

# MSLA JOURNAL

Volume 47, Number 2  
Spring 2020



## Leading and Learning From Home

- 2 Messages
- 4 MSLA Business
- 8 MTS Professional Development Day
- 9 Literacy
- 12 Connecting Through Verse
- 15 Cataloguing Corner
- 17 Leading and Learning
- 23 Leading and Learning From Home





# Table of Contents



## MESSAGES

President's Message – <i>Niki Card</i> .....	2
President-Elect's Message – <i>Brandi Bartok</i> .....	2
Editors' Message – <i>Jonine Bergen</i> .....	3

## MSLA BUSINESS

Manitoba School Library Association AGM .....	4
The 2020-2021 Executive Members and Standing Committee Chairs .....	4
Farewell to the 2019-2020 Executive .....	4
MSLA Awards	
Teacher-Librarian of the Year in Memory of Lois Gervais: <i>Mona-Lynne Ayotte</i> .....	5
MSLA Distinguished Service Award: <i>Joyce Riddell</i> .....	6
MSLA Grants and Contests	
I Love to Read Contest – <i>Cheryl Antonio</i> .....	7
Kevin Mowatt Memorial Seed Grants – <i>Cheryl Antonio</i> .....	7

## MTS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY

Multiliteracies: Opening Windows to the World – <i>Brandi Bartok</i> .....	8
--	---

## LITERACY

CM: Canadian Materials – <i>Dave Jenkinson</i> .....	9
MYRCA and COVID-19 – <i>Colette Dupuis</i> .....	10
It Started With a Breath – <i>Karla Dueck Thiessen</i> .....	12

## CONNECTING THROUGH VERSE

My Corona – <i>Mona-Lynne Ayotte</i> .....	12
21st Century Gathering and Social Distancing – <i>Samantha R. Howden</i> .....	14

## CATALOGUING CORNER

How to Handle Returned Books During COVID-19 – <i>Joanne Girouard</i> .....	15
20 Cataloguing Tips for 2020 – <i>Grace Ballard, B.Comm., CPA, MBA</i> .....	16

## LEADING LEARNING

Reflections from the RETSD Senior Years Teacher Librarian Team .....	17
--	----

## LEADING AND LEARNING FROM HOME

Working from Home – <i>Niki Card</i> .....	23
The New Normal – <i>Brandi Bartok</i> .....	23
School Libraries Respond to the Covid-19 Pandemic: Seesaw and Me – <i>Jo-Ann Gibson</i> .....	24

---

**The MSLA Journal is the official publication of the Manitoba School Library Association and is published two times a year.**

Membership to MSLA is \$25 (student membership is \$10) and includes a subscription to the Journal. It may be obtained by sending a cheque or money order payable to MSLA to:

Manitoba School Library Association  
307 Shaftesbury Blvd, R3P 0L9

Membership is also available online through MTS.

**Articles or correspondence can be addressed to the Publication Editors of the Journal: [mslapublications@gmail.com](mailto:mslapublications@gmail.com)**

ISSN 1189-7163

The MSLA Journal is indexed in the Canadian Education Index

## President's Message

By Niki Card



What a time we are in! COVID-19 has changed our lives in measurable and immeasurable ways and I question that we'll ever be quite "the same". But perhaps that's a positive. I would definitely appreciate something closer to the previous normal right now, but it is also a wonderful opportunity to take stock and evaluate what is most valuable, critical, and meaningful; both

professionally and personally.

What has stood out to me is that the skills that are predominately being called upon right now are those that we nurture through our Library Learning Commons and Makerspaces. Students (and staff) need resiliency, perseverance, problem-solving, and they need to know how to learn and share their learning. Technology skills and digital citizenship have been drawn to the forefront too.

We are also seeing the importance of connecting with nature, being physically active, mental health strategies, and the importance of social connections.

One of the most poignant bits I read fairly early into our time at home was a musing that time didn't always equal capacity. When we first headed home, I thought I was going to accomplish a million jobs both professionally and at home that I had neglected for quite

some time. I made myself massive to do lists, but it required a stamina and capacity that I didn't always have. I also witnessed this in my own children as they started to tackle online learning. I found myself telling them to allow themselves some compassion and I also realized I needed that message myself. "Be kind to yourself" became a motto around my home and, likely, many others.

It has been an honour to serve as MSLA's president this year. I'm so proud of the great work that is being done in school libraries across our province, both when we are in a crisis and when we are not!

Be kind to yourself!

## President-Elect's Message

By Brandi Bartok



It has been my pleasure to work as President-Elect this year for MSLA and to have worked with such an intelligent, thoughtful and flexible group of people. A highlight for me was our MTS PD day, titled: Root Our Practice in Wellness: Nurture Body, Mind and Soul. We had no way of knowing how important the topic of well-being would

be for the end of this school year, or how much the idea of school library learning commons would have to transform to meet the needs of students and teachers as they shift to learn and work from home. As we pivot to support our school communities in this unprecedented time, we need to focus on how we can intentionally influence the evolution of what a school library learning commons can be, and what it will need to be as school starts again in the fall under uncertain circumstances. It is both a challenge and a privilege to be part of

these conversations.

I'm looking forward to the continued collaboration, professional development, and friendships as we face what will certainly be a challenging 2020-2021 school year.

# Editor's Message

By Jonine Bergen

When Joanne and I started planning the spring journal back in February, Joanne showed me an article, written in the 90s, that predicted what libraries would look like in 30 years.

One of the predictions made about libraries in the 1990s was the soon-to-be omnipresent virtual book. It was predicted that we could “click and pick” – sounds a lot like Sora or Follett Shelf to me. If you asked me a few months ago, I would have argued with the “omnipresent” part of that prediction; today, I’d reluctantly agree that the prediction may have come true. Other predictions talked about the changing role of librarians. We were encouraged to become information specialists. Libraries, would have to change to meet the needs of a new technologically savvy patron.

Another prediction was that the physical library was doomed. In its place, it was suggested, possibly, maybe, will exist some type of virtual library. Well, COVID-19 has seen the temporary closure of libraries. And, yes, this closure has shown the power – and flaws – of the virtual library. We are seeing the digital divide in action. We are seeing students being left behind who do not have access to technology or reliable Internet. We are seeing students develop screen fatigue and talk about loss of connection with their schools. Some students are thriving; many are not.


School and library closures have also

shown the true power of the library – as community connectors. Sure, the physical books may be locked behind doors but I know my days are still filled with students, teachers, and supporting learning in my school. The virtual library remains open 24/7 and, at this time, I feel we are working harder and longer than ever – all teachers are! One of the articles I read written in 1995 referenced the “library’s role as the preserver of community.” (Berry, 1994) So many of us are struggling to do just that – preserve our communities.

Many articles from the 1990s talk about the importance of “cybrarianship” and how librarians need to stay current in technology to ensure they can support their communities (Kniffel, 1995). Thirty years hasn’t changed that need. Library professionals know how important it is to stay current with technology, which is why so many of you are being called upon now as support in your schools.

I am so proud to say that so many school libraries remain “open” to support our communities. I am also frustrated that some library staff and their skills are being overlooked. In this journal, we celebrate the work you are doing –

and will continue to do. We encourage you to take care of yourself and your families and do what you can to support your school communities. These times will shine a light on what is working and what we need to work on when our doors reopen. In the meantime, as Karla Dueck Thiessen in her book tells us, “Your problems seem big, but it’s a moment in time. Be in the present, and you will feel fine.”



Your problems seem big,  
but it's a moment in time.  
Be in the present,  
and you will feel fine.

## References

- Berry III, J. N. (1994). *Faith in a library future*. *Library Journal*, 119(4), 6.
- Kniffel, L. (1995). *Confluence in a revolution: ACRL conference looks to the future*. *American Libraries*, 26(5), 394–396.

# MSLA Business

## Manitoba School Library Association Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the Manitoba School Library Association took place on May 11, 2020 on Microsoft Teams. This virtual event was well supported by our membership and allowed all necessary business to occur. We will take the opportunity to celebrate our award winners when we are able to gather together again.

