Gus Kolitsas



Jim and Manju Leskun



Indu Jaiswal



Olatundun Adebogun and Bob Friedrich

Every year following elections which are held usually in late November, a special Board Meeting is held, more of a social meeting than a MLAR business board meeting, close to the Christmas season. This is an occasion to give recognition to any outgoing board member and to welcome any new board member or members. This year this meeting was held at a new location, the Artful Dodger on 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue, with those pictured above in attendance. Unfortunately outgoing board member Judith Kocks was unable to attend due to illness, and newly-elected board member Jashim Uddin was also unable to attend.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### Days Balfour Not Available 2014-2015

DATE(S)	REASON
December 13, 2014	Basketball Tournament
December 21 to January 3	Christmas Break
Saturday January 17 2015	Balfour Tournament
February 16 to 20, 2015	Statutory Holiday
April 3 to April 12 2015	Spring Vacation
Monday May 18, 2015	Statutory Holiday

Last Date for classes is June 25, 2015

MLAR's Teacher Award Night will be held on **May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015** at the Travelodge Hotel on Regina's South Albert Street. All member Heritage Language Schools are encouraged to start now to inform MLAR Office of the full names of their current teachers who qualify for each of the following awards to be presented again this year to Teachers who will have completed:

- **3 years** of language teaching experience.
  - **5 years** of language teaching experience.
  - **10 or more years** of teaching experience.
- Special service pins will be awarded to all above identified teachers for each of the 3 categories. Please note that a volunteer can receive a Bronze, a Silver, or a Gold pin only once. The same pin will not be awarded twice to the same person.

#### Days Campbell Not Available 2014-2015

DATE(S)	REASON
December 18, 2014	Campbell School Dance
December 21 to January 3	Christmas Break
February 5, 6, 7, 2015	Basketball Tournament
Saturday February 14	Cheer Competition
February 16 to 20	No City permits granted
February 25	Campbell Open House
April 3 to April 12	Spring Vacation
Monday May 18	Victoria Day Holiday

NOTE: Saturdays prior to Statutory Holidays will be available for language classes. Should such Saturday be cancelled, schools will be notified when known.

Last Date for classes is June 25, 2015

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

