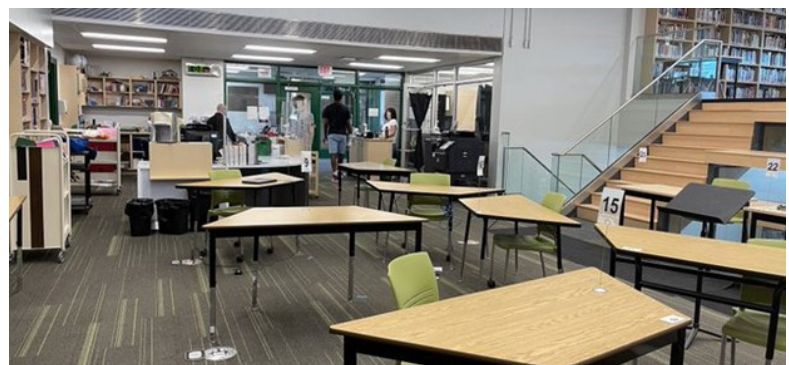


MSLA JOURNAL

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Spring 2021



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President's Message

By Brandi Bartok



Spring conjures images of rebirth and hope with every new green leaf that opens and with every robin sighting. Even though we are in the grips of a 3rd wave and lockdown (sigh), I feel hopeful that with more people being vaccinated and more opportunities to be outside in the sunshine, we will soon find some equilibrium. I want to

take this opportunity to thank all of you for showing exactly how flexible and necessary school library staff and adequately funded library learning commons are to the educational ecosystem. In a year that challenged everyone in education, Teacher-Librarians, Library Technicians and library support staff shone brightly. The number of applicants that we received for our Teacher-Librarian of the Year award and Library Support Staff of the year award are testament to that. The awards committee was in awe of the incredibly amazing things being facilitated through school library learning commons in this province. Congratulations to all of you that were nominated. Choosing just one winner among such incredible applicants was difficult!

My time as President of MSLA has been full of learning experiences and wonderful instances of collaboration with the other executive members. To all of you: thank you. You are a very fine

group of people to work with and those of you who are leaving the executive at the end of this year (Jonine Bergen, Jo-Anne Gibson, Erin Thomas, Samantha Popowich, Karen Surzyshyn, Grace Ballard and Leanne Falconer) will be greatly missed. A special thank you to Jo-Anne Gibson, who has chosen to retire at the end of this year. Congratulations, my friend! We wish you well as you embark on a new adventure, but we will miss your guidance, knowledge, and determination immensely. You have been a central figure in the Manitoba School Library Association for many years and we are grateful for all that you have done on behalf of school library staff.

I look forward to my new role as Past President in the fall! Take care everyone and enjoy a restful and well earned summer.

Sincerely,
Brandi Bartok, President.



President-Elect's Message

By Sandy Welbergen



It is my great honour to be serving as your President of the Manitoba School Library Association for 2021-22. The MSLA is a vibrant and respected SAGE group that is extra-ordinary as it is a place where all school library professionals are supported. I look forward to continuing this tradition.

This next year will continue to pose unique challenges to our association. During the ongoing COVID health crisis we have seen varied responses across divisions that have resulted in the reassignment of many teacher-librarians, the closure of library learning commons and the cancellation of programs. Like many of you, that response meant a change in my own assignment. It began with restrictions to circulation and the quarantining of materials, expanding to the cancellation of lunch-time programs and clubs, to the loss of our LLC space to accommodate a grade 5 classroom, and most recently to my re-assignment as a Remote Classroom teacher. The change was oftentimes frustrating and disheartening, but with some flexibility and creativity, we

continued to get books into the hands of kids and carve time to support our learners and teachers with their technology questions and with virtual resources.

The pandemic highlighted the pressing need for equitable access to quality eLearning resources; a need multiplied by the closure of the Manitoba Curriculum Support Centre. It also exposed growing digital divide across the province, particularly in rural areas, and the need for informed library professionals to provide school staff with support and training re: technology usage, virtual environments, online resources, and copyright issues. If there ever was a time to highlight the importance of the unique expertise of library professionals, this is it.

As president, I know my work will need to focus on and honour past efforts to promote school libraries and quality programming. Advocacy will be at the forefront of our work ahead. We must ensure that professional library staff are reinstated and that any temporary cuts and changes in programming are reversed as we exit from our pandemic response. Bill 64, the Education Modernization Act, presents a new

unknown challenge, but we will be prepared to showcase the invaluable work we do to enhance learning, empower individuals, support literacy, and build community. Library professionals are informed, dedicated and adaptable, and I am confident that we will all soon be back to leading from the library.

Sandy Welbergen
President-Elect



Editor's Message

By Morgan Arksey

To say this year has been a wild ride might be the understatement of our millennium so far. It has taken flexibility, adaptability, compassion, hard work and (dare I say it) a whole lot of frustration to make it thus far. But ultimately, school library staff have helped bring some amount of normalcy to a decidedly un-normal year. The joy of seeing a student finally receive the copy of the newest *Babysitters Club* graphic novel or *Wimpy Kid* book that they have had on hold for months is definitely a soothing balm to some frayed nerves, or it has been for me.

Throughout this issue, you'll get a chance to read about school library staff who are making a difference in this province and who have been recognized

for their work as recipients of MSLA Awards in 2020 and 2021. We also know that so much more is being done around the province. I encourage you to reach out and let us know what is going on in your library or recommend a school library learning commons that you know is doing great work supporting students and school communities. You can always reach us by email at msslpublications@gmail.com. We will have a fresh issue in your mailbox late in the fall of 2021.

I'm particularly excited for this year's Global Read Aloud. Perenille Ripp had previously announced that she was retiring from organizing the event but reconsidered; this year selecting four BIPOC authors (including two

Canadians, two Indigenous authors and even one Manitoban). COVID has brought its share of struggles, but one lingering gift could be teacher comfort with technology, making global connections with events like the GRA more comfortable for teachers (and students).

As I write this, the warming temperatures and increasing rate of vaccination are providing some levity to what has been a heavy year for many. Ultimately, I hope that the summer leaves you well rested to continue supporting communication, collaboration, critical thinking and creativity in Manitoba's School Library programs.

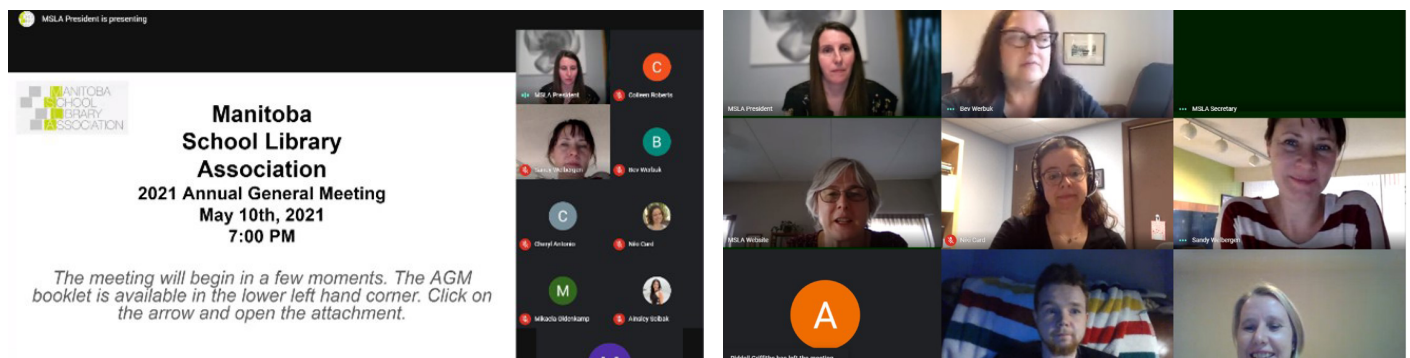


MSLA Business

Manitoba School Library Association Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the Manitoba School Library Association took place on May 10, 2021 through Microsoft Teams.

Thank you to everyone who took part in the AGM and the members of the executive responsible for planning and implementing this virtual event.



The 2021-2022 Executive Members and Standing Committee Chairs:

Board of Directors:

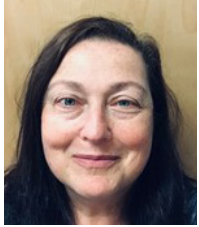
- President: Sandy Welbergen
- Past President Brandi Bartok
- President Elect: (open)
- Secretary: Bev Werbuk
- Treasurer: Ella Munro

Standing Committees:

- Publications: Morgan Arksey
- Membership: Alison Bodner
- Website: Cheryl Antonio
- SAGE Conference 2021: Brandi Bartok
- Advocacy/Publicity: Niki Card
- Professional Learning: Michelle Barclay
- Awards: Brandi Bartok
- Archives: Heidi Cromwell
- Members-at-Large: Alison Marshall, Katie Williams

Welcome to our New Executive Members:

Bev Werbuk - Secretary



Bev Werbuk is currently the Teacher-Librarian at Shaftesbury High School. She has over 30 years of teaching experience working in Pembina Trails School Division. Thirteen of those years were spent teaching grades 7-9 at Van Walleghem and Linden Meadows Schools. The rest of the time she has worked at Shaftesbury High School teaching French, ELA, EAL, and Social Studies. Bev has been the Teacher-Librarian for the past 7 years. She has a Bachelor of Arts from University of Winnipeg, a Bachelor of Education from University of Manitoba, and a Diploma in Teacher-Librarianship from the University of British Columbia.

Ella Munro - Treasurer



Ella Munro is a teacher-librarian in Pembina Trails School Division. For the past 4 years she has been working as a part-time Teacher-Librarian in a K-8 school but will start a new adventure as a full-time K-4 Teacher-Librarian in the fall. Before becoming a Teacher-Librarian, Ella taught French Immersion and spent several years at home with her two boys. She is currently finishing up her Master of Education in Teacher-Librarianship at the University of Alberta. Ella believes strongly in an inquiry-based approach to

teaching and learning, hands-on maker-centered learning, and the importance of choice in what students read and how they present their learning.

Cheryl Antonio - Website



Cheryl Antonio began her career in the library back in the 80s when she worked part-time after school in an elementary school library. Going other directions in education, Cheryl went back full time to the library at Kelsey Community School in The Pas in 2018 and received her Library Training diploma in 2021.

Cheryl is an active volunteer in her community, serving as a director for The Pas Arts Council, Coordinator for Home Routes The Pas, Chairperson of Storytellers' Film Festival, Head Leader for The Pas Helping Hands 4H Club, AdventureSmart Coordinator, and as a volunteer in The Pas Correctional Institute Library.

Michelle Barclay - Professional Learning

Michelle has been a teacher for 22 years. She has taught multiple grades all at the elementary level. Last year she was the half time Early Years Literacy Consultant for Pembina Trails. Looking for a new challenge, she moved into a teacher librarian position last fall to fit with her love of books, makerspace, inquiry and learning. She says she's loving it!

Heidi Cromwell - Archives

Alison Marshall - Member-at-Large



In the fall of 2019, after twenty years as a classroom teacher, Alison embarked on a new journey as a teacher-librarian at Chancellor School. She completed the Master of Education program in April at the University of Alberta. She now plans to continue to further her learning, understanding, and appreciation of the weaving ways of Indigenous and Western pedagogies and how we can honor this knowledge in our school libraries. She is both honored and excited to be part of this year's MSLA.

Thank you to the 2020-2021 MSLA Board and departing members

We would also like to thank the members who served on the MSLA Board for 2020-21. A special thank you to those members who will be retiring from the Board this year including Jonine Bergen, Jo-Anne Gibson, Erin Thomas, Samantha Popowich, Karen Surzyshyn, Grace Ballard and Leanne Falconer.

MSLA Awards

2021 Outstanding Teacher-Librarian of the Year Award, in Memory of Lois Gervais



Jonine Bergen
St. John's-Ravenscourt School
Independent

Jonine Bergen is the teacher librarian for the Middle and Senior Schools at St. John's-Ravenscourt School in Winnipeg.

The word most used to describe Jonine is "friend", followed very quickly by the words "professional" and "collegial". She is someone who shares, is kind, builds connections wherever she goes, delves into the needs of a situation, and digs in to help.

Jonine's sense of professionalism leads her to help in the profession when she sees a need. She has participated on various boards, including MLCI, MALT, MYRCA, and MSLA, and helped found the Association for Independent Manitoba School Libraries. She has done book reviews for various outlets, including CM and continues to sit on the MYRCA Board. She also teaches classes for the Red River Library Technician distance program.