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 2020-2021 Executive Members and Standing Committee Chairs:

### Board of Directors:

- President: Brandi Bartok
- Past President: Niki Card
- President Elect: Sandy Welbergen
- Secretary: Grace Ballard
- Treasurer: Erin Thomas

### Standing Committees:

- Publications: (open)
- Membership: Alison Bodner
- Website: Jo-Ann Gibson
- MTS PD Day Conference 2020: Brandi Bartok
- Advocacy/Publicity: Leanne Falconer
- Professional Learning: (open)
- Awards: Niki Card
- Archives: Samantha Popowich
- Members-at-Large: Karen Surzyshyn, Katie Williams

### Welcome to Our New Executive Members:



#### Katie Williams, Member-at-Large

Katie is a former middle and high school classroom teacher turned Teacher Librarian

at Kildonan East Collegiate. She is also involved with the Manitoba Social Sciences Teachers' Association and sits on the Board for the community organization Friends of Lower Fort Garry. She's passionate about building school culture and helping students find what excites them about learning. In her spare time she volunteers with heritage organizations, travels as much as possible, binge-watches Bon Appetit, and reads stacks of non-fiction.



#### Grace Ballard, Secretary

Grace Ballard is currently a Library Technician at Pembina Trails School Division responsible for training new library staff and troubleshooting problems in the divisional library system. She has fourteen years experience in both public and school libraries. Grace has created and presented professional development seminars featuring cataloging, collection analysis, and library systems.

### Thank you to departing members

We would also like to thank the members who served on the MSLA Board for 2019-20. A special thank to those members who will be retiring from the Board this year including Karen Burkett, Jonine Bergen, Joyce Riddell, Joanne Girouard, Anne Guld, and Debbie Smith for their work on the Board and Executive.

# MSLA Awards

## MSLA Outstanding Teacher Librarian of the Year In Memory of Lois Gervais: Mona-Lynne Ayotte



Mona-Lynne Ayotte is a bilingual teacher-librarian with 33 years of library experience, 21 of those at Institut collegial Vincent Massey Collegiate.

She loves to read in all types of formats and has recently promoted a new Flipster magazine database along with a teen mental health e-book series entitled Cameron's Collection. Mona-Lynne can be found leading workshops, connecting students with a variety of resources in and out of the library, and setting up different learning spaces that make the building work in a more productive and inclusive way.

She worked to design an innovative library learning commons, which would meet the

needs of high school students and teachers. She has continued her education in Indigenous Treaty Work, sharing this knowledge in classes and most recently coordinated the making of ribbon skirts and shirts. This year, she created an instructional ribbon skirt-making document, which she willingly shared with others. She offers a wide variety of makerspace experiences like aromatherapy and sewing and continues to teach meditation and drumming for health classes to students who are looking for ways to improve their well-being.

During this challenging COVID-19 time, she helped to instigate a password reset procedure that benefited the entire school division and has been very helpful in connecting students with their online learning programming. She works side by side with teachers to assist with their curricular needs and often does presentations with classes to develop research strategies; those might include creating a podcast, working with Flipster and comic creation to name a few.

She is a vivacious teacher-librarian sharing her expertise by contributing to professional learning. She continues to write professional articles for the Manitoba School Library Journal, having been its former editor

and was recently published in *Effective School Librarianship: Successful Professional Practices from Librarians around the World*. Mona-Lynne gave two professional development presentations in fall of 2019.

The little, ordinary things she does on a daily basis for students, staff and community make her an extraordinary librarian and deserving to be recognized for her efforts and leadership as Teacher-Librarian of the year.



## MSLA Distinguished Service Award: Joyce Riddell



Joyce Riddell has been a strong supporter of libraries for decades. She runs a quality program for hundreds of students every year; touching lives and building life-long learners. Joyce has helped students lead from the library as library pages.

She is always willing to mentor a teacher considering transitioning into libraries or open her doors to Red River students to ensure new library technicians receive training in exemplary school libraries.

Joyce began her career in education as a high school English teacher in Alberta in 1986. She moved quickly into the role of consultant, reporting on test reliability and running attitudinal surveys of parents and students on disciplinary standards and attendance standards before taking a leave from teaching to start her family. In 1995, her family moved to Winnipeg.

Her dedication to libraries resulted in her joining the school library as a library technician at Dieppe school in 2001. This opportunity taught Joyce the

importance of having a library team of a teacher-librarian and a qualified library technician.

In 2003, she accepted library technician positions at St. Avila and Crane schools where she worked with Marilyn Ouimet and Trish Steadman respectively. These two mentors encouraged Joyce to continue her education while providing her greater opportunities to learn what an effective library program can accomplish. While at Crane, she was able to participate in the library's renovation; learning new skills to create digital mock-ups for the new library space.

Joyce was very excited when the University of Alberta announced in 2003 that they would be implementing a Teacher Librarian Distance Learning Diploma. In 2004, she was admitted into the Teacher Librarian Distance Learning program. That same year she accepted her current position at St. John's-Ravenscourt School as the teacher-librarian in the Rosenberg Library.

Joyce is a consummate professional, and an enthusiastic cheerleader for her students. Her library page program encourages her students to be leaders in and through the library. Joyce also runs a MYRCA Club, a Spelling Bee Club, and an Outdoor Adventures Club. In 2015, Joyce was part of a committee that established an outdoor garden for Junior School and was instrumental in ensuring the school received a grant for the plantings for the garden.

Joyce is a backbone of the library community in Manitoba. Joyce has been on the executive of the Manitoba School Library Association for the past 10 years as President-Elect (2011-12), President (2012-13), Past-President (2013-14), Treasurer (2015-19), SAGE Co-Chair

(2018-19) as well as various committees.

Anyone who has attended an MSLA event in the last ten years has been greeted by Joyce sitting at the MSLA registration table at the door, quietly taking care of various tasks to ensure the event operates smoothly and efficiently.

With over 30 years of teaching experience, her professionalism, work ethic, creativity, problem solving and constant advocacy for her library and all libraries are simply a part of who Joyce is. She is an example of a teacher-librarian who leads quietly by inviting others to join her to accomplish worthwhile objectives.





# MSLA Grants and Contests

## I Love to Read Contest

Kelsey Community School

*Cheryl Antonio*



My name is Cheryl Antonio and I am the librarian for Kelsey Community School, in The Pas, Manitoba. This is my second year as a librarian and this year I became a member of the MSLA. Our school is part of the Kelsey School Division. We are an elementary school with grades kindergarten – 5. We are also a community school which is open to the public twice a month and for after school programs.

I was very excited to read of your I Love To Read Contest!! Reading is a passion of mine and I was so happy to land this position at Kelsey Community School. I love being creative and finding ways to encourage children to read, and better yet – to learn to love reading!!

Last year, I was fairly new to the position and we celebrated I Love To Read Month with a few events throughout the school. This year, being more familiar, I wanted to plan a month-long celebration of reading. February is an incredibly busy month for us. Not only does it hold Valentine's Day, Groundhog Day, 100th day of school, and Louis Riel Day, but our community hosts Northern Manitoba's Trappers' Festival. It was up to me to try and squeeze in some love to read activities and events without burdening the teachers with more to do!

We began the month by sending home a 25-day reading challenge with all the students.

There were 25 fun things to do while reading. Children were encouraged to share what they were doing at home with their teachers, and each time they did, they got their name in a draw. Each classroom got a reading challenge, as well. One that was made especially for classroom reading. Teachers were asked to forward me photos of their classes participating in the challenge. They got their picture on the main lobby tv screen and had their class entered into a draw. Winners of these draws received gift certificates toward our upcoming Book Fair in March.

I also registered for I Read Canadian, which took place on February 19th. I clearly marked the books by Canadian authors as being so, and for the younger children, I made a special display of Canadian penned picture books. Our school took 15 minutes on the 19th to read a book by a Canadian author.

We took part in the Scholastic Classrooms Care 2020 program. At this time, almost all of the classes have reached that goal!

We had our MLA, Amanda Lathlin, come in to read to classes. We also had members of our Junior A hockey team, the OCN Blizzard, come to read to the children.

We had a spirit day in which staff and students dressed up as their favorite book or book character.

The kids all got the opportunity to decorate their own book markers.

We had Guess Who's Reading? I took pictures of several staff members with a book in front of their face and the kids had to guess who it was.

We voted, in three rounds, for our school's top 10 books.

I appreciate the opportunity to share.

## Kevin Mowatt

## Memorial Seed Grant

*Cheryl Antonio*

As students are working from home, all over the nation, we here at Kelsey Community School are busy preparing for their return!!

Thank you, for choosing the Kelsey Community School Library to be a recipient of the Kevin Mowat Memorial Seed Grant!! We so greatly appreciate the support for our digital citizenship library!!

