

President's Report

It has been an honour to serve as President of ELAC this year. The Council members are passionate and dedicated individuals who strive to support their fellow ELA teachers. I am very proud of the things we have accomplished. Many items were the result of ongoing work from the council members such as the planning, organizing, and implementation of the Making Meaning 2018 conference which includes Penny Kittle as a keynote speaker and many valuable breakout sessions. Our Inclusive Literature Committee also released the *ELAC Recommends: Gender and Sexual Diversity in the English Language Arts Classroom* reading list. The list was sent to Minister Eggen along with a letter voicing ELAC's support of teachers who are dedicated to honouring the gender and sexually diversity of students in Alberta classrooms.

We have also launched a new award for ELAC, the STAR Award (Supporters, Teachers, and Researchers in English Language Arts), which replaced previous awards. Other changes include the re-design of the *Celebrating Words* writing contest; the new format will launch in the fall of 2018. We have also put forth a motion that will extend the President's term to two years which will allow for the president to form and follow through with long-term goals. The longer term would also allow presidents to develop their expertise in their leadership role which would benefit the general membership and ELAC overall. Finally, a new logo for ELAC has been decided upon, and we are happy to have this clean, modern look to for ELAC as the Council continues its excellent work.

The Council continued its support of beginning teachers; the engagement of members at the local level; the publication of *Alberta Voices*; a widely read monthly newsletter; and a website that will also see a new format in the near future. ELAC continued to be well-represented in Alberta Education's Curriculum Working Group for ELA.

This year has been extremely rewarding and enjoyable, and I thank all the members of the executive for being such supportive colleagues.

Regards,
Shelley Grey-Sortland

Past-President's Report

This past year, I was thankful for the opportunity to present with Kevin McBean, on behalf of ELAC, at the Beginning Teachers' Conference in Edmonton. Judging from the teachers in the room, our profession is in capable and enthusiastic hands! I am also happy to report that we revised our Awards this year. I am optimistic that the new criteria for ELAC's new STAR Award will encourage even more members to nominate individuals who are making invaluable contributions to the English language arts in Alberta.

It has been an honour to serve the ELAC "Presidential cycle," and I look forward to seeing the work that will continue to be accomplished in the year(s) ahead.

Respectfully submitted,
Chandra Hildebrand

President-Elect Report

I was privileged to spend this past year on the executive council learning more about the work of ELAC and the role of president. I felt particularly honored to represent the council at the NCTE

conference in St. Louis in November. Speaking with colleagues from across North America affirmed what I already believed to be true: Alberta English Language Arts teachers are truly outstanding. Other highlights from the year include co-presenting at the Edmonton Beginning Teachers' Conference with past-president Chandra Hildebrand and assisting conference director Tannis Niziol in her work organizing the 2018 conference. I am grateful to Shelley Grey-Sortland for her leadership and friendship over the past year and I look forward to serving as president and continuing the work of ELAC.

Respectfully submitted,
Kevin McBean

Communications Report

This year, ELAC's communications plan was focused on ensuring that we were reaching our members so that we could share our work with them. Toward this goal, I made some changes to the existing "Much Ado About ELAC" monthly newsletter. I have been using the Smore program, which makes visually pleasing newsletters that provide us with analytics. By using these analytics, I can see that we are reaching over 1000 members a month. I am also able to see which items they are most interested in – this year, items related to our Making Meaning conference were very popular. This information has been very valuable in shaping our communications plan as it helps me to ensure that our work is in tune with what the membership is looking for.

Thank you for the rewarding opportunity to serve as Communication Coordinator this year,
Laura Schmaltz

New Teacher Liaison Report

Since my previous report in March, my focus has been on preparation for the ELAC Conference in May, particularly working with the publishers.

In my role as *New Teacher Liaison* I have invited four beginning teachers to attend the conference. ELAC was pleased to draw their names from our new members from the Beginnings Teacher Conferences. I am looking forward to making their acquaintance at the conference.

Also, since March, ELAC has approved their new logo. It is my suggestion that in the fall the ELAC Executive choose new items for giveaway/ publicity at the upcoming events for the new school year.

At the end of this conference, I will be resigning from my role with ELAC, as I move to other opportunities. I would like to take this opportunity to say a heartfelt thank you to all of the ELAC Executive, and members, for allowing me the pleasure of serving in this role for the past few years. It has been delightful to meet many new teachers across Alberta and share with them the effective and important professional development offered by ELAC. I was pleased to be a part of the ELAC membership growth over these past years. Finally, I will treasure the many friendships I have made through my time on the ELAC Executive.

Respectfully submitted,
Fran Bell

Alberta Education Report

Alberta Education is continuing its work on curriculum development that keeps pace with changing conceptions of future needs and socio-economic and demographic contexts. Work began in 2016 on Language Arts (English Language Arts, French Language Arts, Français), Mathematics, Social Studies, Sciences, Arts and Wellness Education in both English and French.

Alberta Education is continuing to work with Curriculum Working Groups, first completing draft subject introductions and draft scope and sequences in each Kindergarten to Grade 12 subject, and now completing draft learning outcomes for the six subject areas, beginning with Kindergarten to Grade 4.

The validation process for future curriculum is currently in the planning stages. Information on this process will be shared as soon as it becomes available. Targeted actions for validation that are under consideration include:

- Specialist reviews (e.g., specialists in the field of study, brain development specialists);
- Education Stakeholder Focus Group review;
- Teacher and Educator Focus Group review;
- Curriculum Circle to engage Kindergarten to Grade 4 teachers in a discussion about the drafts;
- Minister's Youth Council; and
- Parent Focus Groups.

The cycle of developing learning outcomes and reviewing and validating the draft curriculum elements will continue through to December 2022. Targeted timelines for ministerial approval of curriculum are:

- Kindergarten to Grade 4, (six subjects), December 2018;
- Grades 5 to 8, (six subjects), December 2019;
- Grades 9 and 10 (three subject areas), December 2020;
- Grades 9 and 10 (three subject areas) + Grades 11 and 12 (three subject areas), December 2021; and
- