

Languages Education in Southern Alberta

**SAHLA presentation for
SOHL 2009 Provincial Conference
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Language Association ([sahla](#))**



SAHLA's mission

SAHLA is a Calgary-based non-profit educational umbrella association whose mission is:

To lead, advocate and provide resources for the promotion of international & heritage languages education.



SAHLA's vision

*Every student in the province of Alberta will have the opportunity to access and learn an **International Language** as part of their **basic education**.*

- Alberta Education helped this vision to become very close to **reality** in 2006, when 52 out of Alberta's 62 school boards introduced a languages requirement starting at grade four!
- Community-based language programs through SAHLA & IHLA continue to be a strong and vital source for learning many different languages.



SAHLA partners

Since 1978, SAHLA has been working with:

- *Community Language Schools & Ethno-cultural communities*
- *Community Language School Principals, Teachers, Students & Parents*
- *IHLA (formerly NAHLA)*
- *Canadian Languages Association (CLA)*
- *Provincial government (Alberta Education, Alberta Culture)*
- *Local school boards (ie. CBE, CCSD)*
- *City of Calgary & Calgary Public Library*
- *Post-secondary institutions (U of C, MRC)*
- *Language associations (CASLT, ISLC, ESL)*
- *Federal government (Canadian Heritage)*
- *Political leaders*
- *Business groups (Calgary Chamber of Commerce)*

38 Languages taught by SAHLA's schools... A to Y

- Afghani
- Amharic (Ethiopian)
- Arabic
- Armenian
- Bengali (East Indian)
- Bulgarian
- Cantonese
- Croatian
- Danish
- Dinka (Sudanese)
- Farsi (Persian)
- Greek
- Gujarati (East Indian)
- Hindi (East Indian)
- Italian
- Japanese
- Khmer (Cambodian)
- Korean
- Kurdish
- Lithuanian
- Mandarin
- Nuer (Sudanese)
- Oromo (Ethiopian)
- Polish
- Portuguese
- Punjabi
- Spanish
- Swahili
- Swedish
- Tagalog (Pilipino)
- Tamil (Sri Lankan)
- Tibetan
- Tigrinia (Eritrean)
- Turkish
- Ukrainian
- Urdu (Pakistan)
- Vietnamese
- Yoruba (Nigerian)

SAHLA – 38 Language Schools from A to Y...

- Akiva Academy (1974)
- Alberta Chung Wah Chinese School (1997)
- Arabic – Horizon Academy (2006)
- Armenian Canadian Cultural Association Language School (2009)
- Bulgarian Language School (2003)
- Calgary Chinese Cultural Society Language School (1993)
- Calgary Chinese School
- Calgary Chinese Private School (1910)
- Calgary Chinese Alliance School
- Calgary Italian School (1974)
- Calgary Japanese Language School (1975)
- Calgary Korean School (1979)
- Cambodian Language School
- Cantonese Chinese School
- Chinese Academy (1997)
- Chinese Heritage Language Society (1991)
- Eritrean Language School –Tigrinia (1990)
- Farsi Language School (2008)
- Kurdish Community Lang. School
- Hungarian Language School (1965)
- Hindu Vidyalaya – Hindi School (1993)
- Ethiopian Language School–Amharic (2002)
- Hellenic Greek Language School
- Horizon Turkish School (2007)
- John Paul II Polish School (1934)
- Language School of the German Canadian Club (1955)
- Persian Language School
- Pilipino Language School
- Brazilian Portuguese Language School
- Russian Language School (1996)
- School for East Indian Languages Education and Performing Arts (1979)
- Spanish School of Calgary (1989)
- Sudanese School - Dinka, Luowo Nuer, Acholi
- Swedish Language School (1985)
- Tibetan Language School (1978)
- Yu Feng Chinese School (1997)
- Vietnamese Language School
- Yoruba Language School -Nigeria (2007)

Some of our schools...