Kelsey Community School is home to approximately 350 kindergarten to grade 5 students in The Pas, Manitoba. It is also an extremely active community school, hosting many wonderful activities and events for everyone in the community to enjoy, learn from, and appreciate.

The library and computer lab (side by side) have become central areas during community nights. The two areas are also prime locations for after school clubs. Staff have been eagerly offering as much technology learning with the additions of robotics, coding, chrome books, and an upcoming makerspace.

There was very limited reading in the library, for children, to learn about digital citizenship. In fact, there are only 2 books that touched on it. With the receipt of this grant, we will be adding 10 new, age appropriate books and many new posters that will help to teach the children and families about digital citizenship.

Cheryl Antonio also won the Leading from the Library Grant.



# MTS Professional Development Day

## Multiliteracies: Opening Windows to the World

*Brandi Bartok*

This fall we are looking forward to an engaging MTS PD day conference that will spark new ideas, create connections between different curricular areas and recognize how important it is to provide students with an opportunity to participate in diverse multiliteracy experiences. Our conference for 2020 is titled: Multiliteracies: Opening Windows to the World.

How can we support a multiliteracy

stance in our schools? 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.”

We are currently looking for people to facilitate individual sessions. If you have an interest or area of expertise you would like to share that aligns with our conference theme, please contact Brandi Bartok at the email below.

Contact: Brandi Bartok,  
[msslageconference@gmail.com](mailto:msslageconference@gmail.com)



*Image by David Bruylant from Pixabay*

**Location: École secondaire Oak Park High School, 820 Charleswood Rd. Winnipeg, Mb**

**Conference Date: October 23, 2020**

**Conference Start Time: 8:30 am**

# Literacy

## CM: Canadian Review of Materials and COVID-19

*Dave Jenkinson, Co-chair & CM Editor*



Back in early August, 2019, when I was assembling the first issue of Volume 26 of CM, I assumed that this volume year would proceed much like all the other years had since I began editing CM back in June, 1997. Canadian publishers would send me either Advance Review Copies (ARCs) or finished copies of their season's books, and I would then match the books with the reviewing profiles of CM's 100 plus volunteer reviewers from across Canada. Books would be packaged up and sent out via Canada Post. Hopefully, reviews would arrive by email within the expected turnaround time of a month, and I would edit their content. Every week from late August to late June, I would put together an issue containing 20-25 reviews that represented a variety of audience ages, publishers, nonfiction and fiction (plus genres).

And that's how Volume 26 went for CM until Covid-19 changed the publishing landscape. Publishers' offices closed, and publicists, my direct contacts with the publishing houses, were working from home with no access to physical books. The first noticeable change for CM caused by these closures was a sharp decline in the number of books or ARCs appearing in my mailbox along with a marked decrease in the appearance of book-bearing couriers coming to the door. Like Mother Hubbard's cupboard, my "Books-to-be-sent-out" shelf started to look pretty bare, and, in turn, my "Reviews-waiting-to-be-published"

file began to shrink alarmingly. In response, the weekly issues of CM, by necessity, became smaller.

Some of the publishers whose books CM reviews send out ARCs, others distribute review copies of finished books as they appear, while still others wait until they have an entire season of finished books and then ship them all out at once. Over the years, I've developed a "feel" for when publishers' books for a new publishing season should start arriving, and this spring that "pattern" was obviously broken. Looking online, I could see the publishers' catalogs for their forthcoming books, and so I emailed some publicists asking when CM would receive review copies. The short answer from them was that, as long as their offices and those of the warehouses/distributors were closed, they could only offer review copies in an electronic format.

Because everyone who reviews for CM is a volunteer, the only "payment" they receive is the finished book. Therefore, it has been CM's practice to only review from the physical book. However, if CM was to continue to support our Canadian publishers, authors and illustrators, then we needed to review their output in whatever format was presently available. I emailed all of CM's reviewers, explaining the situation, and asking if they would be willing to review books in an e-format with the understanding that they will eventually receive the finished item. With varying degrees of enthusiasm, the vast majority of the reviewers agreed to give it a go. Consequently, since late April, instead of mailing out a book, I've largely been

emailing a publisher with the name of a CM reviewer, her/his email address and the title of the book to be forwarded as a pdf or other e-format.

As individuals, CM's reviewers across the country have been impacted by the stay at home directives. Some have found themselves with lots of time for reading (and reviewing) whereas others who are now working from home are spending even more time at doing their job (and here I think of all the educators who are trying to assist their students in completing their school/university year successfully). The sudden shut down did have one unexpected impact; a number of reviewers have told me that their book-for-review is presently in their locked workplace and they won't be able to access it until the restrictions are lifted.

And so, CM continues to move forward in these unusual times. If you would like to join the CM reviewing team, drop me a note at [cdn.mat@shaw.ca](mailto:cdn.mat@shaw.ca). You, too, could find a pdf in your inbox.



## MYRCA from Home

Colette Dupuis, MYRCA Board Chairperson



The COVID-19 pandemic has hit the Manitoba Young Reader's Choice Award in a number of unexpected ways.

The 2020 MYRCA Voting period was set to start on March 23rd and close on April 14th. When we

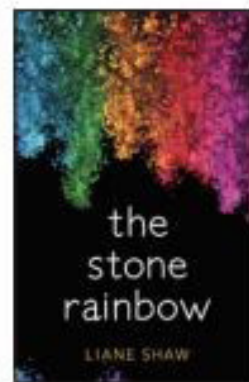
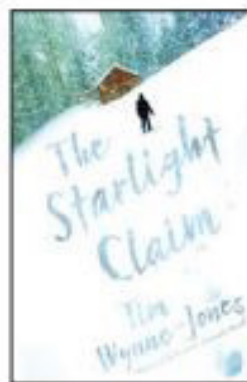
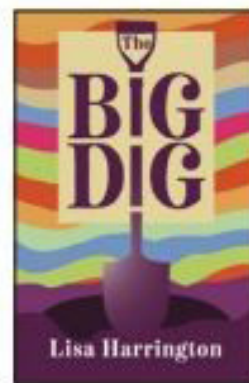
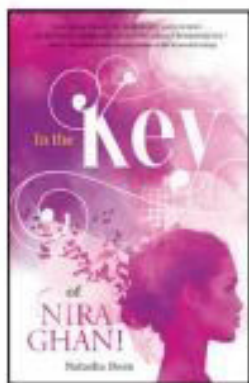
learned that schools were closing a week earlier than the voting period was set to start, we rushed to open the voting period earlier to give you ample opportunity to send in your tallies. Then came the decision on when to close the vote. Do we wait until schools reopen? We can just imagine the amount of work and stress our teachers and librarians will be under at that time. Do we close the vote down as planned? With an infinitesimally small fraction of the votes we normally get, this wouldn't be fair to the authors and publishers.

In the end we did the best we could. We decided to close the voting down on June 12th so that there is a deadline and we can declare the

winners. Unfortunately, that meant asking parents to submit their childrens' votes which is yet another responsibility on top of trying to educate their kids and work from home. Our voting numbers will be low this year, but we are all trying to cope the best we can with this constantly changing situation.

That brings us to the ceremony. We normally partner with Thin Air and host the ceremony on the last Friday of September during the festival. Since we are not able to declare a winner until June, the timeframe makes it virtually impossible for us to host the ceremony in September. Most authors have very busy schedules and it is highly unlikely whomever

## 2020-21 Northern Lights Nominees



wins would be available on such short notice. And that is assuming the authors can travel! Thankfully, Charlene Diehl, the director of Thin Air is incredibly accommodating and we are looking into creative ways to bring the winning authors to Manitoba for some kind of visit in order for our young fans to meet the people who write their favorite books. There is no substitute for encouraging a love of reading than having school age children meet the authors in person!