Within MSLA she has held positions of President Elect, President, Past President, Journal Editor, and SAGE/MTS PD Day Chair. She has helped liaise with various groups, such as the new iteration of the Manitoba Library Association on behalf of MSLA.

Jonine is first and foremost a teacher. Her work leads her to help students and teachers alike. Excerpts from the glowing letters sent in on behalf of her nomination give excellent testimony. One teacher said, "To call Jonine a librarian would be reductive; indeed, she is also a teacher, collaborator, student advisor, role model, and friend."

Her nomination came with high praise from her peers. "Jonine goes above and beyond to provide students with reading materials; nothing prevents her from finding just the right book and delivering it as soon as possible! Jonine builds solid relationships with students to discover what they need to succeed academically and ensures that the school offers the best learning resources possible for students to improve their skills and reach their goals. She does not simply provide a boring, stiff, or obsolete presentation on what the library has to offer once a Term; Jonine creates customized "choice boards" and interactive lessons to invite students to see all of the opportunities they have at their fingertips."

Others noted the guidance and mentorship working with Jonine had provided them, and the hours of hard work that she puts into her craft. She has provided support, encouragement and inspiration to teachers as they diversify the texts that they use in their classrooms, and guided staff and students towards the databases and resources they need for their learning, no matter the topic. A former coworker noted that despite the hours of teaching and supporting staff, Jonine always found the time to connect with students, whether in helping them find a book to read or to inquire about their day. "Our library program has flourished due to

her hard work and endless passion" wrote one recommendation.

Jonine, your co-workers, colleagues, and friends were all delighted to help nominate you for the Teacher Librarian of the Year Award. We see how you work to lift us up. We are thrilled to lift you in nomination, and we are ecstatic that you have been selected to represent the best of what we can be. You support us and challenge us. You are most worthy of the Teacher Librarian of the Year in Honour of Lois Gervais for 2021.

2021 Outstanding Library Support Staff of the Year Award, in Memory of Lois Gervais

Mikaela Oldenkamp



Ralph Maybank and General Byng Schools Pembina Trails School Division

Mikaela Oldenkamp has made outstanding contributions to General Byng School and Ralph Maybank School libraries. Typically, Mikaela works closely with the Teacher Librarians to maintain and enhance the library resources and materials for school staff, offering a story time and advice on book selection. She communicates the availability of resources to staff, students and parents, through written communication as well as classroom presentations.

Mikaela provides support/instruction for professional development days, growth and enhancement of both library spaces

with classroom visits, book readings, and extending to the larger school community by hosting Prairie Children's Centre, Parent/Child Drop-In Program: Fort Garry Healthy Child Coalition, I Love to Read Month, and the Scholastic Book Fair.

Mikaela looks for every opportunity to bring the joy of reading to all students. When the school learning was disrupted in 2020 due to COVID, Mikaela was remarkable in both schools. She continued to support student learning by posting videos on Seesaw so students could stay connected. She stepped up to assist with Learning From Home as well as technology support to staff, students and parents, including platform access, library links on portal, OverDrive eBooks, audio books, new student accounts, new book orders, and on-line library resources. She relocated her entire classroom presentation to 'take it on the road' with a cart moving from cohort to cohort at General Byng School. At Maybank School she continued to offer the library as a place where students could still have library class, although the library also became a secondary home for Physical Education classes when the weather was too cold to allow for outdoor recess. Mikaela worked around this change to the library schedule with grace and flexibility; fluidly changing up the day plan first thing in the morning.

Mikaela shines with her technology skills and is always willing to help with technology issues, to create YouTube links, post a video or support a staff with a challenge on issues related to videos. Mikaela is a talented, caring, intelligent and hardworking young woman! Mikaela is a valuable member of our school communities, and her initiative and strong work ethic are appreciated by our entire community. She has a unique ability to find the perfect book for someone, even if they don't know the title or author; with simply a description of the book and Mikaela will

be able to point them in the right direction

In a challenging year, Mikaela has managed to keep the love of reading alive with grace, a positive attitude, and infectious energy. She is highly valued and appreciated for everything that she contributes at both schools as she goes above and beyond in everything that she does. She is quite simply, the heart of the library.

2021 Distinguished Service Award

Jo-Anne Gibson
Pembina Trails School Division



Jo-Anne Gibson, current Library Learning Commons Consultant with the Pembina Trails School Division, has worked as a Teacher-Librarian since 2005 at the Middle Years and Senior Years level. She received her Diploma in Teacher-Librarianship in 2009 from the University of Alberta and also earned a Master of Education from the University of Manitoba in 1993. As a tireless activist and supporter locally, provincially and nationally of school libraries, Jo-Anne has substantially influenced the profession through her collegial approach and deep knowledge base.

As a committed educator, Jo-Anne became an integral member of the Manitoba School Library Association serving in many roles including President, past president, chair of SAGE and

PD regional and metro chair with the Manitoba Teachers' Society. Throughout her career, Jo-Anne has served on several committees with the most recent (2020-2021) being as National School Library Liaison Chair for Canadian School Libraries. As an advocate promoting libraries and professional learning, Jo-Anne has served on multiple committees for the Pembina Trails School Division, Fort Richmond Collegiate, Acadia Junior High, Pembina Trails Teachers' Association, and the Manitoba Teachers' Society.

Jo-Anne has written many articles for a number of publications and was a co-author of the Leading Learning Document (Canadian School Libraries) and a contributing author of Conducting Action Research to Evaluate Your School Library. Jo-Anne has also been a presenter at numerous provincial and national conferences, including the Ontario Library Association's super conference. In 2013, Jo-Anne received the Angela Thacker Memorial Award from the Canadian Library Association and in 2014, she received the Teacher-Librarian of the Year award from MSLA; two awards she was very proud to receive. During her tenure as LLC Consultant for Pembina Trails, the division was awarded the 2020 Canadian School Libraries Leading Learning Implementation Award.

Jo-Anne is highly deserving of this award given her service with MSLA and multiple contributions to libraries, classrooms, teachers, divisional staff, and library learning commons. As she retires this year, we will miss her tenacity, devotion and tireless efforts to raise the profile of Teacher-Librarianship and the importance of Library Learning Commons in the education system.

MTS Professional Development Day

Teaching and Learning During a Pandemic: Opportunities, Reflections, and Provocations

MSLA MTS PD Day- Multiliteracies: Opening Windows to the World

Virtual Conference: October 22, 2021

Call for presenters:

Last year our MSLA MTS PD Day focused on basic strategies and resources for teaching remotely during a pandemic. We were in survival mode and it was necessary to learn the basics of teaching in an online environment, or partial online environment. We need to carefully consider where to go next because the teaching and learning landscape has been permanently altered. It will be tempting to view students in terms of deficit when school returns to “normal” and to strip things back to “basics” and focus on “catching students up,” especially in the areas of literacy and numeracy. This will need to be carefully balanced against student well-being and engagement.

One way to provide this balance is to consider a multiliteracy approach to teaching, which opens windows to the world and encourages students and teachers to seamlessly integrate many different ways of communicating meaning and learning into the school day. A multiliteracy stance allows for the integration of meaningful life experiences into the teaching and learning environment and for the inclusion of different ways of knowing.

Our focus for this day of learning will be: How can we support a multiliteracy stance in our schools moving forward? We communicate and interpret meaning in many ways: music, art, print, movement, spoken language, land-based knowledge and coding

represent only some of the forms of expression available to us. There are multiple ways to be literate and literacy is often dependent on context. Explore how building on meaningful life world experiences can provide opportunities for students to critically interpret and analyse “text” and how we can move forward in a new educational setting.

We are currently in search of presenters! We know that there are many amazing things being facilitated in Manitoba schools and we would love for these to be shared. If you are interested in presenting, or know someone who might be, please contact:

**Brandi Bartok, MSLA
SAGE Conference Chair at
mslasageconference@gmail.com**



Literacy

DREF is here to support French Language Learning

By Mona Hutchings and Heather Brydon



The Direction des ressources éducatives françaises (DREF) is responsible for the development and distribution of educational resources for teachers of Kindergarten to Grade 12, in Français, Immersion schools and English schools where French courses are offered. Teachers can borrow resources free of charge; all you need is a client number and a password!

To facilitate the teaching and learning of French (English Program), the DREF has consolidated all the pertinent information in a menu on its main page at <https://dref.mb.ca>. Teachers can click on French (English Program) to see more choices available to them. Teachers can find links to the curriculum and support documents by clicking on Downloads. Early Start French teachers will find many digital resources such as songs, rhymes, stories, games and activities by clicking on K to Grade 3 Resources. Teachers of French: Communication and Culture, Grades 4 to 12 can access many lists of resources by clicking on Grades 4 to 12 Resources. Kindergarten to Grade 5 teachers can access six new games as well as download files to create their own games by clicking on Games. Finally, Kindergarten to Grade 12 teachers can access resources and activities that they can share with their students in Learning French at

Home.

The DREF also offers other services, such as providing resource displays, workshops for teachers or help with purchasing.

Mona Hutchings is the DREF's support librarian, for educators teaching French courses (English Program). Her main role is to coordinate and respond to all their requests for French resources. The librarian researches the existing collection and communicates with various publishers to find resources that offer authentic, meaningful, and engaging activities, for second language learning. Teachers can call, email or visit the DREF to inquire about educational materials.

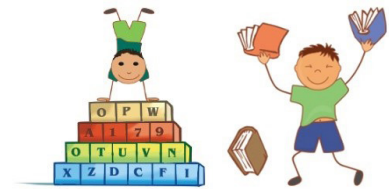
Please do not hesitate to contact Mona at mona.hutchings@gov.mb.ca or call 204-945-0773 if you have any questions or suggestions, or if you would like:

- to become a patron of the DREF
- a presentation of the services provided by the DREF
- a presentation on new resources that are available
- a tour of the DREF
- help researching, reserving, and renewing resources in our online catalogue
- resources related to a specific theme or grade level, sent to your school
- a display of resources for perusal by an individual or a group of

teachers

- a list of resources to meet a particular need
- a consultation with the librarian.

Teachers of French (English Program) may find the following links to the DREF website helpful:



For Kindergarten to Grade 3:

- Framework of Outcomes: Early Start French, Kindergarten to Grade 3 https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/french/early_start.html
- Resources: <https://dref.mb.ca/ressourcesM3>
- Games: <https://dref.mb.ca/jeux>

For Grades 4 to 12:

- Framework of Outcomes: French: Communication and Culture, Grades 4 to 12 https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/french/comm_culture.html
- K to Grade 12, Learning French At Home: <https://dref.mb.ca/learning-french-at-home>

Here are a few suggestions of free, online resources for both teachers and students. Please note that all these sites are exclusively in French.



Alloprof aide aux devoirs | Alloprof (Canada)

- A homework help website from Québec, covering all ages and all subject matters.
- Note: In Québec, after Grade 6, students complete 5 years in high school (école secondaire),
- S1 through S5. S1 = Grade 7, S5= Grade 11

Livres audio gratuits en français | Radio-Canada (Canada)

- Radio-Canada (CBC's French sister station) has over 100 audiobooks available on its website, all by Canadian authors and most are original French-language publications. They also offer over 100 podcasts in French! Balados en français | Radio-Canada

Podcast Littérature Jeunesse | Il était un roman (iletaitunroman.com) (France)

- Il était un roman, which roughly translates to "Once upon a story", is a podcast which offers 22 episodes of a classic from French children's literature, Jules Verne's Voyage au centre de la Terre.

Heureduconte.ca (Canada)

- Heure du conte, literally Storytime, offers a single access point for dozens of virtual and audio storytimes, as



presented via public libraries in Québec, as well as podcasts and audiobooks.

ljourlactu.com - L'actualité à hauteur d'enfants ! (France)

- This website offers articles, videos and podcasts about various topics of daily news for students.
- Note: CM1, CM2 and 6e are equivalent to Grades 4-6 in Canada. Further explanations of equivalencies between countries is available here Équivalence des niveaux scolaires et âge des enfants en classe (ecolebranchee.com)



Matières à emporter - Savoir média (matieresaemporter.ca) (Canada)

- Matières à emporter, which roughly translates to "School subjects to go" contains many, many videos covering all kinds of topics in English, Math and French for all grade levels, including how to write a story, using adjectives, the Pythagorean theorem, etc.



Télé-Québec en classe (telequebec.tv) (Canada)

- Télé-Québec, a tv station from

Québec, has created a very complete website for teachers, librarians and students, covering all ages and all subject matters, including animated picturebooks, physical training tips from a professional boxer, science demonstrations and more!