John Paul II Polish School

- established in **1934**
- celebrated its 75th anniversary this year.
- **433 students** (K-12)
- **31 teachers**
- high school Curriculum developed locally and recognized by Alberta Education
- operates in a Catholic school on Saturday mornings

Armenian School

- established in **2009**
- opens its doors for the very first time tomorrow! (Oct. 4)
- **10 students**
- **2 teachers**
- grades 1-8
- curriculum developed regionally
- operates in a cultural centre on Saturdays/Sundays

Some of our schools...

Chinese Academy

- established in 1997
- celebrated its 12th anniversary this year.
- **1925 students** (K-12)
- **88 teachers** (10 certificated)
- 54 volunteers
- high school Curriculum developed provincially and recognized by Alberta Education
- Mandarin & Cantonese
- includes martial arts, speech, writing & singing competition
- operates in a public school on Saturday mornings

Eritrean Language School

- established in 1990
- **105 students**
- **10 teachers**
- 9 volunteers
- grades 1-10
- curriculum developed locally, looking ahead for curriculum to be recognized by AB ED.
- Tigrigna language
- includes soccer & dance programs
- operates in a public school on Saturday afternoons

SAHLA's role

- SAHLA plays invaluable unduplicated role in bringing **over 36 language and cultural communities**, schools, principals and teachers together, **teaching 36 languages to over 6,000 students**.
- Share ***curriculum and best teaching practices*** between linguistic and cultural communities.
- **Develop, enhance and promote *our rich linguistic and cultural diversity*** and community-based language schools.
- **Advocate for *effective language policies and programs***, to benefit students both at public education and community levels.

SAHLA developments

- **SAHLA** has been working hard with cultural associations, **community-based language schools**, Alberta Education, and school boards for over the past 30 years (AELTA was created in 1978).
- **SAHLA** continually promotes the importance of heritage and international **languages learning** as part of **basic education for ALL students**, regardless of background.
- A major achievement of SAHLA's work with Alberta Education, resulted in **Alberta's proposed second language study requirement for all Alberta students (2006)**. Most school boards across Alberta now teach a second language.

SAHLA developments

- **Professional Development Program** for Community-based Language Instructors in partnership with **U of C & MRC since 2003**. Last year, this became a **recognized Certificate from U of C Continuing Education**.
- **Conferences & workshops** - bring schools (principals & teachers) together and **share common issues and best practices**. Invite guest speakers --language experts and representatives (Alberta Education, CLA, U of C etc.)
- **Curriculum & Teaching Resource development** to assist schools (standardized, flexible framework for non-credit and credit courses). Help schools meet Alberta Education curriculum criteria for credit courses (ie. Chinese, German, Greek, Polish, Swedish, Tagalog).
- Finding affordable **teaching and classroom space for community schools**. An ongoing challenge!

SAHLA highlights & achievements
SAHLA & Alberta Education

- Working together on a project-basis to enhance community-based languages learning.
 - enhancement of the teaching and learning of international/heritage languages for children and students at community language schools***
 - development & coordination of language schools***
 - language instructor professional development***
 - language school curriculum & teaching resource development***

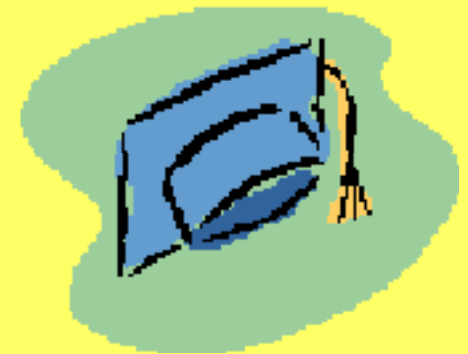
SAHLA thanks Alberta Education for its support!