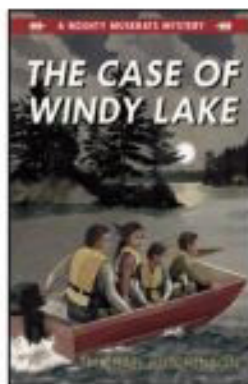
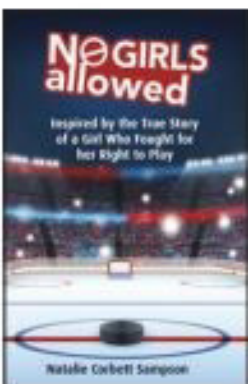
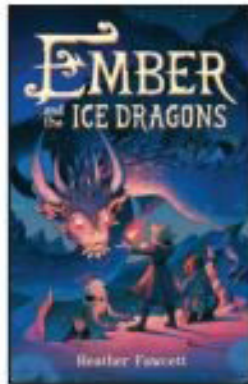
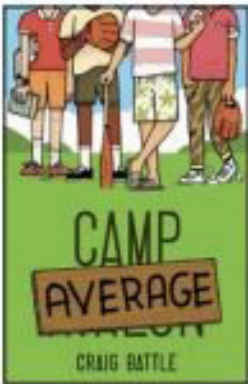
And then came the challenge of choosing the new lists! For the first-time-ever, the lists this year were chosen via an online meeting. It was both strange and surreal and

went surprisingly well. Decision Night, as we call it, is usually a lively, boisterous in-person evening with passionate discussion that can last well into the night. The online format made it a little more subdued and there was a bit of confusion as to who was speaking...not everyone had a camera! But the MYRCA team is a highly dedicated group of professional and conscientious readers who are focused on providing the best titles for the lists. We refine the selections monthly meetings and this year the effort paid off by having a solid list of potential nominees before Decision Night. It was then a matter of deciding the “make-up” of the lists... a balance of boy/

girl protagonists, a wide range of genres and novels that will appeal to reluctant and avid readers. As always, the team did an amazing job and I couldn't be prouder of all the obstacles we have overcome. We hope that you will continue to support MYRCA in your own schools and libraries and thank you all in these crazy times for everything that you are doing.

To view the new lists, visit [www.myrca.ca](http://www.myrca.ca) and don't forget to follow us on Twitter and Instagram @myrcaward

### 2020-21 Sun Doas Nominees



## It Started With A Breath...

Karla Dueck Thiessen, Brock Corydon N/K



The Nursery/Kindergarten students at Brock Corydon school are proud to share their book *It Starts With A Breath...* a book about mindful breathing as a free resource. It all started with them learning mindfulness strategies and practicing mindful breathing for a few moments each day. Mindful breathing relaxes the mind and body so stressful experiences can be calmly observed, reflected upon and responded to in a positive way. Practicing mindful breathing is a simple, practical, important life skill that calms the nervous system, helping children (and adults) develop self-regulation, focused attention, and positive well-being.

The book came naturally out of the

learning in our Nursery/Kindergarten classroom. The students became very passionate about mindful breathing and recognized how helpful it is at school and home. To highlight our collective learning during a school assembly, I made up a simple rhythmic poem about our mindful breathing strategies. My daughter Jubilee and I took pictures of the students acting out the scenarios in the text in front of the green screen and other locations around our school. With the help of public domain photos and technology we blended the pictures and text to create a PowerPoint presentation.

We first published 50 copies of our book in June 2019 as a keepsake of our year together and I published 500 copies of a second edition in October 2019 due to the overwhelming response the book received. What started as a small class project has blossomed into a practical tool used by teachers, behaviour specialists, psychologists, Yoga instructors, parents and grandparents to help teach children about the benefits and ease of mindful breathing. It resonates with children and parents alike and was on McNally Robinson's Bestseller list for many weeks after its release.

As humanity faces a new reality with the Coronavirus, I have been moved by the generosity of the education community as people share resources in response to the pandemic. Anxiety levels are high everywhere and it occurred to me that there was a way my students and I could help as well. We have just released the third edition of our book as a digital read-aloud version and I wrote a new verse in response to the pandemic. You can view the read-aloud book at <https://youtu.be/5eftsTzClw4>.

It Starts With A Breath...  
a book about mindful breathing

By Karla Dueck Thiessen

Pictures of Brock Corydon School  
Nursery/Kindergarten Students  
By Jubilee and Karla Dueck Thiessen

## Connecting through Verse

### My Corona

Mona-Lynne Ayotte, Institut collegial Vincent Massey Collegiate.



By the end of a school day,  
Which is really at school, but home day,

I am exhausted.

My email lists grows and grows,  
Responding with lightning speed.  
Should I always be at my computer?  
My wrist tells me NO. It aches  
Because my ergonomic desk  
Did not come home with

The laptop, the iPad, the DGI device,

The tripod, the Canon Camera,  
The microphone I have been waiting

To use to create a podcast.

I should have time to finally  
Learn all of this,

But my learning is confused by  
Meetings and tapings on Microsoft



Teams,

And EDSBY, whose new graphic icon is

Sitting on a couch. Really, I haven't had a

Chance to sit on my couch until the Weekend, when my couch potato self

Is reborn, rejuvenated and not having to

Answer hopefully a single email.

Yet, it lures me back in,

Concerned for a student who

Hasn't got access, a teacher looking

For a resource, a representative

Still waiting to sell me something

When purchase orders are no longer.

My fingernails have grown so long, That I hear that click, click, click on the keyboard.

I can cut them myself, but as for my bangs,

I hope the hair studio reopens soon.

My hairdresser is my family,

Just like the students and staff

We suddenly left behind.

I call, I text, I call. Yes, a real phone call.

Facetime, Zoom, Video chat on Teams.

All this in my pajamas, my yoga pants,

And messed up hair. And I still wear my designer MUGLER Over the Musk perfume.

I have to take a shower, yes, remind myself to bathe, even if my only companions

Are cats. I am a really cat lady now.

I won't be able

To go back to school because who will let them

In and Out, In and Out.

I am not lonely here because my house is a floating craft and book store.



I have scraps of materials, masks to make,

And I can play my music as loud as I want,

Drumming to my own beat.

My daily walks and bike rides, exclamation point!

Survival. Yet today, I cried, not because I was lonely,

But because for the first time I saw my daughter, her partner and mother-in-law

OUTSIDE on a Facetime Walk. It was almost

As if I was there by their side.

From Winnipeg to Toronto,

Free air fare.

Tears of joy.

Tears of hope.

For them, incarcerated within a



home,

Thirty-one long days.

Both immune compromised.

Sunny days ahead.

And my heart waits for the day

I can fly back there and hug them all so dearly.

It's easy to work long distance

When you have the tools, have the richness

To afford good connections, either online

Or in six feet distances,

But it is not the same.

Human smiles, human touch, human teasing,

All temporarily put on hold.

Because this virus has showed us all

How interconnected we really are in this world.

Our students gone, tumbleweeds in the wind,

Some never to be seen again, as they graduate.

Tears of missing them already. All of them,

No matter how we interacted, I still MISS them.

I miss the curiosity of a young female student

who asked for books on dreams,

I miss meditating in the middle of the day with

Anxious students turned peaceful,

Supported by another teacher,

Whose voice knows calm wisdom.

I miss the student who dropped in for

Just a minute of help

That turned into a half an hour

Of explaining, talking, learning,

Growing and finally feeling confident

That the project could be done!

I miss the laughter and the red lipstick

A teacher wears! Always the realist, Always the optimist.

I miss my working team,

Teamwork now is dreamwork.

## 21st century gathering and social distancing

*Samantha R. Howden*

Yet soon, they too will be gone.  
Forced budget cuts.  
And wishing that instead it was  
The Corona virus that would leave



FOREVER.  
I am tired of washing my hands  
Over and over again; twisting,  
turning,  
Twenty LONG seconds. Hand  
cream.  
I feel that Michelangelo's Sistine  
Chapel painting says it all.

Hands inches away from each other,  
Waiting to be connected.  
I am after all able  
To live my best upcoming summer  
life,  
A patio, a garden, a reclining chair.  
The smell of BBQ, the sound of birds  
chirping.  
The green green grass of home,  
Standing still while kites fly by in the  
wind.  
As I wait for the doors to reopen  
To invite my friends over  
For a wood burning by the fireside  
chat.  
Cherishing new times, old times.  
I had time on my hands after school,  
And made the most of this time,  
Clutter cleared, shredded documents,  
Read books, read magazines,  
Made face masks with colourful  
designs,  
Looked for lost items.  
Wanted to paint a wall too,  
However, the time I really need  
Is with you, my friend,  
My colleague, my students,



I scroll pages through pages of  
Amazon, Walmart, and Canadian  
Tire,  
Hoping for some relief.

Seeking refuge,  
By scrolling the stark white web  
pages,  
Hoping to fill the void of my cabinets  
To create space for my loss of security.

Wondering if my search results will  
fill that void.

The uncertainty of knowing,  
Whether the desired product I seek  
will be in stock,  
Reassures me that I am not alone in  
my thinking,  
And somehow is somewhat reassuring.

I used to love just scrolling.  
It soothes me.  
Apparently, this is a common response  
Amongst people with complex  
trauma,  
So I continue to scroll.

Endlessly seeking things,  
I never needed to begin with,  
But now feel as if I desperately need.

I have always been an obedient  
capitalist subject  
When it came to consumption.

I have rebelled in other ways,  
But I love things.  
Much like others, I know.

My privileged thoughts of scrolling,  
Repeat like a to do list  
Which never ends.

Soap, bread, isopropyl alcohol, toilet  
paper, Gatorade,  
A whisper of a "non-essential product"  
Just to dampen the sounds in my  
head  
That echo the fears of just not having  
enough  
In such uncertain times.  
My class is showing, even if I try to  
hide it.

Lysol and toilet paper is the new  
currency.

The privilege of credit.  
The warmth a home.  
A bed.  
A food supply.  
Scrolling.  
All feel heavy.  
There is no pride here.

Microbes are the new enemy.  
An enemy we cannot see, hear,  
But feel viscerally.

Lather, rinse, repeat, and scream,  
Cry.

I was born into a world of crumbling  
walls  
That separated countries,  
Islands of plastic,  
Skinny polar bears,  
9/11,  
And of course the Internet.

Thank God for the internet.



## Cataloguing Corner

Scrolling,  
Scrolling,  
Scrolling.  
Zoom. Texting. Netflix.  
Lather, rinse, repeat.  
Pasta with tomato sauce.

Some of us are thriving,  
In the acts of “social distancing,”  
(If we have the privilege to do so!)  
While for others,  
There is no escape from themselves,  
Or from this virus.

I hope for a day  
When scrolling becomes simpler  
again,  
And I don't troll every news station  
on the hour  
Waiting for status updates,  
Where I do not watch numbers rise  
And panic follow in its foot steps.



### How to handle returned books during COVID-19

*Joanne Girouard, Teacher-Librarian, St. Avila School*

As teacher-librarians, we receive countless books from different households. What are the risks involved during the pandemic? Recent studies published in the New England Journal of Science indicate that COVID-19 can live on paper/ cardboard surfaces for 24 hours and on plastics for 3 days. Therefore, allowing book returns to sit for 24-72 hours should render the virus inactive. Here are some guidelines provided by Lorie Carriere, the Safety, Health and Environment Officer of Pembina Trails School Division on how to handle returned books. These guidelines have been based on Health Canada and WHO research and information.

1. Wash hands thoroughly for the recommended 20-25 seconds with soap and water prior to starting.
2. For those requiring physical pickup and drop-off, set up certain times where this can be controlled. Staff can be there to receive the packages/books during set times or appointments. Meeting students at the doors is recommended to avoid additional visitors in the building.
3. Disposable nitrile gloves can be used when handling books, but they are not required.
4. Students/parents should not be

allowed to come into the building whenever possible. Make every effort to have a set destination for drop-off or pickup to minimize time in the building.

5. Maintain social distancing requirements of at least 2 metre (6 feet) distance between yourself and others when receiving packages and books and while at work.
6. Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth. Follow good respiratory hygiene. This means covering your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze. Then dispose of the used tissue immediately and wash your hands.
7. Regularly wash your hands throughout your workday or thoroughly clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub.
8. Allow books to sit for 24 hours, for those that are covered with paper, prior to scanning them and putting them away. For books that are covered with plastic, allow them to sit for 72 hours.
9. For those books covered with plastic, if you do not have the time to allow them to sit for 3 days, they can still be scanned and put away, but staff must follow strict

hand washing protocols or use disposable nitrile gloves.

10. Scan and return books to the library shelves.
11. Using cleaning wipes, wipe down your workspace once you have finished work for the day.
12. Thoroughly clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water prior to leaving work.
13. If you were wearing disposable gloves, you must still wash your hands with soap and water or use an alcohol based hand sanitizer once the gloves have been removed. This ensures your hands have not become contaminated while removing the gloves.

By following these easy steps, you ensure your own safety as well as the safety of others. This is also valuable information that you may want to share with your community to explain the safety measures and precautions taken at your library. This will reassure parents and students to continue taking out books because they will know that you have eliminated all possible risks. Stay safe!

## 20 Cataloguing Tips for 2020

*Grace Ballard, B.Comm., CPA, MBA*

There are so many aspects to cataloguing a MARC record that it is hard to just pick 20 tips, but these are some of things I try to make a point of observing in creating the best record I can.

1. Remember, we all make mistakes! Do the best you can and try to fix any mistakes when you find them.
2. To save time, try to find an existing record if you can. Even if you can't download the record it will save you time by providing most of the MARC tags that you need. An excellent place to find MARC records is WorldCat at: <https://www.worldcat.org/> And of course, the source of the record should be identified in the 040 tag.
3. Always check your indicators and sub-fields.
4. Use square brackets [ ] for information added to the record that was not found on the item itself. For example, if the publisher is stated on the cover page but there is no location or address to be found, then in subfield 'a', you can enter '[Place of publication not identified]'.
5. Editors NEVER get a 100 tag. The 100 tag is for the main person responsible for the work. If you have a collection of short stories that has been compiled by an editor, there will be no 100 tag. Instead, you should put the name of the editor in a 700 tag.
6. Only the first word in a title is capitalized unless the word is a proper noun.

### 300 Tag or Physical Description:

7. Do not use abbreviations.
8. Photographs and illustrations are not the same thing. If the item you have has both, then they should both be listed along with any other physical details.
9. The dimensions of the item are given in centimetres. The height is sufficient, but you can also provide the width and length if you like or if the item is an unusual shape. The order is always height then width then length, written as: h x w x l cm.

### 250 Tag or Edition Statement:

10. The 250 tag, or Edition statement, is not the same thing as the Publication statement. The information that is recorded in the 250 tag are things like 'First edition' or 'Revised edition'. If you are cataloguing a computer program this tag may contain the version number of the program, or the model number for a piece of equipment.

### 520 Tag or Summary Note:

11. A summary note is always very useful to the patron. If possible, use the description on the book jacket or back cover.
12. Always indicate the source of the summary. This may be the book cover, the publisher or a reviewer. If there is no summary available and you decide to write one yourself simply indicate the summary was provided by the 'cataloguer'. Do not put your name in the record.

**Subject Headings:**

13. The 600 tag is used for names of people or characters and follows the same rules as for the author.
14. The 650 tag is for topical terms as per the subject heading authority identified by indicator 2. The most common authorities are the Library of Congress and Sears.
15. The order of the subject heading subdivisions is [Topical] - [Geographic] - [Chronological] - [Form].
16. The 655 tag is for form headings or genres. Some examples include; Graphic novels, Fantasy Fiction, Biographies, Picture books for children, and Dictionaries to name a few.
17. If you want to use a subject heading that is not included in your source authority you can create your own subject heading and record it in the 690 tag.
18. Try to limit the number of subjects in a record to 3. Each subject listed should represent a minimum of 30% of the material in the book.
19. Use a broader subject heading if the material covered is varied. For example, a book that covers topics that include family law, criminal law, immigration law, international law, military law and environmental law should be assigned the broad subject heading of 'Law'.
20. The Sears List of Subject Headings also includes a recommended Dewey Decimal number for non-fiction material.

For more information about cataloguing, check out the Cataloger's Reference Shelf at: <https://www.itsmarc.com/crs/crs.htm>

# Leading Learning

## Reflections from the RETSD Senior Years Teacher Librarian Team



There was a buzz of excitement this past September in the six high schools of the River East Transcona School Division. As with any start to a school year, changes are anticipated, but this was different, this was new. A feeling of transformation was in the air. For three of the RETSD high schools, it marked the return, after over a ten-year absence, of senior high teacher librarians. For the other three high schools, it was the debut of teacher librarians.