Tusome Books; My Story

By Valerie Chelangat



“Oh my goodness, P! That’s exactly what I should do.”

“What’s that?”

“A bookstore! An online bookstore to represent African and Asian authors.”

“Do it!” There was no doubt or hesitation in his voice. I’d said it just like that and my cousin P jumped on board without question. That is all I needed. To know that he, a big deal entrepreneur now millionaire who grew up in the same household as me, had no reservation about my sudden burst of genius. So, I did.

I launched Tusome [too-so-meh] Books exactly one year later. I did a lot of research and completed all the appropriate paperwork quietly until November 2019 when the virtual doors of our bookstore publicly opened.

I wish I could say that it had always been my dream to run a bookstore. It never once occurred to me to start a bookstore. From as far back as I can remember I wanted to write. As a little girl I made up poems and short stories. When I was in high school I started thinking about the possibility of becoming a journalist but



Let's read. Lisons. E je ki a kawe. Naqra. Zela totanga. Reka desome. Asibale.

somewhere between considering it and applying for university I found myself in business school instead. The reasoning at the time was that I would make more money with a business degree than as a journalist. It wasn’t the worst decision as I also wanted to be a business owner at some point. I, however, did not know how to take the theoretical knowledge and apply it to starting a business-or maybe it was fear. Either way I found a government job where I spent the next eight years of my life.

As Didion famously admitted, I too stayed too long at the fair. Oprah Winfrey explained it best when she said that she always knew it was time to move on whenever she felt that there was nothing new to learn in a specific job. I was anxious for the unknown future that lay before me but on January 3rd, 2020 I walked away from my fulltime job to focus on the bookstore and to return to school. I figured if I didn’t do it then, I never would. I could not bear the thought of not even trying. Now I am Master of Fine Arts Student and a small business owner. Hopefully someday I will also add ‘author’ to my title.

Tusome Books was born out of my desire to eliminate stereotypical thinking. Often times when people speak of Africa or Asia and their peoples, they seem to know only the negative aspects and

even then it’s a viewpoint that’s heavily influenced by the media-specifically those charity ads. I have nothing against non-profits catering to third world countries but there is a danger in telling any story through a single lens. Chimamanda Adichie Ngozi and Elif Shafak have both presented TEDTalks stressing the importance of representation in literature. Ngozi says there is a danger in telling a single story. Shafak argues that reading widely is a powerful way of eliminating our biases.

People are multidimensional and they have layers. Readers of all backgrounds benefit from seeing themselves in books. Readers also learn from reading about people and lifestyles that are unfamiliar to them. We become a more accepting and loving community by seeing ourselves and seeing others in literature.

After the bookstore opened I quickly realized that even within our country, Canada, there are many voices often left out in bookstores. In response to that realization, I expanded Tusome Books to include Canadian Indigenous voices, people living with disabilities and chronic illnesses, and the LGBTQ+ community. The goal of Tusome Books is to ensure that every person who comes through our virtual doors feels welcomed, loved, and seen.

Tusome Books caters to individual

buyers and organizations including educational institutions. Book purchases can be made directly through our website. Large organizational orders can also be emailed for ease of purchase. Here's the link to our shop: <https://www.tusomebooks.com/>

Tusome Books Foundation is our tutoring and writing centre. We assist learners of all ages at a sliding scale. The foundation is very close to my heart. I want to always remember that when I was growing there were people along the way who taught, inspired and mentored me. People who paved the way and gave all they could to secure my future. My single mother of three children sacrificed everything to pay for my overpriced education and my eventual immigration to Canada. My aunt helped raise me when my mother was out making ends meet for me and my two brothers. Teachers and other relatives all played a part in making me who I am today. They always gave! I want to do the same through the foundation. To provide a platform where learners-young or old-are welcome to come with whatever they can afford and be sure to receive patient, loving and supportive help from our volunteers. If you'd like to learn more about Tusome Books Foundation you can find us here: <https://www.tusomebooks.com/tusome-books-foundation>

This summer Tusome Books is running two virtual reading events for young readers. This is an exciting announcement as it is our way to encourage diverse reading in children. The more we read the more we realize we are not as different as we imagined. It is extremely important to encourage this mindset in children from an early age-before the world makes them jaded like the rest of us, ha! The first reading workshop will be run by Samantha



Leach, an English Teacher from Park Street Education in Ontario. Young readers will explore 'Adrift at Sea: A Vietnamese Boy's Story of Survival' by Marsha Forchuk Skrypuch with Tuan



Ho.

Our second kids' event will be a storytelling session with Elder Robinson Kathleen Fingarsen of Winnipeg. She

will be sharing some of the legends from her book, 'Legends of Weesakayjak'. To register for these sessions, visit our events page: <https://www.tusomebooks.com/>

Join Our Read Along: Across the Globe in 6 Months



How to Join: Join Tusome Books Facebook page and sign up to Across the Globe in 6 Months group.

events-1

For the non-kids, we currently have an ongoing read along. We're travelling vicariously through at least six cultures. We began this inspiring journey in February reading a different book every month. This month we are reading 'Hiding in Plain Sight' by Nuruddin Farah, a story that takes place between Rome, Kenya and Somalia, about family obligations and living in the shadow of loss and grief. To join the read along like us on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/tusomebooks.ca>) then join the group 'Across the Globe in 6 Months'.

For more information about Tusome books, please Contact Valerie Chelangat at

Phone: 204-306-2822

Website:

<https://www.tusomebooks.com/>

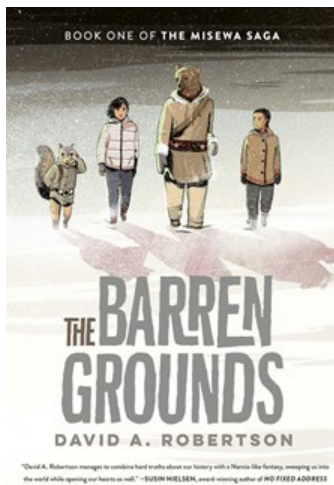
Indigenous

Global Read Aloud 2021 List Features Two Titles by Indigenous Authors

By Sharron Arksey

Novels by two indigenous writers, one of them from Manitoba, have been selected for Global Read Aloud 2021.

Writer and public speaker David A Robertson's novel *The Barren Grounds* has been chosen in the middle school category (Gr. 6-8). *Elatsoe*, the debut novel by Darcie Little Badger has been chosen in the Young Adult category.



Already well known to Manitoba readers, Robertson is a member of Norway House Cree Nation. His works have garnered such awards as the 2021 Writer's Union of Canada Freedom to Read Award, the 2017 Governor General's literary award and the McNally Robinson Best Book for Young People award here in Manitoba. He has more than 25 books to his credit spanning several genres and age levels.

The Barren Grounds is the first book

in The Misewa Saga series and tells the story of two indigenous foster children. Incorporating fantasy in a way that is reminiscent of Narnia, the book depicts with Robertson's signature wit and easy readability the loss of culture and family that results when children are fostered at a young age.



Darcie Little Badger is a Lipan Apache writer and oceanographer. Her writing is a mix of fantasy, science fiction and horror developed with Lipan Apache characters and themes and incorporating an affirmation of LGBTQ+ community members.

Elatsoe was featured in Time Magazine as one of the best 100 fantasy novels of all time and is a Nebula, Ignyte, Locus and Lodestar finalist. A second fantasy novel, *A Snake Falls to Earth*, is scheduled for fall 2021 release.

Set in modern-day Texas, Ellie and

the ghost of her pet dog Kirby join forces with Ellie's classmate and friend Jay to solve a murder. Along the way, they confront an enclave of vampires plaguing a nearby town.

Global Read Aloud selects books based on broad world experience and global themes. The program is now in its 12th year.

Read alouds will begin on October 4 and run until November 12 and include books at various age or grade levels. The experience provides a great opportunity to connect with classrooms all over the year. This year's list also includes

- a picture book study by Mesoamerican author Duncan Tonatiuh
- early reader choice *Dragons in a Bag* a fantasy novel featuring BIPOC characters by Canadian author Zetta Elliott (a 2020 MYRCA Sundogs nominee)
- middle grade selection *The Jumbies* a spooky fantasy based on Caribbean mythology written by Tracey Baptiste

For more information about the program and how to participate, go to <https://theglobalreadaloud.com/2021> or join any of the Facebook communities at the age level of your choice.

Reflections Inspired by Mr. David Alexander Robertson's School Visit

By Muskan Bhandari, Grade 8 student, St. John's-Ravenscourt School

As an avid reader, I love learning about different perspectives and experiences through books. I haven't read many BIPOC books - especially by Indigenous authors. So, it was wonderful to have an Indigenous author visit us virtually.

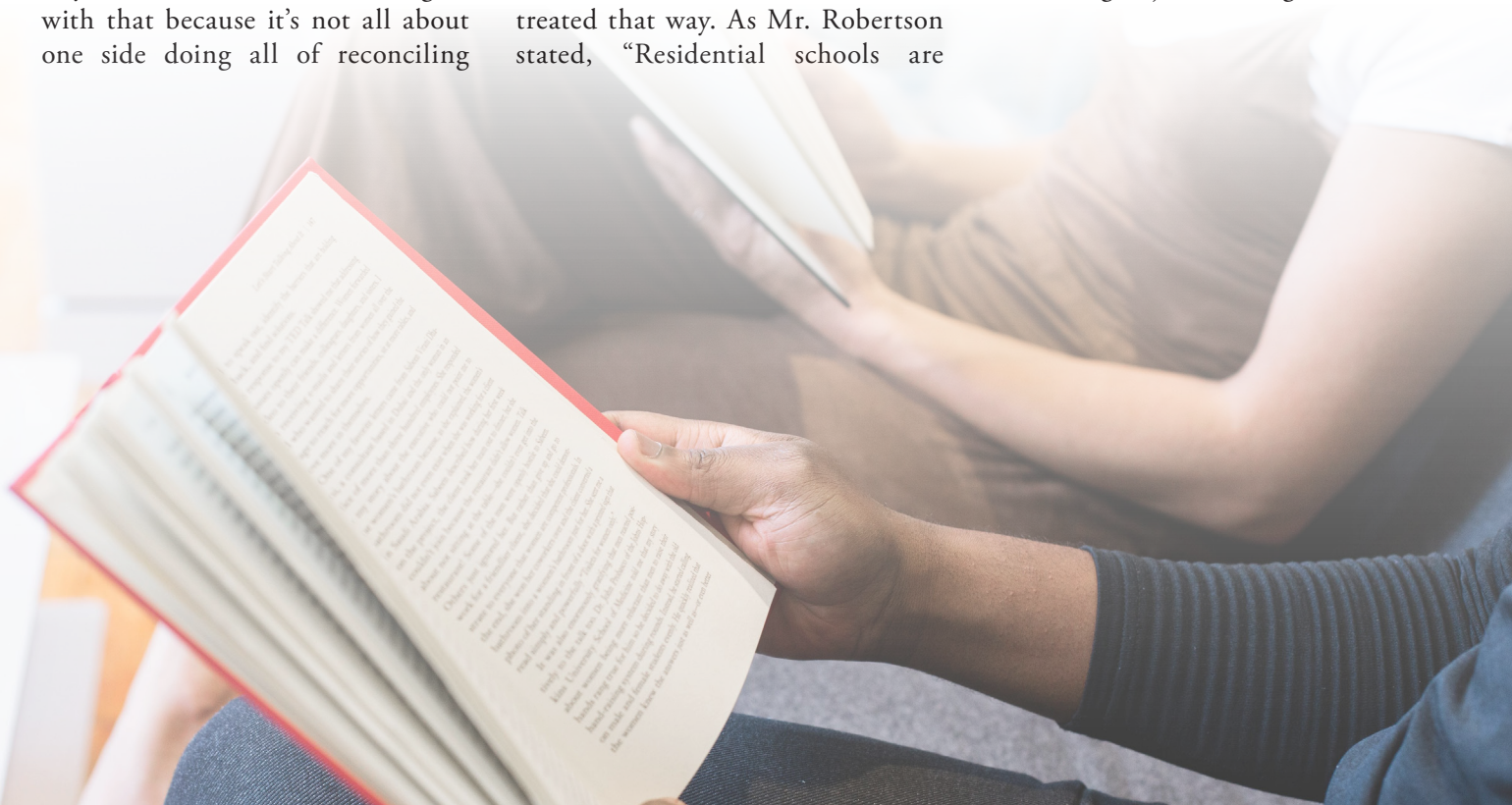
Mr. David A. Robertson visited our class in March, through Teams to talk to us about his writing career, some books, his culture, and some social issues. Having read and done a novel study on the book, *Indian Horse*, I was able to understand and partially relate to some things he had talked about. Now, I'm not Indigenous, but my family and culture have faced some discrimination in the past. Mr. Robertson talked about how you need to learn to forgive and how reconciliation is not a one-way conversation. I 100% agree with that because it's not all about one side doing all of reconciling

or one side staying silent about the wrongdoings; both sides need to come together, work together, and hear what each have to say to each other, as Mr. Robertson said. Our experiences in the past have shaped us into the people we are today. Forgiving may also not occur and the same goes for reconciliation.