SAHLA highlights & achievements

SAHLA Professional Development Program for Language Instructors

Established in 2003 in partnership with
**University of Calgary Language Research Centre
& Mount Royal College Languages Institute**

- ***Over 100 students (teachers) have participated in the program, representing:***
- ***22 community language schools***
- ***18 different language and cultural communities***
- ***Original program requirements (2003-2006):***
- ***8 core courses and 2 options***
- ***10 courses / over 100 hours total***



SAHLA highlights & achievements

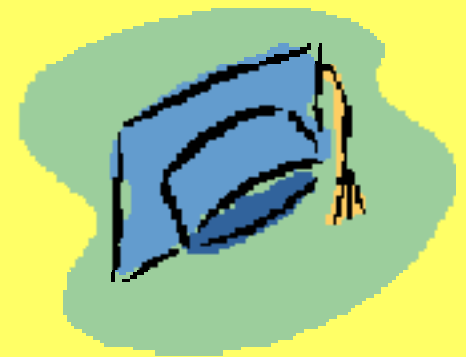
SAHLA Professional Development Program for Language Instructors

- *Over 50 students have received certificates of completion!*

Many thanks to

- Alberta Education
- University of Calgary
- Mount Royal College
- SAHLA's community-based language schools & instructors

for their continued support, and participation.



In the fall of 2007...

SAHLA & U of C
Continuing Education
introduced a new



Professional Development
CERTIFICATE Program

for International Heritage
Language Instructors

***NEW SAHLA & U of C Continuing Education
Professional Development Certificate Program
for International Heritage Language Instructors***

**Are you teaching international or heritage languages
at a community school?**

- Deepen your understanding of language learning by taking our **120-hour Professional Development Certificate**. This certificate is delivered in partnership with SAHLA.

OR

**Are you a public/separate/private school teacher who must
incorporate grade four second-language mandate into your
classroom?**

- Take either the full **250-hour certificate for in-depth knowledge of second language teaching** or the 120-hour professional development certificate specializing in **International & Heritage Languages** or French as a Second Language.

SAHLA highlights & achievements
SAHLA & U of C Continuing Education
Professional Development Certificate Program
for International Heritage Language Instructors

4 Courses total = 120 hours

1) Pedagogic Fundamentals – 30 hours

2) Teaching Specific Language Skills 1 – 30 hours
(Reading/Writing/Grammar/Vocabulary)

3) Teaching Specific Language Skills 2 – 30 hours
(Speaking/Listening/Pronunciation)

4) Assessment and Materials Development – 30 hours 17

SAHLA & U of C Certificate Program

IHL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CERTIFICATE

4 Courses total = 120 hours

1) Pedagogic Fundamentals – 30 hours

Focus on the “art and science” of second language learning and teaching in the classroom. This course’s learner-centered objectives include *how to read curriculum guidelines and assess student needs, how to plan, prepare and deliver a lesson, and how to create a supportive learning climate in the classroom through classroom and time management.*

2) Teaching Specific Language Skills 1 – 30 hours (Reading/Writing/Grammar/Vocabulary)

Explore both theoretical and practical aspects of specific skills in learning a second language. Review what is known about the reading and writing process including communicating well to be heard and understood and reading and writing for specific purposes. Next review what is known about teaching grammar in a second language while concentrating on pedagogical techniques. Cover critical and innovative approaches to grammar and learn specific strategies for teaching grammar in a second

language. Finally, cover systematic and principled procedures for teaching vocabulary.¹⁸

SAHLA & U of C Certificate Program

IHL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CERTIFICATE

4 Courses total = 120 hours

3) Teaching Specific Language Skills 2 – 30 hours (Speaking/Listening/Pronunciation)

Become aware of current techniques used in the classroom that promote **listening and speaking** and be introduced to the ***communicative method of second language learning through group discussion, modeling, games and activities***. Then, discover how sounds are produced in a variety of languages and how to correct common problems with pronunciation in a second language by learning practical classroom teaching techniques. Gain familiarity with the International Phonetic Alphabet.

4) Assessment and Materials Development – 30 hours

Analyze classroom assessment strategies, processes, issues and trends in the assessment of student language learning. Perspectives of assessment from learner, teacher, standardized tests and workplace needs will be addressed, as will the functions of formative and summative assessment. The role of assessment in learner motivation, accountability, and communication of learner ability will be addressed with reference to participant's real classroom experiences. Then focus on key criteria used in assessing and selecting materials. Familiarize yourself with the main types of materials currently available, and examine the range of teaching possibilities with these materials. Finally, experiment with developing your own materials to meet second language classroom needs.