With abounding energy and enthusiasm, and a goal to transition each library into a 21st century Learning Commons, the journey began. Our first assignment - present to the staff who we are, what we do, and the value we hope to bring to each of our corresponding schools. Working collaboratively over the summer, we created a unified presentation for our first day as senior years teacher librarians. With intimidation of this task set aside, it was a successful first step in sharing the role of a teacher

librarian. Many teachers had simply never worked with a teacher librarian before and had many questions for us. For some, there was a reluctance and hesitation to understanding the need, and purpose, of a teacher librarian - a fair assumption after an absence of so many years. Yet for many others, there was a sense of excitement. They had heard the rumours of a teacher librarian's resourcefulness, and they welcomed all of us and the change we represented.

This is a summary of our insights, our challenges, and our celebrations in our first year of working as teacher librarians in the high schools.

### *Christine – From Mentorship to Partnership*

When RETSD announced they were moving to re-staff all their Senior Years libraries with teacher librarians, I was elated. The teacher librarians in RETSD had been pushing for this since the positions were first eliminated 10 years ago. After applying for and getting one of the six Senior Years high school positions, I met with our Assistant Superintendent, Karen Boyd. We discussed setting up a PLC to provide support and mentorship for the group of 'new' Senior Years teacher



librarians since we were all new to the role in some way – some had never worked in a Senior Years setting, like myself, and some were new to the library. We all had a lot to offer and a lot to gain from a PLC.

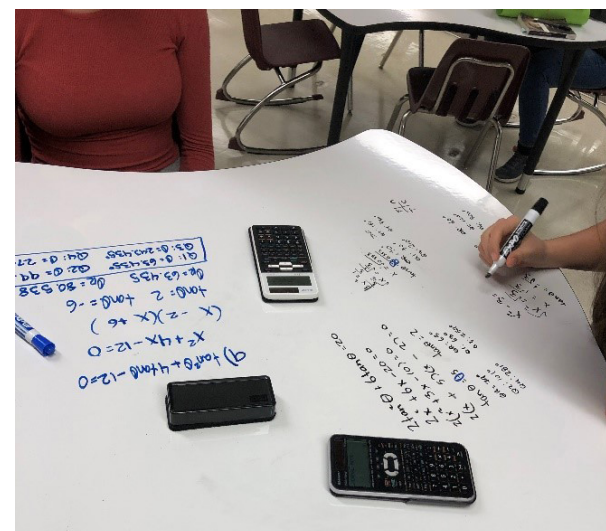
Another thing Karen Boyd and I discussed is that re-staffing the teacher librarian role at all six of our high schools at the same time was the perfect opportunity to think systemically about what a Senior Years library program should, and could, look like in our school division. Thus, I set my sights on providing mentorship to my ‘new’ colleagues while also guiding us to achieve some lofty goals as a school division.

Early on our PLC realized it would be quite important to define what a teacher librarian does for the staffs at all the high schools. The role of a teacher librarian has significantly evolved over the last 10 years especially given the increased need for skills in media literacy, information literacy, news literacy, digital literacy and digital citizenship. It was important that we clearly communicated the fact that teaching those skills is central to our role. The first step in moving to a systemic thoughtful plan for Senior Years library programs in our school division was to define the teacher librarian role with a divisionally approved presentation, given at all Senior Years schools on the first day of the school year. All high schools and their staffs would get the same message at the same time. To ensure our programs started with a good foundation, we borrowed from Leading Learning, BCTLA, OSLA/OLA, AASL and ISTE Future Ready Librarians and created a comprehensive presentation.

Some of the early issues we addressed systemically as a group involved ensuring our policies were consistent but also that they aligned with best practices. Some examples of this included discussions about the purpose and usefulness of things like fines in our Senior Years libraries and about the feasibility of repairing and maintaining the aging alarm systems

each of the high schools had. These led to deeper discussions about the purpose and nature of our spaces. We started to look more closely at our spaces and supported each other in evaluating the spaces against best practices outlined in the Leading Learning document. Our close work as a PLC allowed these discussions to be based on strong, research supported arguments so that when steps were taken to implement changes to our policies and spaces, these changes were adopted across the division and supported by our Principals. It also allowed us to be able to individually provide sound reasoning to those who challenged the changes, because we had collectively already discussed the types of challenges we might face. Our group is now looking to the future and we hope to create a Senior Years Library scope and sequence that will guide our instructional roles and aid in facilitating teacher collaboration at the Senior Years level across our school division.

Our PLC grew out of a need to support one another professionally, but it also quickly became a place where we supported each other emotionally and mentally. The work of starting a new program from scratch at a school where no teacher librarian had worked for years (or ever) is taxing, and we often feel like we aren’t doing enough, or that changes aren’t happening at the speed we hoped they would. There have been struggles and successes, highs and lows and we put a lot of pressure on ourselves to get this right. Our PLC became a place where we could work to co-create a vision of Senior Years libraries in RETSD but also support each other in that work and remind each other that this work takes time. We meet in person for a half-day each month and have an epic never ending chat through Microsoft Teams where we touch base almost daily. Our work as a PLC has evolved from some of the “experienced vets” providing advice and support to a learning group where we all focussed on learning together, sharing ideas, strategies, solutions, and questions,



to a group fully focussed on the job at hand, but also on what the future holds for our Senior Years programs, spaces and collections. In the span of less than a

year, our PLC evolved from mentorship to partnership. Being involved in the Senior Years Teacher Librarian PLC this year has been one of the greatest professional experiences of my career.

**Julia - Building Strong Foundations**

When I first began my journey as a Teacher Librarian at the beginning of the year, I knew that building relationships was going to be important. Administrators had mentioned it and it had come up a number of times in meetings. I thought to myself, well of course, because I have always placed a priority on building and maintaining relationships with my students. As an educator I have always felt that in order to help students learn you have to get to know them, you need to listen and try and see their perspective so that you can work to support them in the best way possible. They also need to get to know you, because trust is crucial when getting to know a student... and people don't trust people they don't know!

Moving into the Teacher Librarian role I was confident in my ability to build relationships with students outside of the four walls of a single classroom. However, there was another set of relationships I needed to build that I hadn't thought as much about, my colleagues. I have felt very fortunate to have the opportunity to continue working at the school I've been teaching in for the past two years. I had built relationships with other teachers, administrators, and support staff. I went into my role feeling very comfortable in the building. What I was not prepared for was the shift that occurred when my role changed. With a change in roles came a change in perspective and I quickly realized that though I had built relationships with staff I needed to work hard to build up a different type of relationship in order to be successful in my new role and create

opportunity for valuable collaboration between myself and my colleagues.

Asking to be part of someone's classroom is a wonderful and truly exciting thing, but it is also something that can be difficult for teachers to say yes to, especially in a high school setting. We are by nature independent and I know from my own classroom experience that it can feel like your classroom is an island at times. I realized very quickly that my colleagues needed more from me before they



were going to let me in. Like my students, they needed to trust me, not just as a fellow teacher but as someone they could feel comfortable taking a risk and trying something new with. I needed to identify their needs and their wants within their classroom and then show them that I understood. They also needed to know me, because as my students showed me, you can't trust someone you don't know. I needed to be vulnerable with them, I needed to share my ideas and show them

that I trusted them, that I was willing to take the risk and try something new myself.

The Library Learning Commons should be the hub of a school, and the Teacher Librarian must play a central role in building that community. It must be built around the wants and needs of our students and of our staff. In order to understand those needs you need to build relationships and build up the trust enough that people will begin to share those wants and needs with you. Building relationships in your school community is like building the foundation for a house. If the foundation isn't solid and structurally sound to be able to support the building, the house will fall. Our school communities rely upon the relationships that we build to keep them standing strong. When taking on the task of developing a new program within that school community it is crucial to build up that foundation before you move too far ahead.

**Katie - Collaborative R&R**

As my colleague, mentor, and friend Andrea has said many times, practice is personal. For me, the greatest "takeaway" of my first few months as a Teacher Librarian is a much deeper understanding of this phrase. Much of what we do as educators is determined by our care for students and passion for our craft, possibly two of the most personal motivations that publicly manifest in what our students, colleagues, administration, and communities see. Our feelings about teaching and student success are intimate and prized; risk and reward require something valuable to be at stake for loss and as bait for gain.

My first years as a teacher I was keenly aware of the amazing things happening in the classrooms surrounding mine and my novice practice felt inconsequential next

to the decades of experience the others' held. I painfully felt the constant fear of judgement, which halted any risk-taking I could ever dream of. Fortunately, those colleagues next door practiced collaboration between themselves, and before I knew it, I was agreeing to a joint unit with a teacher in a different discipline, teaching a different grade. That experience (full of daily failures but ultimately a net success) caused me to become addicted to collaboration. We never judged each other's practice but used those incredibly personal elements to plot out how we'd strengthen the other or build new skills together.