Throughout your years in school, I'm sure questions similar to the following have come to your mind in Social Studies or history class at some point. Why do we need to learn history? What's the point? The answers to these questions can become simple when we think about residential schools and why we learn about them. We learn about residential schools because it is part of our history. What happened in the past was wrong: we, humans, are all the same and no one deserves to be treated that way. As Mr. Robertson stated, "Residential schools are

not just Indigenous history; it's Canadian history too."

Mr. Robertson also brought up something very important, which just needs to be talked about. He said that his culture is not anyone's Halloween costume. This needs to be emphasized because these "costumes" feed stereotypes about the Indigenous peoples, which are rude and not correct representations. When we say nothing about these racist, disrespectful, and incorrect representations of the Indigenous peoples' clothing as a "costume", we allow for a seed to be planted, which can grow into a belief that is not entirely true or correct! Eventually, this belief becomes an expectation. We need to be mindful about what other people say and do, remembering to speak up when something unjust is being done.



Cataloguing Corner

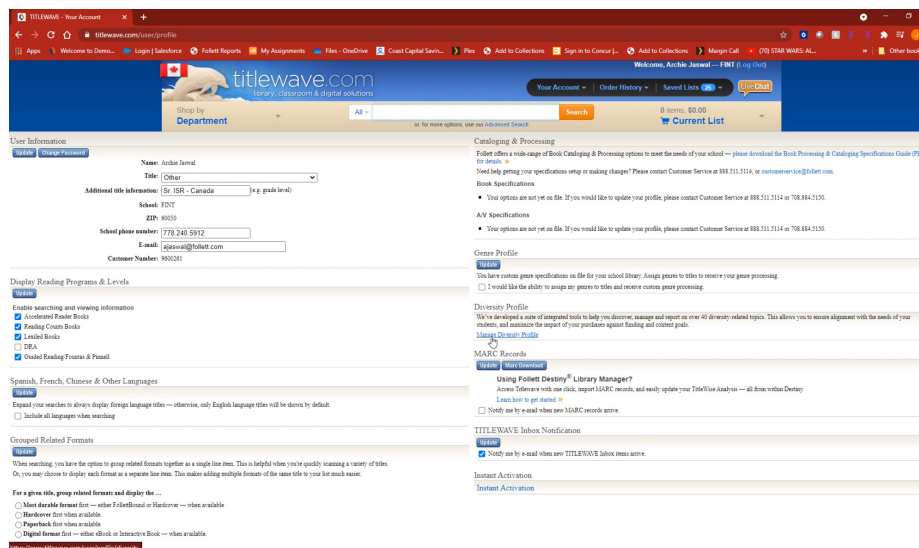
Follett's Diversity and Social and Emotional Learning Report

Follett is aware that school libraries are looking at their collections with a diversity focus and are trying to help. They know that completing a diversity audit is a time-consuming task, but they also know that they have several tools already available to help library professionals with their purchasing decisions. So, they have taken their existing collection development tools and have started developing a suite of tools to provide a critical diversity lens with which to view the collection. A new tool available to customers of Follett is called the Diversity and Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) report.

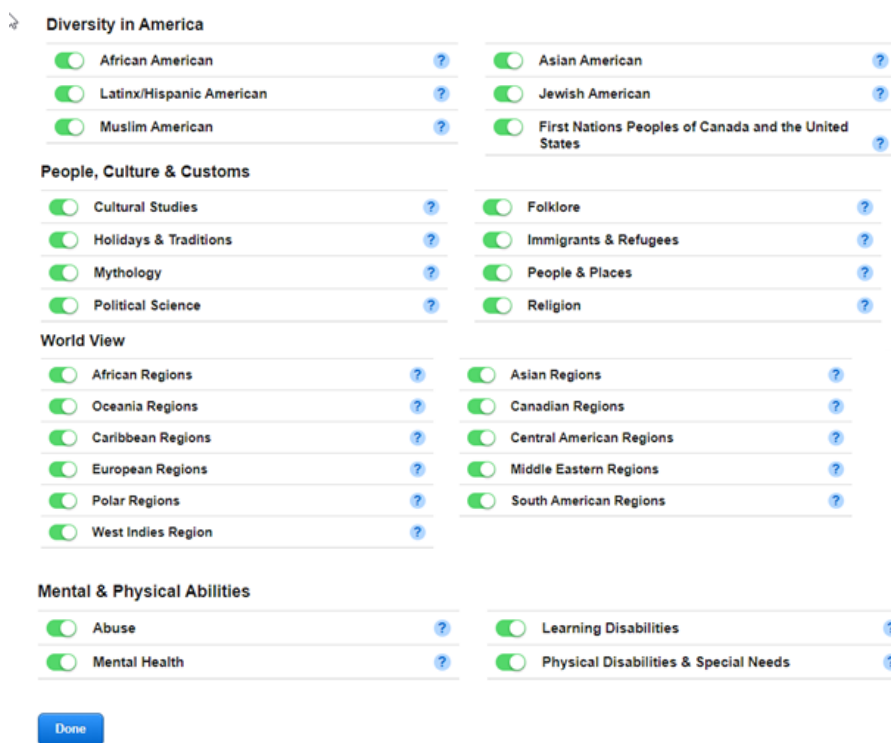
Customers of Follett are likely already aware that one can use Titlewave to purchase books. You can also use their service, called TitleWise, to analyze your collection. Now, you can request Follett turn on a feature in Titlewave that will assess the diversity of your collection. This report uses information collected through subject headings and publisher feeds. This can be a useful tool in your collection development toolkit to help you critically review collections based on ethnic, cultural, and other criteria you feel important for their collection.

If you are interested, ask Follett representative, Archie Jaswal (ajaswal@follett.com), to turn on this tool under your Diversity Profile in Titlewave. Once this step is complete you will see your Diversity/SEL report as part of your TitleWise analysis.

Step 1. Ask for the Diversity profile to be turned on.


 The screenshot shows the Titlewave user profile page. The 'Diversity Profile' section is highlighted, showing options to 'Turn On' or 'Turn Off' the feature. Below this, there are several sections with checkboxes: 'Display Reading Programs & Levels', 'Enable searching and viewing information' (with sub-options for Accented/Pinyin, Reading/Chinese, and English/Books), 'Spanish, French, Chinese & Other Languages', 'Grouped Related Formats', and 'Using Follett Destiny® Library Manager?'. The 'Turn On' button is visible at the bottom of the Diversity Profile section.

Step 2. Choose what criteria you want reported (Only a couple of the options are shown). You now can choose themes/topics to be reported with a series of radial buttons.


 The screenshot shows the 'Diversity in America' configuration page. It features several sections with radial buttons for selection:

- Diversity in America:** African American, Latinx/Hispanic American, Muslim American, Asian American, Jewish American, First Nations Peoples of Canada and the United States.
- People, Culture & Customs:** Cultural Studies, Holidays & Traditions, Mythology, Political Science, Folklore, Immigrants & Refugees, People & Places, Religion.
- World View:** African Regions, Oceania Regions, Caribbean Regions, European Regions, Polar Regions, West Indies Region, Asian Regions, Canadian Regions, Central American Regions, Middle Eastern Regions, South American Regions.
- Mental & Physical Abilities:** Abuse, Mental Health, Learning Disabilities, Physical Disabilities & Special Needs.

 A blue 'Done' button is located at the bottom left of the configuration area.

Step 3. View your results in the TitleWise report under the section entitled “Diversity, Equity & Inclusion.”

***Please note, this is a feature for libraries who consistently purchase resources through Follett and use Destiny. Call Archie for more details. If you are with another provider, give them a call. They may have similar tools to help you with your collection analysis activities.*

Ensuring Diversity in the Collection – and the Catalogue

By Jonine Bergen

It is time to do a diversity audit, I naively thought last summer. I spent the last two years learning and weeding Bonnycastle's collection and now I want to assess the collection to determine what areas need a more detailed focus. This is my story of falling down the rabbit hole.

The Why – the power of the story

It is important to review one's collection through different lenses on a regular basis to ensure that the collection is meeting the needs of its community. Over the past few years there has been a societal focus on systemic racism, social inequities, and a subsequent call for diversity. The pandemic has further highlighted the need for enhanced focus on these areas. This has been a focus of my personal learning this year.

In February I listened to a TED talk by Nigerian author, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie entitled "The danger of the single story," in which she talks about the problem of the "single story" in literature. She described a vignette she experienced while attending an American university. Her roommate was surprised she knew how to use the stove. That person immediately assumed that she came from poverty because of the single story of Africa told in Western literature. Adichie says, "What struck me was this: she had felt sorry for me even before she had saw me. Her default position toward me, as an African, was a patronizing, well-meaning pity" (Ted Global, 2009). Adichie also emphasized that her experiences as a Nigerian woman were

not representative of all of people of Africa.

Adichie's talk resonated with me in my personal journey with the concepts of colonialism and white privilege. I have been reflecting lately about how my world view has been shaped by single stories. As a white woman who has grown up with privilege, I need to be aware of my personal preference and biases so that I can actively and intentionally purchase for my community members based on the selection policy of my school.

In the State of Libraries Report (2021), the section entitled "Confronting structural inequities impacting communities of color" emphasizes the lack of diversity that may exist within our library collections as well as the fact that people of colour are under-represented in the library field. I am cognizant that, as library professionals, we must strive to ensure our libraries allow our communities mirrors, windows, and sliding doors (Bishop, 1990, p. ix). This was an important part of my thinking when I started my audit. I don't believe it is good enough to identify that the collection is diverse. I want to make sure that the collection allows my students to experience different world views – and to find themselves within the pages of our books.

First steps – look at your displays and collections

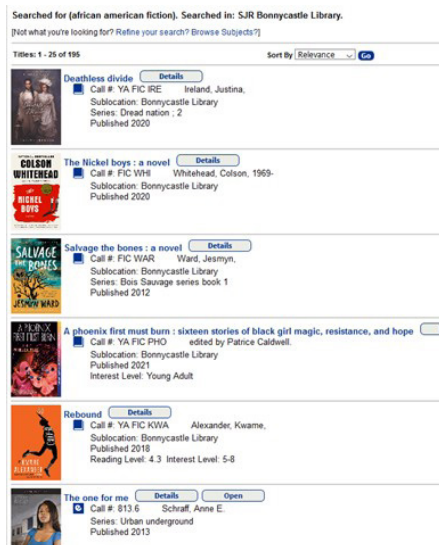
I was fortunate that my library continued to function in the fall, although the physical library was

closed. Students could still take out books by putting holds through the library catalogue. So, like most libraries, I started creating collections to encourage students to look at books that they may not find on their own. I made sure that each collection, regardless of the topic, included books populated by characters of diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds as well as people with various sexual orientations and gender identities. I was gratified to discover that, with a bit of effort, this wasn't a stretch.

We had materials representing marginalized and underrepresented groups for every collection/display I created. I was also conscious of trying to ensure that the books represented various world views and life experiences. Using this lens, I realized that I may have unintentionally been perpetuating some single stories in the previous displays. For example, when I started developing a collection for Black History month, I was surprised that many of the titles pulled through my search featured black characters struggling with poverty in urban America or in the American South. Did my collection represent stories set in Nigeria, Algeria, or even Canada? Did I have books in the library that tell stories of black characters from different socio-economic backgrounds and experiences? The answer is yes, but the subject headings used in the catalogue meant these nuanced experiences were being missed. To ensure my catalogue truly represents diversity, I will have to update subject

headings. This will be my next step after the audit is complete.

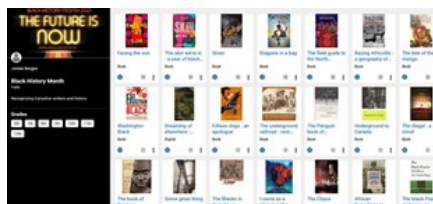
I decided to take the opportunity



to celebrate Canadian Black history and focus the collection on Black Canadian authors. We need to be reminded at times of the purpose of subject headings as well as their inherent bias in the Dewey Decimal System. Subject headings are intended to identify the main subjects of the book, which has not, in the past, included the ethnicity of the author. The only way to include the ethnicity of the author in the catalogue is through a local note or perhaps, using a local subject heading.

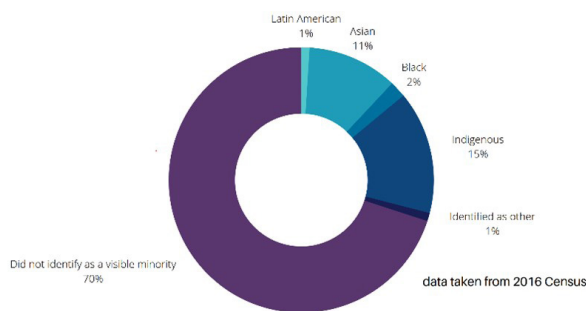
As a result, the subject heading of “African American” will, of course, return US-centric materials, which should be considered in a school library in Canada. To search for novels set in Canada or written by a Black Canadian author one has to get creative. Of course, many Canadian authors choose not to set their books in Canada, which is understandable due to our population base. As often is the case, I had to complete some research on Black Canadian authors outside the

catalogue to create the collection.



This example reminds us cataloguing practice evolves over time to meet the needs of library users. We need to stay current with changing practice so our catalogues can support students searching for their personal mirrors and windows. This is not easy, but it can provide wonderful dividends. I have had two experiences this year where students have expressed excitement and delight because they saw their culture represented in a book. This also showed the importance of developing collections and resources lists. At this time, there is no easy way to run a report based on cultural or ethnic diversity of authors or protagonists.

Visible Minorities in Manitoba



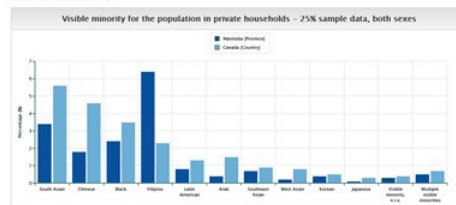
Data used from: Statistics Canada (2017). Manitoba Census Profile. 2016 Census.

The Research

According to the 2016 Canadian Census, the Manitoba population is 1,278,365; 227,465 defined themselves as immigrants with 216,850 identifying

as a visible minority. Further, 223,310 respondents identified as Indigenous. It should be noted that each category includes several different ethnic and linguistic groups which we feel are important to track in our diversity audit. Based on these simple numbers, at least 30% of our collections should include BIPOC content. This does not consider other demographic markers such as gender, neurodiversity, or sexual orientation. It also does not take into consideration the specific demographics of our individual school.

Visible minority



Note: n.i.e. = Not included elsewhere

Statistics Canada (2020)

The process

I started the process by reviewing the literature so I could base my decisions on the best practices identified in the field (Jensen, 2018; Bogan, 2020). I decided to focus on the Young Adult section (2700 books for grades 6-8) this year. Using the recommendations Jensen (2018) suggested in her article, “Diversity Auditing 101: How to Evaluate Your Collection” as my guide. I ran a report of the shelving list and exported it to an Excel document. I then identified the general areas of focus for the audit. Asian, Black, Hispanic, Indigenous, White, Non-human, Person with a disability, LGBTQ+. In the fields, if the ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation of the main characters was identified, I included it. For example, under the Asian column, I listed the ethnicity of the protagonist, if it was

identified: Chinese, Filipino, Korean, and so forth.

According to Karen Jensen (2018), “one of the goals [of the audit] is to help those involved in collection development determine their own internal bias and pinpoint areas they may need to be more consciously aware of when selecting materials.” As I visited classrooms, I talked to the students about the audit and why we were working through the process. I invited them to look at our library collection with their personal lenses and encouraged them to communicate gaps they found. Inviting my community to help with the process empowered them to talk about their experiences and I received excellent book lists that will ensure various cultures are better represented.

Our audit will not be finished until the end of June, so I am unable to share the results. Based on current numbers, it is clear that although I can say our collection is diverse, we have work to do. We need to focus on diversifying the countries represented in the Asian category. We need to continue to focus on developing our Indigenous collection. The results of the audit will help to inform us of areas in our collection which need additional scrutiny. Even without the actual audit, however, I feel the process has been worthwhile.

Last thoughts

I have really appreciated the feedback that I have received over the year as I have worked through this process. Students especially have engaged by providing suggestions and encouragement. They want to be involved and represented!

It is clear to me that every step in this process mattered. You may not be able to do a full audit or are not comfortable with making drastic changes to your catalogue. That’s okay! Here are some smaller things that you can do:

- Create collections and displays that feature underrepresented groups
- Ensure you are including diverse groups in ALL your displays/collections and promotional materials
- Invite your community members to provide purchasing suggestions
- Don’t simply focus on a cultural group during a special month
- Complete diversity audits of your purchasing lists
- Review international award lists
- Talk to your peers across school divisions. Although our collections are unique, there is definitely a lot of overlap. Let’s share the work!

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Leading Learning

The Importance of School Libraries

By Brandi Bartok

We all know that well supported school library learning commons are a key contributor to student success and well-being. On May 8th, Christy Lao, Sy-ying Lee, Jeff McQuillan and Stephen Krashen released research that names school libraries as a significant and positive contributing factor to student literacy development. In fact, the positive impacts of school libraries are found to be so significant that they neutralize some of the negative impacts that poverty has on student literacy development (Lao, Lee, McQuillan, & Krashen, 2021, p. 4). This is a powerful statement and although the research is American based, it can be generalized to a Canadian context as well. Where socioeconomic conditions hold students back, Canadian school libraries work as a mechanism of equalization, providing access to books, resources and experiences that some students cannot access in other ways.

Teacher-Librarians are essential in ensuring successful student literacy outcomes, they directly support student understanding of all curricular areas through direct teaching and that they have a positive impact on student academic achievement (Lance & Kachel, 2018). In an ideal scenario, Teacher-Librarians teach from vibrant library learning commons classrooms, their lessons guiding students to a love of reading, innovative thinking, collaboration, active learning,

appropriate technology use and creative and complex problem solving. These skills are explicitly named by the World Economic Forum in The Future of Jobs Report as being among the top 10 employability skills for 2025 (2020, p. 36). It is not just early years students who benefit from well supported school libraries; high school and middle school students benefit from learning with qualified Teacher-Librarians at a critical time in their lives when they are exploring future possibilities and building skills to enter the workforce.



Additionally, Teacher Librarians work to support classroom teachers, educational assistants and school administrators in making informed decisions about educational resources, educational technology, inquiry-based teaching practices (Oberg, 2012) and as demonstrated during a year of pandemic response teaching, remote teaching/learning pedagogy. They know how to connect all the educational dots between different subject areas, drawing together the

best combination of everything the school system has to offer in direct service of students. They ensure that resources are diverse, supportive of school/divisional goals, high quality, linked to curricula, maintained and perhaps most importantly, that they are expertly curated for individual student learning needs.

In the spring 2019 volume of the MSLA Journal, a very thorough position on the importance of school libraries was written for the Manitoba Education Review Process (pg. 19). This position was submitted to the Education Review Commission but it appears to have made no impact. To date there is no provincial standard in Manitoba for the allocation of resources or staffing for school libraries. There appears to be no government plan to create a more equitable system in the near future even as a major restructuring of the provincial education system has been proposed through the recently released, Better Education Starts Today (BEST) report and Bill 64.

The BEST report and the resulting Bill 64 may become additional barriers to equitable access to school library learning commons in Manitoba for two main reasons. Firstly, where strong school library learning commons programs exist, it is because local communities and elected school board members are supportive of the

work Teacher-Librarians, Library Technicians and other library staff do. It is through direct connection to our elected boards that we are able to highlight how important school library learning commons are for student success and strengthen support for them. Our pleas for equity across the province have gone unanswered by provincial governments (past and present). It is doubtful the proposed changes that call for the elimination of democratically elected school boards and the centralization of power over the education system will improve our ability to have the government's ear on issues of equitable access. Secondly, The BEST report does not explicitly name school libraries or Teacher-Librarians at all, despite mentioning the term "literacy" ten times. This omission leaves the door open for dollars that were previously spent on school library resources to be spent on prepackaged literacy kits in an effort to provide some sort of metric to measure literacy progress, despite the fact that research suggests investment in school libraries could be more effective, supportive of diversity and reflective of student needs and interests.

On a related note, the report also lists ten imperatives for action and those of us working in school library learning commons across this province will quickly recognize and be able to articulate that Teacher-Librarians, Library Technicians and school library learning commons work toward most of those imperatives on a daily basis:

1. Strengthen Educator Capacity
2. Increase School Leadership Effectiveness
3. Improve Student Engagement & Well being
4. Close the Achievement Gap for Indigenous and Non-Indigenous
5. Commit to Equitable Outcomes

for All

6. Ensure Quality in Rural, Northern and Remote
7. Strengthen the Delivery of French Language Education
8. Expand Community Education & Strengthen Public Engagement
9. Improve Foundational Skills
10. Enhance Effectiveness of Governance & Funding (Manitoba Education, 2021, p. 6)

When will provincial policy makers finally recognize the importance of school library learning commons and move forward on equitable student access to something so vitally important to student success and wellbeing? The implications of omitting equitable access may not have been considered but given that increasing amounts of research point to the positive impact that robust school libraries have on literacy, academic development and student wellness, there is a clear place for school libraries and Teacher-Librarians in the educational ecosystem. We can and should advocate that we need to be a key part of any structure moving forward.

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Demise of School Libraries: Consequences and Options

By Brandi Bartok

On May 12, I had the pleasure of participating in a virtual panel discussion about the current state of school libraries and the possible costs and consequences of the erosion of school library programming. The event

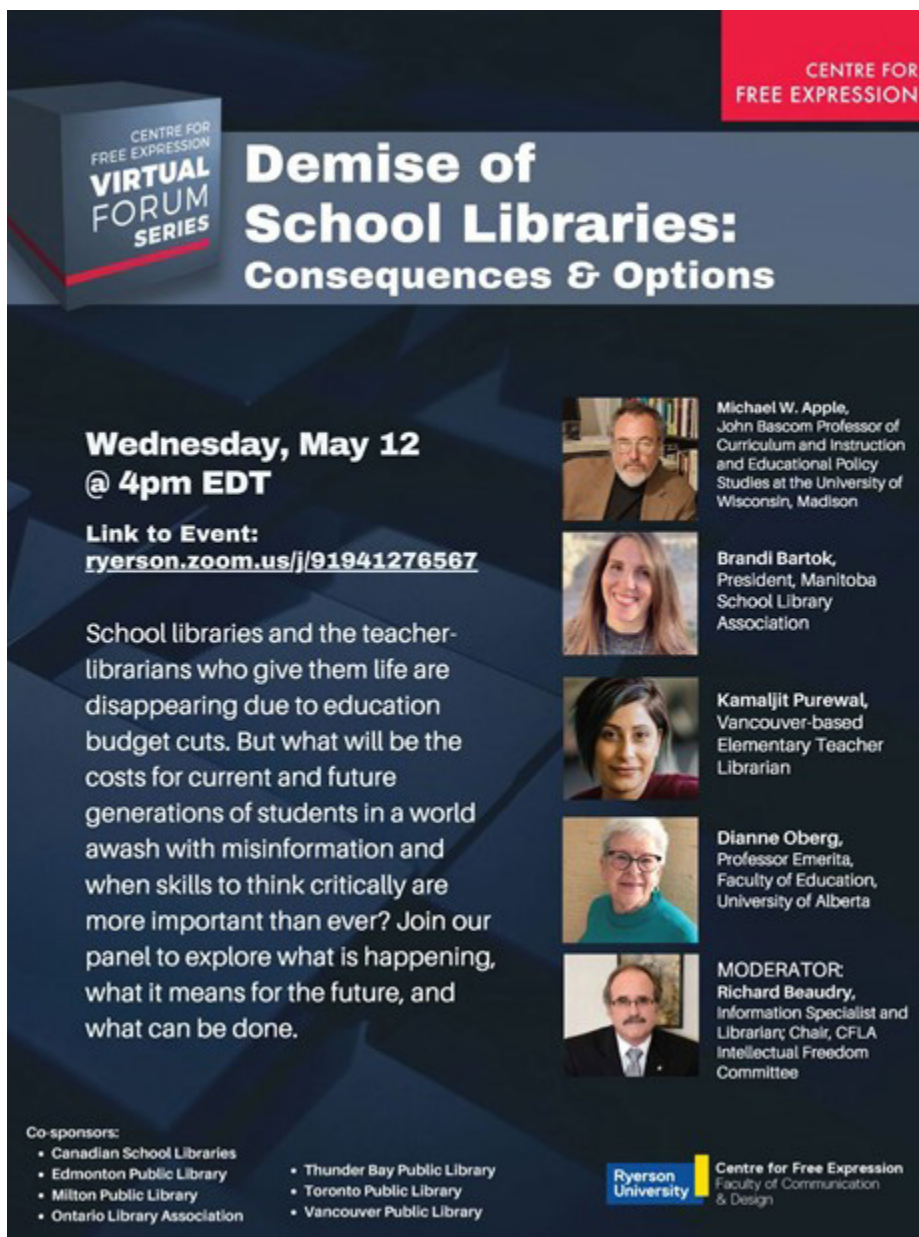
was moderated by Richard Beaudry (Information Specialist and Librarian; Chair, CFLA Intellectual Freedom Committee) and featured Michael W. Apple (John Bascom Professor of Curriculum and Instruction and

Educational Policy Studies at the University of Wisconsin), Kamaljit Prewal (Vancouver-based Elementary Teacher Librarian), Dianne Oberg (Professor, Department of Elementary Education, University of Alberta) and myself, Brandi Bartok (President of the Manitoba Library Association). This panel represented a very good cross section of knowledgeable experts, both from academia and from the frontlines of the school system.