SAHLA & U of C Certificate Program

NEW TEACHING SECOND LANGUAGES CERTIFICATE

TEACHING SECOND LANGUAGE FUNDAMENTALS

Part II

(IHL Teachers can take this after completing IHL PD Certificate)

4 Courses total = 130 hours

All 4 courses will be offered on-line only

- Teaching Second Languages - Foundations – 40 hours
- Teaching Second Languages - Methodology – 30 hours
- Linguistic Structures – 30 hours
- Teaching Culture – 30 hours

2008: UN International Year of Languages

- SAHLA hosted **2008 International Year of Languages Symposium** for community-based language educators – Nov. 1
- Over 60 community-based language school principals & teachers participated, along with representatives from Alberta Education, CBE, CSSD, Calgary Public Library, U of C, Canadian Languages Association.
- SAHLA co-hosted **UNESCO Mother Language Day Celebration “Beyond Bilingual Canada – Impact of Mother Tongue”**
- **Public Forum** – Feb 21. Over 150 people attended.
- In partnership with Calgary Multicultural Centre, Calgary Board of Education, Calgary Catholic Schools, University of Calgary and Calgary Public Library
- Keynote Speakers, **John Archibald**, Head of Linguistics Language Research Centre, U of C
- **Alysouk Lynhiavu**, Canadian Commission for UNESCO



Community Language Schools

Ongoing issues and challenges



- **Community-based language schools continue to face increasing operational costs, which they are 100% responsible for:**

including:

- classroom rental
- teacher honorarium
- teaching materials, equipment

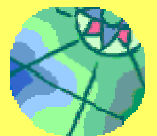
ALBERTA'S NEW CULTURAL POLICY (2008) Alberta Culture & Community Spirit

- **Vision:** *an Alberta where all citizens feel a sense of belonging and pride, and participate in cultural and recreational activities that reflect their diverse heritage and enrich their lives*
- **Mission:** *To ensure Albertans have the opportunity to share, express and experience culture in a province that respects the past, celebrates the present and welcomes the future.*
- *“Culture is who we are, what we value, what we consider beautiful, how we spend our leisure time and how we think about and treat others.”*

Revitalizing Languages Project

-SAHLA has been actively working with many communities in Calgary over recent years to support **new** language programs:

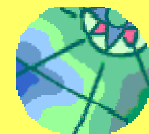
- *Amharic (Ethiopian)*
- *Arabic*
- *Bulgarian*
- *Khmer (Cambodian)*
- *Kurdish*
- *Persian (Farsi)*
- *Tagalog (Pilipino)*
- *Sudanese languages (Dinka, Nuer, Acholi, etc)*
- *Tigrinia (Eritrean)*
- *Yoruba (Nigerian)*



Revitalizing Languages Project

How can SAHLA continue to help?:

- Working in partnership with **Alberta Education**, local school boards, CLA, CASLT and others to continue to **recognize and support community-based language education**
- teacher **professional development**
- **curriculum & teaching resource development**
– *standardized, flexible framework*
- **promotion of languages learning & schools**
- **SAHLA resource centre and staff**



SAHLA ongoing Initiatives & Programs

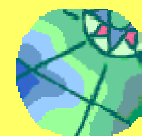
Languages Technology

SAHLA is assisting community-based language schools through the use of human, print, computer and web-based resource support for:

- ***Curriculum & teaching resource development*** – *standardized/flexible*
- ***Instructor development and lesson planning***
- ***Enhanced networking*** *between language schools across Calgary, Alberta and Canada*
- ***School web-page*** *development*

Check out our website, www.sahla.ca

- *info. about SAHLA, community language schools, conferences, workshops, teaching and curriculum resources*
- *language and cultural education links across Calgary, Alberta and Canada, including **Canadian Languages Association (CLA)***