I began to seek out colleagues with ideas that intrigued me, challenged me, or mimicked what I'd wanted to do all along. I was fortunate enough to take a position where I worked with a Teacher Librarian (the aforementioned Andrea) who somehow swept me into collaboration on a regular basis. That process was missing from my initial experience in a school that did not (at that time) have a Teacher Librarian. Gradually the feelings of impending judgement faded and my desire to find new teachers to work alongside increased.

Collaboration magnifies risk, but in a healthy partnership there is always a reminder that student success is a worthy reward. We can see when a student has

I've since returned to the first school I worked at, the one with the experienced teachers who publicly shared their practice for the benefit of myself. Now, I'm the Teacher Librarian and I get to see a different side of collaboration. There will always be healthy fear – it is what keeps us from becoming stagnant – but now I've become the instigator. Collaboration is hard. Adding another professional to your practice carries a different feeling of risk for every teacher, but it is worth that risk to gain the rewards... because practice is personal, but collaboration is crucial.

#### *Andrea – From Voice Grows Choice*

When I made the move from an early/middle years school to high school this past school year, I thought about all the things that would be different. The book stacks would be filled were more complex works, the curriculum content would be more challenging, and the clientele taller.

As I spent time in the space and observed its comings and goings, I began to see familiar faces come through to check out books, do homework, talk with friends. This was great, but I also noticed that the faces were the same. I had always thought of the library learning commons as a hub. The place where students came together from their different grades, class-

rooms and talked with teachers. I ventured into Room 22, our life skills classroom, and introduced myself to the students, letting them know that I was excited to meet them and looked forward to their visits. One of the girls in class turned and said, "No. Your library doesn't have books for me". I glanced around the room and the heads of staff and students nodded in agreement. They were right. I didn't have books at their reading level or on topics that interested them. If this was a fact for those, I spoke to in Room 22, it was probably the fact for the students I had yet to talk to.

When I worked in middle years, we spoke a lot about the diversity of reading levels and interests of students. In a typical classroom, students could be reading anywhere from a grade 2 level to a grade 12 level. They devoured graphic novels, dystopian, fantasy, realistic fiction and non-fiction. We always did our best to reflect these levels and interests on our library shelves. It allowed readers to participate as members of our reading community; it gave them multiple entry points with dignity. If this is what I knew about middle school, why would I think it would be any different in high school?

I was starting to realize that the library was not a part of the high school experi-



found a new understanding, realized they could persevere in difficult situations, and haven taken a new ownership or sense of pride in their learning. Sometimes we even watch them put aside their own fear of judgement to jump in and join forces with each other.

es and social groupings, like the living room of the school. The more I reflected on this the more I began to think —where is everybody? Who wasn't I seeing? Who was missing?

I began walking through the halls and talking with students. I went into

ence for many students. It could be that there were other places they wanted to be, or that maybe they didn't want or need to check out books and read on their phones instead. But maybe they didn't use the library because the collection was not representative of who they were as read-

ers. They could not find themselves represented in the stacks in terms of readability level, genre or topics of interest. How would we change this?

So, I started with the students who voiced that our collection was not inclusive of their needs, the students of room 22. Together we wrote booklists, brainstormed topics and titles. My administration supported our request for picture books, easy readers, and graphic novels with a generous budget. I went shopping and promised them an Unboxing party. We set a date and they created invitations. They invited a grade 9 English class, teachers, administration and superintendents. Everyone RSVP'd yes. There were balloons, cookies and homemade banners. We were ready.

We held our celebration during third period, amidst a library filled with students studying. Boxes of picture books waited on nearby tables decorated with giant green and gold bows. Our principal read his favourite picture book to the group and those studying nearby stopped and listened. When the moment arrived, the bows fell to the floor and picture books poured out onto the tables. Students shrieked in delight as the evidence of their collaborative work stared up at them from the cardboard boxes. But I noticed the excitement spread to smiles on the faces of students who were studying. The grade 9 English class scattered amongst the group and began flipping through books and reading to one another. "I remember this book! This was my favourite! I still have my copy at home! I never got to finish this series!" escaped the lips of staff and students. The class of room 22 delivered a thank you speech which they wrote and rehearsed, and everyone applauded—even those watching from across the room. Their voices had been heard in more ways than one.

### ***Sabrina – The Future of a Senior Year's Library***

When the announcement was made

that they were creating senior year teacher librarian positions, I thought that it would be a great opportunity to leave the classroom but still have contact with curriculum and students. I left a grade 8 French immersion classroom to go into a senior year library half time and my learning curve was incredible; new school, new curriculum, two new positions (I work half time as a resource teacher) and new staff.

Coming into a senior year's library that has never had a teacher librarian was challenging. I eventually learned how the space was viewed and being used after some weeks of observation and conversation with staff. In the first few months, I realized that the library was being used by teachers as another computer lab, it helped that the library still had desktop computers that were never refreshed into laptops. Students used the library as a study space and prep space for exams. Students borrowed library books for their language arts classes and kept these books for the entire semester.

As I start transitioning our library into a 21st century Learning Commons, some of the areas of my focus are:

1. School community involvement: actively engage the students and staff because meaningful face to face interactions are on the decline with our increased use of technology, for example:
  - a. Student library committee to engage students and have their voices heard,
  - b. Activities to promote literacy,
  - c. New seating, to create connectedness, partnerships and understanding and allow for new ways for students to learn and share.
2. Focusing on all library groups; different initiatives to target our different library groups. Making sure that we have the needs to meet the diverse needs of our students, for example:
  - a. books for different levelled reading in both languages,

- b. increasing and buying different genres,
  - c. creating spaces for students to collaborate in small groups and to be creative.
3. Reinvent our services; it is important to create spaces for new purposes such as innovation and knowledge exchange, for example:
  - a. Makerspace,
  - b. Puzzles,
  - c. Card and board games,
  - d. Reading corner,
  - e. Collaboration space.
4. Learn about our community; have up to date information and weed the collection and curate it to have some of the latest information possible in different formats.
5. Library image: it is important to promote the changing space and using different platforms so that students have access to our catalogue.
6. Emerging technologies: promote the space as a learning and digital hub and a one stop destination to test drive and learn about the latest technology, equalizing access and skills around the fast-developing technologies, for example:
  - a. Coding,
  - b. Circuit making,
  - c. Self-publishing,
  - d. Augmented reality,
  - e. Artificial intelligence,
  - f. Solar powering cells.

### ***Shannon – Collegial Collaboration will Continue...***

When looking back at this past year, the six of us have all had our own unique experiences within our libraries and different challenges along the way. Yet we've also shared in many similar, rewarding experiences. Our determination to succeed was led by our two experienced teacher librarians who willingly shared their expertise along the way. We quickly learned that as educators with diverse educational experiences and knowledge, we all had

something to contribute to our PLC. It's this diversity that has allowed our PLC to work so effortlessly over the past year. Having this PLC to collaborate, comfortably ask questions, bounce ideas around, and to sometimes simply listen and support each other, has been an incredible source of encouragement, an invaluable benefit.

As we all look ahead to next year, and work towards common goals in our library spaces, one thing we know for sure is that our support for each other will remain steadfast. We will continue to see progress, share in our professional goals, create new ones, and celebrate with each other along the way.