The original topic focused on the disappearance of school libraries and Teacher-Librarians, but the discussion was wide ranging, covering everything from the general global political climate as a cause for decreasing support of institutions that encourage critical thought to the current state of school library programming in British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario and Manitoba. There were several very interesting questions from the audience which sparked further connections and reflections.

For those of you interested in learning about the state of school libraries across the country, I highly recommend listening to the recorded video podcast of the panel discussion: <https://cfe.ryerson.ca/key-resources/podcasts/demise-school-libraries-consequences-options>

There is also a page of additional readings that were recommended by the panel: <https://cfe.ryerson.ca/additional-readings-demise-school-libraries-consequences-options>



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Link to Event:
ryerson.zoom.us/j/91941276567

School libraries and the teacher-librarians who give them life are disappearing due to education budget cuts. But what will be the costs for current and future generations of students in a world awash with misinformation and when skills to think critically are more important than ever? Join our panel to explore what is happening, what it means for the future, and what can be done.

Michael W. Apple,
John Bascom Professor of Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Policy Studies at the University of Wisconsin, Madison

Brandi Bartok,
President, Manitoba School Library Association

Kamaljit Prewal,
Vancouver-based Elementary Teacher Librarian

Dianne Oberg,
Professor Emerita, Faculty of Education, University of Alberta

MODERATOR:
Richard Beaudry,
Information Specialist and Librarian; Chair, CFLA Intellectual Freedom Committee

Co-sponsors:

- Canadian School Libraries
- Edmonton Public Library
- Milton Public Library
- Ontario Library Association
- Thunder Bay Public Library
- Toronto Public Library
- Vancouver Public Library

Ryerson University **Centre for Free Expression**
Faculty of Communication & Design

Together Apart; Building Community Through Online Games

By Morgan Arksey

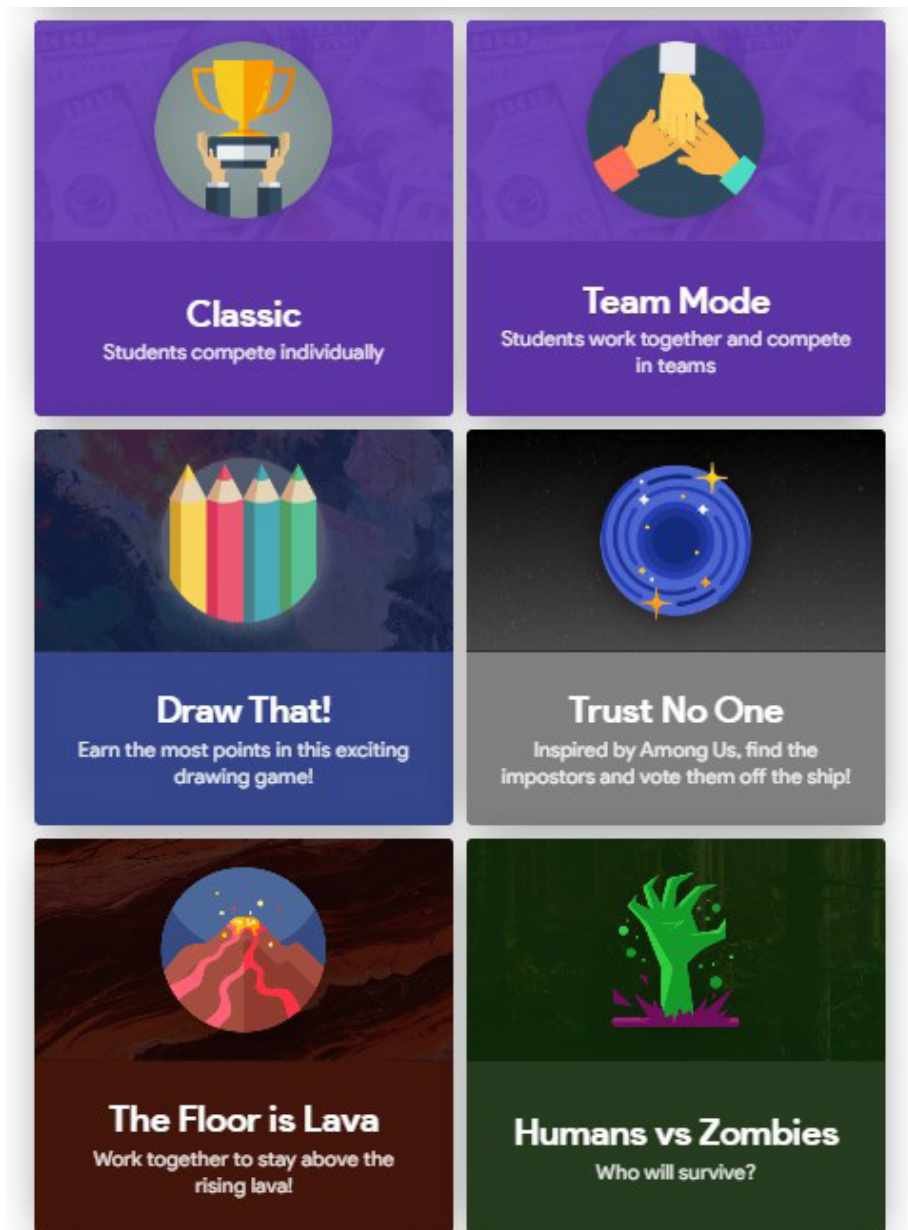
The average year of middle school is full of all kinds of activities; concerts, dances, house team challenges, sports teams, gym blasts, book clubs, and a wide range of other extracurriculars. But what can you do when you can't be in the same room?

Here at Arthur A. Leach School, a grade 5-9 middle school in Winnipeg, we missed getting together a lot. Fortunately, online educational games have come to the rescue. We've used Kahoot, Gimkit and Blooket to bring together students who have been learning in a blended home-school environment, and more recently, completely from home, in real time cooperative competitions. This was really spearheaded when our grade 7-9 students moved to an alternate day model. It became clear that we still needed opportunities for these different groups to interact in educational and recreational manners.

Through the library, we were able to schedule Teams meetings and share links to them with staff and students through our online learning system. Topics were sometimes voted on by students in our online library group, or sometimes chosen by staff. Games were created on platforms like Kahoot, Gimkit, or Blooket. Then during the assigned period, students and

time, students who placed on the podium were invited to send me screenshots of their placement. Winning students were invited to screenshot their podium finishes, and top three finishers

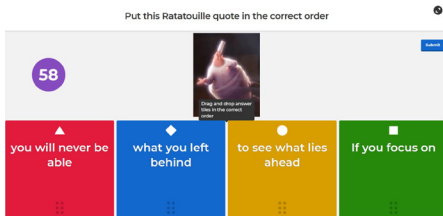
staff would join the Teams meeting, and where I would screenshare the join code. Once time was given to get everyone logged in, the game would begin. At the end of the game



win a small prize for their class; because when one of us succeeds we all do. FYI - Bulk Barn is an excellent source of a gelatin free chewy candy that doesn't break the bank.

Most of our games have been just within school, but we've even done a few series' against surrounding middle schools. I've found that making sure to choose from a wide range of topics and using a number of different game sites gives a wide range of students a chance to shine. Sometimes I write questions in other languages spoken by students in the school. Topics so far this year have included basic math facts, flags, world cultures, Disney movies, video games, spelling, confused words, name that animal, and pop music. While I create the quizzes, I rely a lot on the question banks and existing ones available on the platforms to get started.

There are similarities between the three game systems. All have name-generator options, which is integral for larger and more open games. All allow you to pull pre-made questions and duplicate other quizzes to adapt for your needs. There are also some significant differences:



Kahoot

We started out using mostly Kahoot! a game-based learning

platform that has been on the around for quite a while. A free account will give you access to games with up to 100 players and basic quiz type questions. Subscription options are available to accommodate up to 2000 players and with quiz, written answer and puzzle questions.

Gimkit

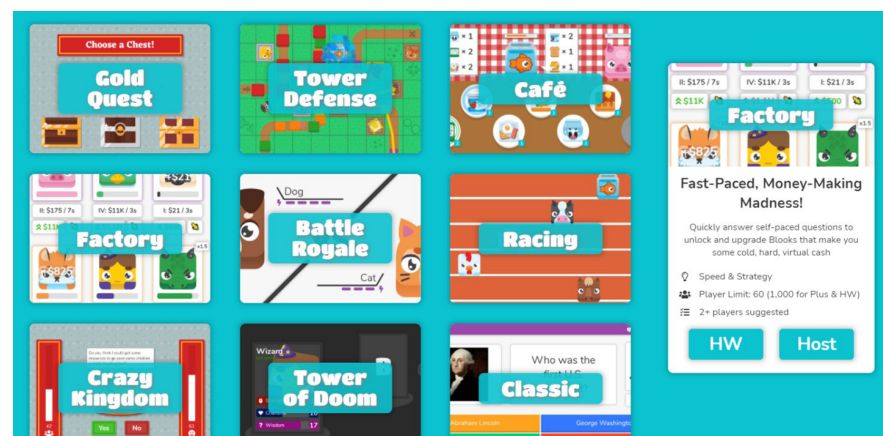
Gimkit was created by a student who thought that they could make Kahoot more engaging. It pulls on the same quiz style questions, but makes answering these questions part of a larger game. Mode options include Humans vs Zombies, Trust No One an Among Us inspired game, Draw That! and The Floor is Lava, among others. To play at a school wide level, a \$60 subscription is required.

Blooket

Our current favourite is Blooket, which is a multiple-choice quiz game in has students answer questions to earn points that they then use in a strategy game, like Tower Defense or Gold Quest. It

provides great opportunity to review vocabulary or questions over a pre-determined amount of time (I like playing two 10 minute games) A nice feature of Blooket is that the same student rarely wins continuously, and students have to strategize – answering content questions correctly to get point, but also thinking carefully about how to use points to their advantage. To be honest, I find it a bit overwhelming, but students love it! While Kahoot only gives you one chance to get the correct answer, Blooket is more useful as a tool to acquire and practice content. A free subscription allows you to play with up to 60 players, and while an approximately \$40 subscription allows you to create games for up to 1000 players.

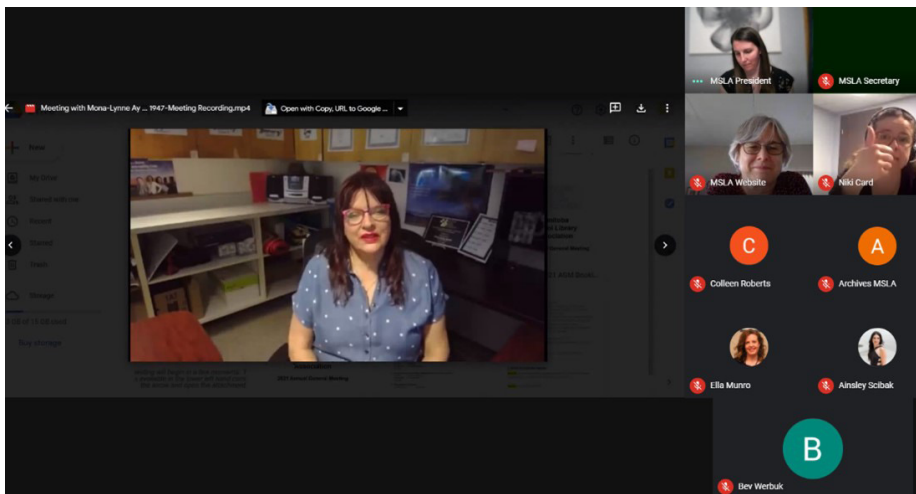
While it doesn't replace time spent together, digital online games through Teams have helped to provide bright spots to some darker days here at Arthur A Leach.



