



IHLA Professional Standards

This document was created by the International and Heritage Languages Association, IHLA and published in June 2011.

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www.ihla.ca



What IHLA Members Stand For

The IHLA Professional Standards document is the result of an 18-month long process that IHLA schools embarked on, during 2009 and 2011.

During this time period, IHLA board members reflected on a special document that was issued by the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) of which IHLA is a member. The ACTFL document is entitled: Statement for Professional Responsibility for ACTFL Members, which was finalized in 2009.

Amongst the statements of the inspiring document, IHLA members considered three key areas: 1) Commitment to the Community; 2) Commitment to Students; and 3) Professionalism and Leadership.

The commitment statements have undergone several revisions, including a

community session where IHLA school members considered each statement and discussed what the statements mean to them, as a community school and leaders in international and heritage language education.

This final document is the result of the latest revision and approval by the IHLA members at the Annual General Meeting on June 6, 2011.

These standards will officially come in effect as of September 1, 2011 and will serve as a guiding document for IHLA and all its members.

The standards outline the key areas of focus and commitment that IHLA schools will strive to achieve at the community level. They will serve as a guidance to compare and possibly initiative local polices for professional

conduct. These standards are not expected to be used as a policy document - but more like an ethical conduct guiding set of rules that can help build community, respectful behaviour and a sense of professionalism that we all want to achieve in our commitment to language education.

We hope this document will serve you well and inspire you to be the best language and culture education provider you can be in your own communities.

IHLA Board, 2011

Commitment to the Community

This is the section that deals with standards about commitment to the community.

IHLA member schools are first and foremost community schools. They are created by the community and they serve the community. These standards outline the type of commitment that all IHLA member schools strive to follow with regards to their relationship with and in the community.

Standard 1) deals primarily with information sharing about school programs and initiatives. IHLA schools become the hub of information and resources for the community around language and culture programs.

“MEMBER SCHOOLS, TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS, ARE COMMITTED TO SUPPORTING AND MAINTAINING ONGOING INFORMATION SHARING OF INTERNATIONAL AND HERITAGE LANGUAGE AND CULTURE PROGRAMS AT THE COMMUNITY LEVEL AND BEYOND”

1

Ideas around achieving this standard

1. Write locally developed programs of studies (LCDs)
2. Maintain constant communication within the community through different communication channels (newsletters, handouts, bulletin news, meetings, etc.)
3. Involve the school in community activities/events
4. Promote the school through different venues – dances, displays, etc.
5. Engage in after-school programs
6. Participate in different community events with performance, display and info sharing
7. Involve school teachers in the community
8. Consider impact of access to resources to keep everyone informed
9. Promote and participate in cultural programs such as dance, singing in the community
10. Participate annually in the International Mother Language Day event at IHLA
11. Teach about language culture and history of your own community heritage
12. Celebrate in your school program and in different community places
13. Keeping current with what/how the language and culture are evolving in your native country
14. Engage the whole community in events typical of native country

Commitment to the Community

Standard 2) deals primarily with the essential idea of collaboration. IHLA member schools promote collaboration within their communities, supporting ideas and projects that build the most ideal learning environments for their students and their communities.

IHLA schools also collaborate with other schools in their own communities and across communities in their same language and culture. They strive to build bridges and work together on common goals.

Finally, IHLA schools collaborate with each other, across borders of language and culture diversity, and they build positive environments in the true multiculturalism spirit of Canada.

“MEMBERS MAINTAIN HIGH STANDARDS OF COLLABORATION WITHIN THEIR COMMUNITY AND ACROSS COMMUNITIES FOR THE BENEFIT OF STUDENTS OF ALL AGES, WHO WISH TO LEARN OR IMPROVE THEIR COMPETENCY SKILLS IN THE HERITAGE AND INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE OF THE COMMUNITY”

2

Ideas around achieving this standard

1. Consider offering courses for different age groups and at different levels
2. Involve people from the community (guest speakers) such as elders, professionals, and any other member who may enrich the experience from the cultural and historical perspective
3. Maintain collaboration efforts with other community organizations
4. Share experiences with other organization in order to learn from each other
5. Keep current with language competency needs and ways to teach these competences to a variety of learners
6. Maintaining/teaching native language or dialect speaking with parents of the native language
7. Initiate a class for non-members
8. Offer open-house sessions where the public can come and view what the school programs are about and how they are structured
9. Offer a variety of language programs (content-based language learning, culture courses, history and traditions, cooking classes, dance classes in the language, etc.)

Commitment to the Community

Standard 3) deals with the concrete idea of ongoing communication and practice of gathering on a regular basis.

based on the ideas of support, information sharing and collaboration, IHLA member schools find ways to maintaining ongoing communication channels within their communities and across communities.