#### CONTRIBUTORS' INFORMATION

Shannon Pufahl is a former middle and high school teacher with over 22 years of classroom experience. She has taught for the Calgary Board of Education and Lord Selkirk School Division before coming to RETSD. She is currently working as a Teacher Librarian at Transcona Collegiate.  
**spufahl@retsd.mb.ca**

Christine Robinson is a former middle school Teacher Librarian who has been

teaching for 20 years, 11 of those in school libraries. She has been an outspoken advocate for school libraries in RETSD and is a former executive member of MSLA. She is currently working as a Teacher Librarian at River East Collegiate.  
**crobinson@retsd.mb.ca**

Julia Barton is a former middle and high school teacher with experience teaching in Manitoba as well as in Thailand. She is a passionate advocate for literacy in all forms, she worked within the MMC English department the past two years to bring in new opportunities for students to explore their learning. She is currently working as a Teacher Librarian at Murdoch MacKay Collegiate.  
**jbarton@retsd.mb.ca**

Katie Williams is a former middle and high school classroom teacher with experience across multiple disciplines. Her goal is to get people excited to learn, read, experience and enjoy the treasures our schools hold. This year she returned as a Teacher Librarian to Kildonan-East Collegiate, where she was fortunate to have begun her career with RETSD.  
**kwilliams@retsd.mb.ca**

Andrea Zaroda has been teaching for 16

years at the early and middle years levels, with 5 of those years as a Teacher Librarian. Her goal is for others see the Library Learning Commons as more than a place to go, but rather a student designed learning environment to explore. She is currently working as a Teacher Librarian at Collège Miles Macdonell Collegiate.  
**azaroda@retsd.mb.ca**

Sabrina Fernandes is a former middle school French Immersion classroom teacher and has been teaching for over 25 years within Manitoba. She has a passion for reading, learning and teaching and is presently working as a half time Teacher Librarian and half time Resource Teacher at Collège Pierre-Elliott-Trudeau.  
**sfernandes@retsd.mb.ca**



# Leading and Learning from Home

## Working from Home

*Niki Card, Hampstead School and Westview School*

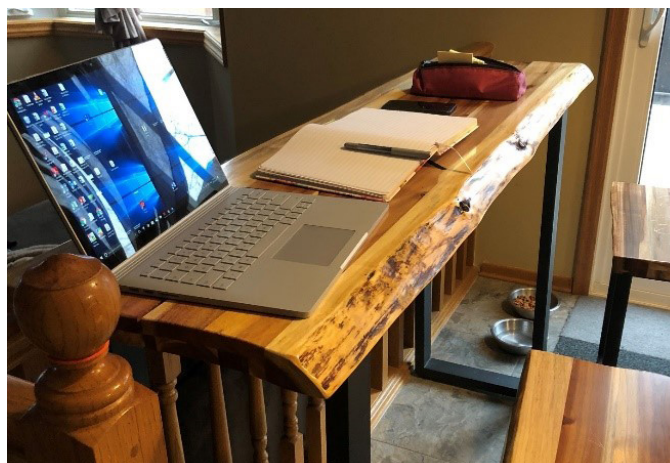


Since completing an online degree necessitated it, I've always maintained a workspace at home. What I am unaccustomed to, however, is sharing it! Suddenly my husband is working in the same space, also taking video conference calls, and our two children need access and support as well. What a balancing act! It's had its trials and tribulations, but it has also been interesting to watch some technology-reluctant colleagues and my own tictok-consuming children, learn and develop new skills. One computer hard drive failure and an intermittently working printer aside, my work from home time has been acceptable. (I don't want to give it higher praise because I'd give just about anything to be back in my libraries engaging in hands-on learning with my students!)

## The New Normal

*Brandi Bartok, École Secondaire Oak Park*

Who could have guessed that in 2020, we would suddenly be thrust into a 'new normal' of learning from home and communicating through video conferences? Working from home during the school system closure has been a challenging experience. It sometimes feels like all the members of my household are on top of one another trying to find a place to work, play, eat, or relax. My workstation is portable, but mostly I am set up as you see in the picture. My main tools are a laptop, a notebook to keep track of who I have contacted during the day, a cell phone and a pen. My



days have been largely filled with providing technology support for students, parents and teachers as everyone

tries to navigate a new way of learning. I have also found that an online Library

Learning Commons presence is even more important in these conditions, both in terms of providing the resources that teachers and students need, and in providing a social connection between myself and the school community. I am finding the lack of face to face social interaction with students to be the most difficult piece of this experience. I am hopeful that we will be able to return to schools in the fall with a new appreciation for the school experience and for one another.

## School Libraries Respond to the Covid-19 Pandemic: Seesaw and Me

*Jo-Ann Gibson, Library Learning Commons and Literacy Consultant, Pembina Trails School Division*

When I was offered the School Library Learning Commons and Literacy Consultant position for the Pembina Trails School Division in the fall of 2018, I was surprised to learn that the position of Technology Consultant would no longer exist. The rationale behind that decision, at least in part, was that since technology was now such an important part of learning at all levels and subject areas, all consultants would be required to provide professional learning needs for teachers in their area of expertise as it related to technology. As a former teacher-librarian used to providing PD for teachers on how to use technology as a tool for learning, I had no problem with this decision. As consultant, I continued to provide this support as needed and was happy to do so. And then in the spring of 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic hit and all the support in technology integration that I had provided in the past came back to haunt me.

It wasn't that I was suddenly unhappy to continue to support teachers in developing meaningful online learning for their students during the Covid crisis. I was somewhat shocked, however, to find myself in a place where I was virtually in charge of online learning for all K-6 schools in the division. Earlier in the year, I had provided PD for one school who was piloting the online learning tool called Seesaw. My focus at that time was how Seesaw could best be used from a pedagogical standpoint. This is the type of work that I relish and I took on the challenge of learning Seesaw on a deeper level to provide a rich PD session for this school.

As more schools in my division began to use Seesaw as a tool for learning, the Pembina Trails School Division decided

to purchase a subscription to Seesaw. Although the use of Seesaw was still optional, I was asked to provide PD to teach one teacher from every elementary school how to teach others in their school how to use Seesaw. I was about two-thirds through this training when the crisis began rearing its ugly head. Virtually overnight, Seesaw became the mandated platform that all elementary teachers would use in Pembina Trails to conduct online learning and I found myself frantically contacting schools to arrange for Seesaw PD before they were



closed due to the pandemic. Of the few schools I didn't reach in time, fortunately there were capable teacher-librarians willing to take charge of Seesaw learning in their schools.

During the Covid-19 crisis, as Library Learning Commons and Literacy Consultant, I became the leader of Seesaw in Pembina Trails. It was to me whom our IT department, senior and school administrators and teachers called upon to have all the answers about how Seesaw worked or why it didn't work. To gauge how our students and teachers were progressing with their online learning, I even became the keeper and issuer of all divisional Seesaw usage statistics for our IT department and Senior Administrators. At one point, I found myself jok-

ing that the IT department needed to make me an honorary member of their department!

Throughout the crisis, I have had to embrace what I have always preached to the school library learning commons staff and teachers whom I work with to dig in the best that they can and not to be afraid to learn something new. The phrase that I had used often in the past, "we are all life-long learners" came to mind many times. I spent many long days and nights anxiously pouring over the intricacies of Seesaw and preparing online PD sessions. In my angst over providing correct answers and professional learning support for Seesaw, I was further challenged by having to provide this support using an online tool (Microsoft Teams) that I had never used before. I'm sure that the good people at Seesaw know my name by heart due to the number of questions I asked them during the Covid-19 crisis. I have had to learn that it's ok to say, "I don't know

the answer to your question right now but I'll find out for you and get back to you."

It's amazing to me how much more I know now about Seesaw and Microsoft Teams as compared to when I first began learning from home. It speaks to the importance of creating an authentic purpose and audience when asking anyone to learn something new. I was also reminded of how important it is to be patient and kind when teaching someone a new skill. The amount of anxiety and self-doubt I experienced throughout this time is something that will stay with me always especially in my role as consultant where I am constantly encouraging teachers and support staff to embrace new ideas and ways of learning.

# MSLA Executive, 2020–2021

## MSLA Executive:

### Board of Directors:

#### President

Brandi Bartok

#### Past President

Niki Card

#### President Elect

Sandy Welbergen

#### Secretary

Grace Ballard

#### Treasurer

Erin Thomas

## Standing Committees:

### Publications

OPEN

### Membership

Alison Bodner

### Website

Jo-Ann Gibson

### SAGE Conference 2020

Brandi Bartok

### Advocacy/Publicity

Leanne Falconer

## Professional Learning

OPEN

### Awards

Niki Card

### Archives

Samantha Popowich

## Members-at-Large

Katie Williams

Karin Surzshyn

---

## MSLA Liaisons

### DREF

Heather Brydon

### WPL

Karin Borland

### CM

John Tooth

### CSL

Jo-Anne Gibson

### MANACE

Andy McKiel

### MCSC

Nancy Girardin

### MTS

Lia Gervino

Cynthia Taylor

### MLCI

Heather Brydon

### AIMSL

Christine Janzen

### MSLA Mailing Address:

Manitoba School Library Association

307 Shaftesbury Blvd.

Winnipeg, MB. R3P 0L9

[mslapresident@gmail.com](mailto:mslapresident@gmail.com)