Excerpts of Awards Acceptance Speeches

Reflections of a Teacher-Librarian in the Trenches

By Mona-Lyann Ayotte, Teacher-Librarian of the Year, 2020



What created my desire to become a teacher-librarian started at a young age. Let us travel back in time and share these moments that shaped my future career along with my love of reading.

As a young spirited child, trying to get me to stay still was an ever-present challenge for my parents Bernard and Yvonne Ayotte. In our Letellier, Manitoba rural household, books, the Winnipeg Tribune newspaper and the brown leather-bound Britannica encyclopedia were mainstays of knowledge. It wasn't until I was five years old that I started to learn English. I remember my father reading to me from a very special hard-cover red and gold treasury of illustrated stories, poems and nursery rhymes. With a vivid imagination and a movie mind, I created delicate and intricate

scenarios. As for our Letellier rural school library, you won't believe this! Our library, which was the size of a narrow bathroom and painted sky blue, also doubled as the confessional when the priest would come to school to take our confessions. Now you are probably wondering, how does that happen? (Although we were a publicly funded school, we had close ties to the Roman Catholic church and so every day at 3:30 p.m. our United Church friends would go home and we would be further instructed in our religious practices.)

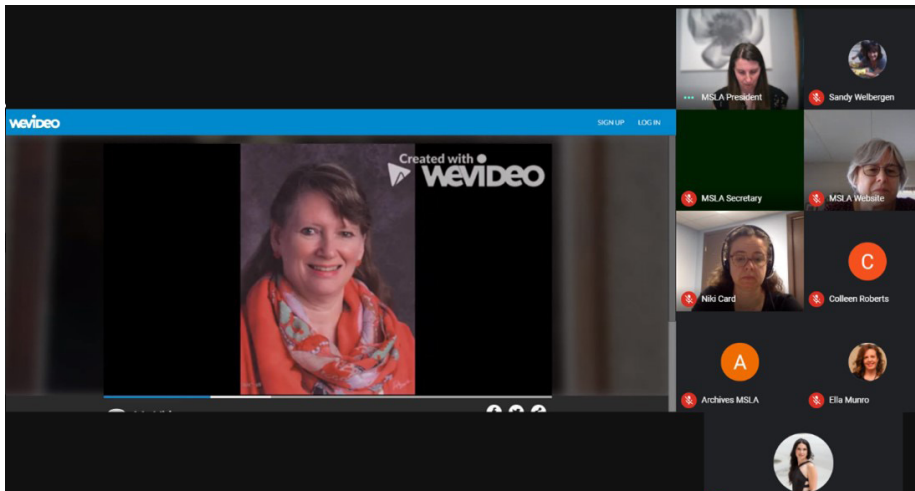
What does it mean to be a teacher-librarian to me? It is a perfect combination of being able to assist staff and students while working with knowledge and modern technology in multiple ways. I have a detective mind, zeroing in on information

that students, teachers, educational assistants need and find a challenge to locate. That is exciting to me! With the introduction of a Library Learning Commons, student-led inquiry and an ability to explore learning in makerspaces students, and Indigenous perspectives, LLCs are providing a more hands-on and personalized approach. Yet, in my heart, a library is a place that offers a safe haven for students. It is also a place to meet like-minded people, discover books and information. Encouraging students to read, to see them explore a world outside of their own, and to have them see in between the invisible lines, will always be for me, the joy of librarianship.

My fondest achievements have been with those students who are not your traditional library bookworms. They are the ones whom you come to love as they need your help academically, but it ends up really being about their humanity. Success for them is at times elusive, but with just a little bit of help, belief and confidence in their abilities success is achievable, making their success equally your success. To me that is what I hold in my heart in terms of how a Library Learning Commons invites everyone to the table. Thank you.

Reflections on standing on the shoulders of those who have gone before

By Joyce Riddell, Distinguished Service Award, 2020



I believe that I have been very fortunate to have such great people lead me along by example or make my way easier by their efforts. From the library technician who accepted me as her Monday morning volunteer to the principal who noted my pleasure at being in the library and later called me to fill in, “for a few weeks” for the library technician at her new school. From the Assiniboine South central technician, who signed me into Mandarin as a library technician that first day, to the teacher librarians I worked with who showed me what a great library program could offer students, to all of the teacher librarians and library technicians in Assiniboine South, and then Fort Garry, and then Pembina Trails who generously shared their knowledge with me and accepted me at PD events and social gatherings.

My colleagues lifted me up to become better at my job, and believed in me. That community felt like a second home.

I was thrilled when the University of Alberta began offering the Teacher Librarian program by distance learning. I had started the process of registering, when a job posting made the course work immediately applicable. I couldn’t believe my good fortune at being asked to become the teacher librarian for the junior school at SJR.

Bob Piper had built a relevant and essential program for his students. He had helped implement the automation, design the library space and build the collection that I would get to work with. Lucky me, indeed. And when one of my courses called for imagining an improvement to my library space or

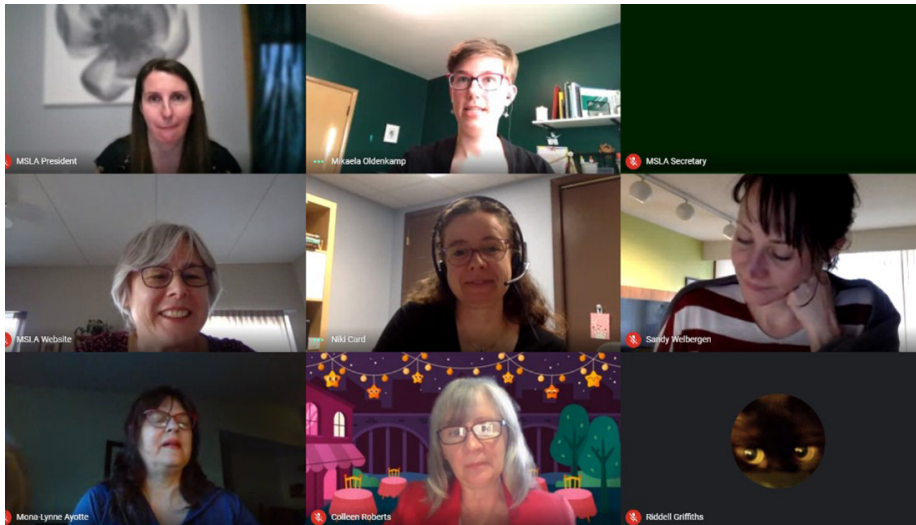
program, I grappled with what might need changing. After coming up with a redesign of the space that could help with traffic flow and teaching area, I shared the results with my principal (as part of my PD goals), and she shared it with the Head of the School, who said, “Let’s do it!” My job was made smoother because of the efforts of someone who had gone before me and was moved forward because of my co-workers.

When I attended the MSLA SAG (SAGE) Days and met people who were working on the MSLA board, I was in awe. These people were so well organized and did such important things. I loved going to the library related PD offerings and events. All of those well organized, brilliant, knowledgeable people became my people, welcomed me, and eventually talked me into working on the executive with them. Again, the people who went before me made my work so much easier. And the people who served with me lifted me up with their challenges and their ideas.

So thank you, all. This represents the success of what our community can build and do. I really hope we can continue to lift each other up, to challenge each other and to build the very important future of school libraries.

MSLA Award Speech

By 2021 Manitoba Outstanding Library Support Staff of the Year, Mikaela Oldenkamp



I have always been an avid library patron, but I got my start as a library employee at Brandon University when I worked as a student library assistant during my undergrad. I enjoyed my work there, so I next attended Red River College for my Library and Information Technology diploma. After a brief stint in River East Transcona School Division, I worked at the University of Manitoba Music Library for several years. In 2017 I began working in Pembina Trails; first at General Byng School and in 2019

at Ralph Maybank School.

This, of course, has been a difficult year for everyone and there have been challenges working at two schools during a pandemic. But I love being a library technician and love working in school libraries. I enjoy having as many opportunities for detailed & analytical work (Ainsley can tell you how excited I am when I ‘get’ to make a spreadsheet) as there are for creative endeavours like story telling. And of course, building relationships with the students is so special – I feel delighted when a

student sees me in the hallway and tells me they loved a book and put the next in the series on hold!

I would like to thank the MSLA for their work supporting and advocating for school libraries. Thank you for recognizing, with awards such as this one, the impact that library support staff can have in a school library learning commons. Thank you to Mr. Charles Gervais as the benefactor of this award in memory of Lois Gervais.

Finally, thank you to my nominators Colleen, Ainsley, Andrea, and Lauren. It is meaningful to me that you took the time in this challenging year to write such beautiful nomination letters and to be here this evening. It is a testament to the work of all four of you – Colleen and Andrea being supportive administrators, and Ainsley and Lauren being fantastic teacher-librarians. I’m so proud to work with you.

Acceptance Speech MSLA 2021 Distinguished Service Award

By Jo-Anne Gibson



I'd like to begin by thanking those MSLA Board members in the past who had the foresight to establish a school library awards program in Manitoba. Although I don't know the exact date the first awards were given out, I do know that the awards program established by the MSLA has allowed school libraries, school library staffs and those who support them, to be highlighted and acknowledged for many years. This, in itself, is something wonderful to celebrate!

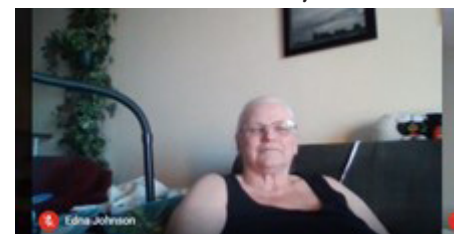
I want to thank Mona-Lynne Ayotte, teacher-librarian at Institut collégial Vincent Massey Collegiate, for nominating me for the 2021 MSLA Distinguished Service Award. I have nominated many school library staff members for various MSLA awards in the past so I know how much work this is and how difficult it is to do within such a short period of time. I would also like to thank the MSLA Board for

bestowing this honour upon me. Being nominated by one of my peers and chosen by my peers for this award means the world to me. As I retire at the end of this school year, I can tell you that I am more than grateful to be leaving on such a high note.

For those of you who don't know me, I got my start in school libraries by facing down a personal challenge. After twenty wonderful years of teaching band to junior high students (yes, really), I was told by an audiologist that unless I changed my chosen profession, I was going to lose my hearing sooner than later. Fortunately, my employer at the time, the Pembina Trails School Division, was sympathetic to my plight and therefore, gave me an entire week to job shadow any teacher I wanted (with their permission, of course). I am incredibly grateful that one of those teachers who I tagged along with all week was Nell

Ududec, former teacher-librarian of Bairdmore School, later Library Consultant for Pembina Trails School Division and one of the many distinguished recipients of the award I am receiving today. It was Nell who truly inspired me to take up the teacher-librarian profession and I haven't looked back since!

If it was Nell who got me started, it was the chance that Elaine Egan, then principal of Acadia Junior High School, took by hiring a band teacher as teacher-librarian, and the wisdom and encouragement I received from the library technician



at Acadia, Edna Johnson, who kept me growing and learning as a member of a library team. It was the support that I received from Edna and later Rosemarie Schwarz at Fort Richmond Collegiate who gave me the confidence to see beyond the needs of our own schools and offer my support, in whatever way I could, to other school libraries.

As fate would have it, it was literally the day after I finished by teacher-librarian studies at the University of Alberta, that I was asked by then president of the MSLA, Sherry Faller, if I would take on the presidency of the MSLA. At the time, I admit that I knew little

about this organization so thinking about becoming its president was quite overwhelming. However, with Edna and Nell to back me, I decided to take on the challenge. I can honestly say that I have never regretted taking on this position and the many others that followed.