Meetings occur on a regular basis and are a way for IHLA member schools to stay in touch, build rapport and connect with their students, parents, administrators and volunteers.

Ultimately, IHLA member schools attend regular IHLA meetings on an annual basis.

MEMBERS GATHER ON A REGULAR BASIS AND PARTICIPATE IN MEETINGS THAT DEAL WITH MATTERS OF LANGUAGE AND CULTURE EDUCATION AT THE COMMUNITY LEVEL

3

Ideas around achieving this standard

1. At meetings create standards for teacher or reflect one existing standards
2. Set up regular meetings with board of directors
3. Ensure the school has a board of directors volunteer-based group that is regularly informed about the activities of the school
4. Structure meetings so that minutes are regularly kept and records can be viewed and referred to for school operations
5. Establish and refer to guiding policies around meetings and communication protocols

Commitment to the Community

Standard 4) deals with the idea of maintaining highly ethical and professional conducts in all school activities, that IHLA member school will carry out during their annual operations.

This standards talks to the idea of ensuring that official and daily operations and communications within and across the community are always carried out with respect and intercultural sensitivity, ensuring that all communications take place in good faith and with good intentions, to build community environments that positively affect the learning experience of all involved.

“IN ALL THEIR LANGUAGE EDUCATION-RELATED ENDEAVOURS MEMBERS STRIVE CONSISTENTLY AND CONTINUOUSLY TO MAINTAIN THE HIGHEST STANDARDS OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT WITHIN THEIR OWN COMMUNITIES AND INTER-COMMUNITY AFFILIATIONS”

Ideas around achieving this standard

1. Be honest and respectful in all matters of the school
2. Act professional in all tasks and through all communication channels
3. Be mindful of cultural differences and expectations
4. Respect protocol
5. Respect intercultural competencies
6. Learn from each other participating in activities with each other
7. Treat all other schools and communities with outmost respect
8. Treat all students equally
9. Understand the cultural differences within community and outside and help the students to handle the differences professionally

Commitment to Students

This is the section that deals with standards about commitment to the students.

IHLA member schools work through specifically structured educational environments to facilitate the learning of language and cultures at the community levels, building communities of learners of all ages and interests.

Standard 1) deals with the schools' commitment to provide high quality linguistic competence as well as in-depth and valuable cultural competence in unbiased ways, to all students who attend IHLA schools. A special focus is maintained around the idea of "love" for languages and cultures around the world.

“MEMBERS ARE COMMITTED TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF LINGUISTIC AND COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE, PROMOTION OF UNBIASED CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING, AND TO INSPIRE AND SUPPORT LOVE, PASSION AND ENTHUSIASM FOR LANGUAGES IN EVERY STUDENT OF THEIR COMMUNITY SCHOOL”

1

Ideas around achieving this standard

1. Use tasks and activities that promote interest and passion for the language and cultures
2. Encourage all learner and community members who support and promote the language and culture of the community
3. Use the heritage international language whenever possible when teaching and conducting education activities within the schools. Use English as well when communication difficulties also arise
4. Show movies and other interesting language-related stories, card games, etc. to develop interest in the language
5. Respect intercultural competency
6. Promote use of heritage language by using the language in teaching communicative method

Commitment to Students

Standard 2) focuses on the idea of creating and supporting ways to treat students with respect and dignity.

IHLA schools establish school policies and guiding rules that allow every student to feel safe, respected and valued in the school. This standard also addresses the notion of privacy and the work that IHLA school will strive to put in place to ensure that information is kept private and that tools are used to ask for permission to use students' work for celebration, task exemplars and sharing of progress with the community and with IHLA.

“MEMBERS WORK TOGETHER WITHIN THEIR COMMUNITY SCHOOLS TO ESTABLISH, MAINTAIN AND PROMOTE POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH AND AMONGST STUDENTS, AT ALL TIMES RESPECTING STUDENTS’ PRIVACY AND THEIR PERSONAL INTEGRITY”

Ideas around achieving this standard

1. Ensure you make use of FOIP forms/submissions
2. Teaching by being an active role model within the school and the community at large
3. Always include positive reinforcement/motivation in all activities the school completes
4. Use discretion when needed
5. Respect differences - making students aware that we are all unique
6. Know your students and their backgrounds
7. Ensure instructors communicate effectively about students across the different levels
8. Encourage students to communicate respectfully with each other at all times
9. Elicit praise and enthusiasm for all school activities

Commitment to Students

Standard 3) speaks to the fundamental need of all students to learn in exciting, engaging and supportive environments, where learning takes place on a regular basis, is meaningful and celebrated often.

Positive learning communities share successes and focus on gained competences and move towards higher goals in incremental and doable ways. Learners feel valued and motivated to continue to learn in such exciting learning environments.