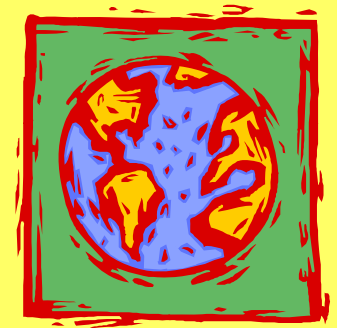


International/heritage languages

- **Learning Languages builds important bridges** between individuals, their parents, relatives and with their motherland. Understanding and maintaining one's own cultural identity. **Narrowing the generation gap.**
- Helps our young people become better aware of others' cultures and traditions
- Prepare an individual for a broader range of experiences in their future for their work, leisure and study purpose
- **Language is the most vital communication skill in society.** It is necessary for everyday life and is related to every single part of our community from industry including **tourism, import export, economy, and social justice as well international relationship.** Learning a language can also contribute towards **social, cultural, educational and economic resources** of the Alberta community.
- Since language and culture are inextricably linked, learning languages can contribute to cultural enrichment and **intercultural understanding** between different groups in several ways.
- Learning heritage and international languages also helps immigrants settle better in Alberta.
- Language is an important part of the **Alberta Education curriculum.**

International/heritage languages

- Together, with multiculturalism are part of an inseparable family – language and culture.
- Reinforce **Canadian multicultural identity** and strengthen our country's way of life. The result is social cohesion, which includes:
 - cross-cultural understanding, anti-racism, peace-building & civic participation*
- Language and cultural communities promote Canada's mosaic through the teaching of over 60 languages and cultures across the country.
- Essential to Alberta's and Canada's relationships with the international community, in the areas of:
 - International relations & cooperation***
 - International trade***
 - International development***



2006 Canada Census

Release *no. 6*: March 4, 2008

In 2006, close to **2.8 million Canadians reported using more than one language at work.**

Release *no. 4*: December 4, 2007

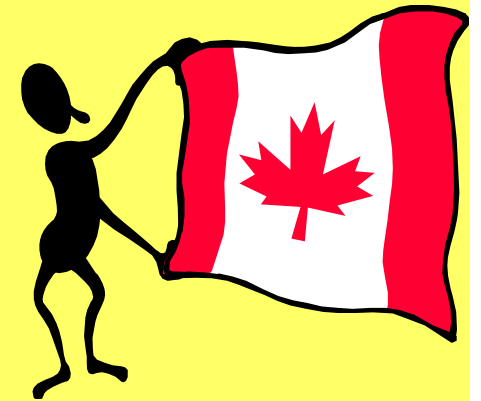
Due to increased immigration since the mid-1980s, and the tendency of most immigrants to have a mother tongue other than English or French, **the share of the allophone population has grown: from 18% in 2001 to 20% in 2006.**

In 2006, **98% of the population can speak one or both official languages.** In addition, English or French is spoken at least regularly at home by 94% of Canadians and most often at home for 89% of the population, sometimes in combination with a non-official language.

The **Chinese languages¹** are the third largest mother tongue group, as 3% of the population reported a Chinese language as their mother tongue.

2006 Canada Census

- Canada is becoming more and more a multilingual society with **more than five million Canadians** having a mother tongue other than English or French.
- Canadians reported more than 100 languages spoken.
- **The five most widely-spoken non-official languages** are Chinese (the home language of 2.6% of Canadians), Punjabi (0.8%), Spanish (0.7%), Italian (0.6%), and Arabic (0.5%). Aboriginal languages, many of which are unique to Canada, are spoken by less than one percent of the population, and are mostly in decline.
- Language groups from **Asia and the Middle East** (ie. Chinese, Punjabi) again recorded the largest gains.
- The census is available in **42 languages** other than French and English, as well as another 18 First Nations languages.



Canada's Commissioner of Official Languages

***“We’re seeing a nation that is
embracing official bilingualism
and multilingualism...***

***We will continue to embrace
diversity.”***



- Dyane McAdam, 2002

Reaching out for Languages

*A brighter window on the world
for all of Canada's people, especially our youth.*