The kind, knowledgeable people I have met and worked with in my service to school libraries in the Pembina Trails School Division, the Manitoba School Library Association and Canadian School Libraries has been amazing. I can truly say that becoming a teacher-librarian and now library learning commons consultant and

volunteering my time in these organizations has been a blessing. The wise old saying that you get back more than you give certainly holds true for me. It has been my honour to have been a part of such a long-standing special area group of the Manitoba Teachers Society, one that has made and continues to make, such a difference in the lives of students across Manitoba.

As I accept this award, I'd like to personally thank all those who are currently serving on the MSLA Board, those who have agreed to serve next year and those who have served in the past. You have been needed in the past and now, school libraries

need you more than ever. Without you, there would be no MSLA. Like those who are here this evening, I believe school libraries and the school library profession, whether teacher-librarian, library technician, consultant or coordinator - are all worth fighting for.

I wish the Manitoba School Library Association and everyone who works in and supports school libraries, all the best. I hope that this organization and school libraries thrive as long as there are schools and students within them.





January 28, 2020

The Honourable Cliff Cullen, M.L.A.
Minister of Education
Room 168 Legislative Building
450 Broadway
Winnipeg, MB R3C 0V8

Dear Minister Cullen:

In early March 2019, the Government of Manitoba stunned the education community by announcing the imminent closure of the Manitoba Curriculum Support Centre. Gone in an instant were resources teachers needed to educate the next generation of Manitoba citizens and resources students needed to learn in a complex world. Educators were assured by your government at the time that the physical resources once held in the Curriculum Resource Centre would be replaced by online resources for all teachers and students across the province.

Almost two years have passed since this closure. Compounding this is the global Covid-19 pandemic which has forced all students to learn at home and which continues to create an environment where some students are still learning from home either full time or part time. Although there has always been a need for province-wide online resources for the teachers and students of Manitoba, this need could not be any greater than today.

In a press release from the Manitoba Government: Province Begins the Distribution of Millions of Dollars for Safe School” on September 21, 2020, former Minister of Education Kelvin Goertzen is quoted as saying, “Manitoba will be working closely with divisions, schools and stakeholders to assess where additional financial contributions are needed and will invest in order to meet these needs to ensure learning continues, while maintaining a focus on health, wellness and student achievement.” We applaud the government for investing money to keep our children safe; now is also the time to invest in student achievement by providing province-wide access to eLearning resources including ebooks, audio books and databases. The creation of a Remote Learning Centre is not enough; the equitable distribution of resources is required province wide to ensure quality teaching and learning.

Students of Manitoba have grown up in a digital age and deserve to be taught with the best digital resources possible. We cannot teach student to spot “fake news” if we do not have something other than Google and YouTube to offer them; we cannot get students excited about reading if they don’t have access to books due to the Covid crisis; we cannot meet the individual needs of students if we do not have a variety of formats to choose from; and we cannot teach students how to think critically, research effectively and contribute to the knowledge of this province and the world if they do not have reliable sources of information to base their inquiry-based reasoning upon.

Investing in eLearning resources at the provincial level would save the Government of Manitoba money. It is far more expensive for school divisions and individual schools to purchase these learning materials on their own rather than having the government make a bulk purchase on behalf of the school divisions. We can look to our neighbours to the west in Saskatchewan who provide numerous digital resources for all students and teachers in their province in a cost-effective manner.

Advantages of eLearning resources include:

- Being accessible anytime, anywhere by anyone
- Being easily updated with the most current information
- Being curated and vetted by experts
- Offering a wide variety of viewpoints
- Being accessible to learners at a variety
- Translating the text into multiple languages at the click of a button
- Capturing the imagination of learners with their multiple and multi-modal types of texts
- Adapting text size and fonts to suit the needs of the learner
- Allowing access to ideas by including text-to-speech tools and read-aloud features

The Manitoba Library Association, an organization committed to literacy and student achievement since 1938, believes that it should not matter where a student attends school in Manitoba, every student should have the same access to elearning resources. We urge the Government of Manitoba to act now and provide quality, reliable eLearning materials to every student and teacher in Manitoba. Given our membership’s expertise in this area, the Manitoba School Library Association would be willing to offer their guidance as to which eLearning resources are most suitable for teachers and students in Manitoba. The time to act is now.

The Board of the MSLA looks forward to your favourable response.

Sincerely,



Brandi Bartok, President
Manitoba School Library Association



James Bedford, President
The Manitoba Teachers’ Society



Education

Student Achievement and Inclusion Division
307–1181 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R3G 0T3
T 204-945-0435 F 204-945-8303
www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12

February 26, 2021

Ms. Brandi Bartok
President
Manitoba School Library Association
msslapresident@gmail.com

Mr. James Bedford
President
Manitoba Teachers' Society
jbedford@mbteach.org

Dear Ms. Bartok and Mr. Bedford:

Thank you for your January 28, 2021 letter to the Honourable Cliff Cullen, Minister of Education regarding the closure of the Curriculum Support Centre and the continued availability of electronic resources for Manitoba educators. I am pleased to respond on behalf of the minister.

As you are aware, after a careful review, the decision was made to close the Curriculum Support Centre (CSC) on April 1, 2019. Following the distribution of all physical resources from the CSC to school divisions and other education partners across the province, Manitoba Education established the Online Resources for Manitoba Educators website.

This repository allows all Manitoba educators and home schooling parents continued access to a collection of carefully selected electronic resources including 131 video streaming titles, over 2000 downloadable electronic and audio books, several online journals as well as links to other vetted content including searchable research databases.

In addition to the Online Resources for Manitoba Educators, the Alternate Formats Collection, located at 1181 Portage Avenue, provides resources in multiple formats (braille, large print, e-text and audio) for Manitoba students who have a print disability. Physical materials are mailed free of charge to requesting schools while e-text and audio books are available for direct download to a computer or portable device. In cases where a title is not available in our collection or in other alternate format libraries across Canada, production of the resource may be considered.

A Provincial Resource Consultant continues to provide assistance to educators in locating requested resources in all formats and regularly reviews online material to ensure content remains relevant.

I encourage you to access more information about Manitoba Education's collection of electronic resources through our website at www.mbcsc.edu.gov.mb.ca. We would welcome an opportunity to meet and discuss how to further develop these resources and communicate to school divisions, school, and teachers about the availability of these resources.

If there are questions about how to access any of the online resources or the Alternate Formats Collection please contact Nancy Girardin, Consultant with the Inclusion Support Branch, by email at nancy.girardin@gov.mb.ca or by phone at 204-945-7722.

I appreciate your support and dedication to high quality education in Manitoba and look forward to our continued collaboration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christina Moody". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Christina Moody
Assistant Deputy Minister
Student Achievement and Inclusion Division

- c. Honourable Cliff Cullen, Minister of Education
Nancy Girardin, Consultant, Inclusion Support Branch



The Honourable Cliff Cullen, M.L.A.
Minister of Education
Room 168 Legislative Building
450 Broadway
Winnipeg, MB R3C 0V8

Dear Minister Cullen:

Thank you for arranging a response to our letter from January 28, 2021 regarding electronic learning resources for Manitoba educators and students. I have attached our original letter and the Deputy Minister's response for your reference. In response to our request for an equitable and 21st century collection of online learning materials, we were directed to the materials on the www.mbcsc.edu.gov.mb.ca website and told that:

"This repository allows all Manitoba educators and home schooling parents continued access to a collection of carefully selected electronic resources including 131 video streaming titles, over 2000 downloadable electronic and audio books, several online journals as well as links to other vetted content including searchable research databases."

MSLA is aware of the limited number of resources that are available on the www.mbcsc.edu.gov.mb.ca website. In light of the fact that there are approximately 180,000 students and 16,000 teachers in Manitoba, this is a small collection that does not meet educational needs. It also does not come close to replacing the many thousands of resources that we lost when the Curriculum Support Centre was closed. We have identified a number of issues which need to be rectified in order to have a high quality system:

1. There are three ebook services offered. Tab-Vu is K-8 only and there are no ebooks/audiobooks with a copyright date newer than 2016. Ebsco ebooks also is primarily K-8 and there are no ebooks with a copyright date newer than 2016. The material that would be appropriate for grades 9-12 is largely made up of material that is found in the public domain and is easily accessible by anyone for free via Project Gutenberg online. The Follett collection is again mostly aimed at K-8, the material that is appropriate for grades 9-12 is mostly made up of public domain material and there are no ebooks or audiobooks available with a copyright date newer than 2018. Many more resources of this type are required to serve the 180,000 students in the province and they should include the newest, best quality material available. The provincial

government should invest in more ebook resources for grade 9-12 students and in newer ebook resources for K-12 students.

2. Students cannot login to any of these collections independently. They require a teacher or an adult to login and give them access or to download and provide the resources. A service that is app based would allow students to download material to a personal hand held device and would result in increased usage.
3. The quantity of audiobooks available in the collections named above is inadequate. Audiobooks serve as an enhancement to the literacy experience, make otherwise out of reach material accessible, and engage all of the same skills of interpretation and comprehension that text based materials do. They encourage the development of skills that can be transferred to print based reading.
4. The quantity of graphic novels available in the collections named above is inadequate. Graphic novels are an important tool to enhance the literacy experience and to make literature accessible to all students. Graphic novels appeal to many students and serve as an entry point to print-only based literacy experiences. They are also worthy of study on their own as they engage students in interpreting different modes of communication at the same time, a vital skill in the 21st century when many of our interactions and literacy experiences are made up of different modes of communication.
5. The quantity of streaming online videos is inadequate. Again, the bulk of these are aimed at K-8 and only about 30% have a specifically named audience of grades 9-12. This video collection is starting to age, with a number of titles having a listed copyright date of 2004 and 2007.
6. The electronic databases that are linked to the website are all available and accessible to everyone on the internet. While it is convenient that they are linked here, this does not represent an investment by the provincial government.
7. The encyclopedias that are linked to the website are all available and accessible to everyone on the internet. While it is convenient that they are linked here, this does not represent an investment by the provincial government.
8. There are no high quality electronic databases available for student use and research.
9. There are no electronic magazines available on the website.
10. There are very few news based resources available on the website resulting in a lack of diverse perspectives.

The collection curated at www.mbcsc.edu.gov.mb.ca falls short in terms of the number of resources offered, independent accessibility to students, age of materials and diversity of viewpoints. The lack of resources is particularly troublesome for grades 9-12 students and teachers.

Once again, we reiterate that the advantages of high quality eLearning resources include:

- Being accessible anytime, anywhere, by anyone
- Being easily updated with the most current information
- Being curated and vetted by experts

- Offering a wide variety of viewpoints
- Being independently accessible to learners in multiple ways (computer and devices)
- Translating the text into multiple languages at the click of a button
- Capturing the imagination of learners with their multiple and multi-modal types of texts
- Adapting text size and fonts to suit the needs of the learner
- Allowing access to ideas by including text-to-speech tools and read-aloud features

We suggest the province invest in the following resources to ensure equitable, adequate access to all students and teachers from K-12:

- Britannica Online
- Britannica Image Quest
- Criterion Streaming
- CBC Curio
- Discovery Education including STEM resources
- Mystery Science
- Ebscohost including the Professional Collection Collection for teachers, Canadian Points of View, Consumer Health Complete, Explora Canada, History Reference Centre, Science Reference Centre, ERIC
- Gale including the Cameron Collection, Canada in Context, Global Issues, Literature Resource Centre, Opposing Viewpoints, Science in Context
- Je Lis French eBooks
- Spark eBooks
- LumieLabs
- National Film Board
- Overdrive eBooks and audiobooks
- Worldbook Online
- Pebble Go
- Flipster Magazines
- EduReference ebooks
- Exploring Nature

We again urge the Government of Manitoba to act now and provide quality, reliable eLearning materials to every student and teacher in Manitoba. Given our membership's expertise in this area, the Manitoba School Library Association would be willing to offer their guidance as to which eLearning resources are most suitable for teachers and different grade levels in Manitoba.

Sincerely,



Brandi Bartok
 President
 Manitoba School Library Association

MSLA Executive, 2020–2021

MSLA Executive:

Board of Directors:

President

Brandi Bartok

Past President

Niki Card

President Elect

Sandy Welbergen

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SAGE Conference 2020

Brandi Bartok

Advocacy/Publicity

Leanne Falconer

Professional Learning

OPEN

Awards

Niki Card

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Samantha Popowich

Members-at-Large

Katie Williams

Karin Surzshyn

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Heather Brydon

WPL

Karin Borland

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John Tooth

CSL

Jo-Anne Gibson

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Andy McKiel

MCSC

Nancy Girardin

MTS

Lia Gervino

Cynthia Taylor

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Heather Brydon

AIMSL

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