“MEMBERS ESTABLISH AND PROMOTE POSITIVE AND ENGAGING LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS FOR EVERY STUDENT AND INCORPORATE THE CELEBRATION OF STUDENTS’ SUCCESSES”

Ideas around achieving this standard

1. Share successes with each other classes and parents at the school level
2. Use effective differentiation strategies to encourage students to work together
3. Provide models for celebrating and sharing successes
4. Acknowledge students strengths
5. Celebrate with formal and informal learning and community events
6. Differentiate – acknowledge strengths whenever possible
7. Demo of learning - use opportunities for students to demonstrate what they know in the language
8. Create ways to incorporate celebrations in the curriculum
9. Hands on/realistic activities/active learners
10. Use radio shows/projects, technology tools to communicate and share
11. Use positive reinforcements in meaningful ways
12. Pace activities according to students’ needs and abilities
13. Use games
14. Use cooperative learning
15. Share work with others – classes, parents, teachers
16. Praise students’ successes

Professionalism and Leadership

This is the section that deals with standards about professionalism and Leadership.

IHLA member schools act in highly professional ways in all their activities and tasks. Although instructors in IHLA member schools do not require provincial certification, unless they teach locally developed and approved high school programs, they still strive to act a professional educators, working on their previous teaching experiences in their own countries of origin, and or working collaboratively and respecting the Canadian learning experience of their students.

Standard 1) deals with instructors' professional development goals and activities to reach them.

“MEMBERS ARE COMMITTED TO PROMOTING AND MAINTAINING HIGH QUALITY TEACHING STANDARDS OF LANGUAGE AND CULTURE EDUCATION BY SEEKING AND ENGAGING IN, ORGANIZING AND LEADING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS ON A REGULAR BASIS”

Ideas around achieving this standard

1. Incorporate/involve older teachers in sharing their teaching experiences
2. Participate frequently in IHLA PD sessions and events
3. Encourage all instructors to take part in offered workshops and seminars
4. Attend conferences in the language and culture
5. Read journals and articles about language education
6. Discuss literature amongst instructors
7. Establish a school curriculum
8. Share unit and lesson planning
9. Plan together
10. Utilize educational tools that are consistent across the school (i.e. report cards)
11. Establish routine conversations and communications with parents
12. Invite instructors to set personal professional goals and support them in reaching the goals
13. Provide professional support with access to funds to improve instruction
14. Access reliable resources to support the curriculum
15. Celebrate instructors' successes

Professionalism and Leadership

Standard 2) speaks to the commitment of IHLA member schools to promote multiculturalism and respect, knowledge and understanding of all language and cultures in Canada, at the community level and through inter-provincial, national and international level.

IHLA schools take every opportunity they can to ensure that bridges between and across cultures are built and supported, with participating and organizing in a variety of activities. individually and through the coordination of IHLA.

“MEMBERS ARE COMMITTED TO LEADERSHIP IN LANGUAGE EDUCATION IN THEIR COMMUNITIES. THEY STRIVE TO PROMOTE HERITAGE AND INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL CONNECTIONS AND SUPPORT MULTICULTURALISM AT THE COMMUNITY LEVEL AND WITHIN CANADA”

Ideas around achieving this standard

1. Maintain active and current membership with IHLA and other IHLA member schools
2. Consult the IHLA website often
3. Actively contribute to IHLA activities and events, such as the Annual International Mother Language Day
4. Welcome and invite all kinds of students to be part of the community school
5. Participate in various cultural activities at the local and national level
6. Stay connected with local cultural communities with similar heritage goals (dance clubs, traditional clubs, etc.)
7. Maintain an active profile in the communications network in your community and in the city (be part of events run by in the neighborhood, the local newspaper, at the city level)
8. Share information about multicultural activities and take part whenever possible

Professionalism and Leadership

Standard 3) speaks to the importance, for IHLA member schools, to maintain, in all activities and communications, the outmost professional and respectful language and behaviour with their members and across communities.

This standards speaks not only to the specifically educational types of activities that IHLA member schools carry out on a regular basis, but also to all collaborative and communication tasks that they will engage in during their operations.

“MEMBERS INTERACT WITH STUDENTS, COLLEAGUES, PARENTS, AND ALL MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY WITH RESPECT, UNDERSTANDING AND INTEGRITY”

Ideas around achieving this standard

1. Consider ways to create welcoming events for new immigrants
2. Create a bridge to support ways to locate resources within the community
3. Be a resource for everyone in the community
4. Be an ambassador
5. Be friendly but firm towards students/new immigrants
6. Explain and interpret the “Canadian” way with people who are new to the community
7. Find ways to connect to new immigrants
8. Invite newcomers to speak as presenters at special school events
9. Promote integrity and respect in everything that you do at the school level

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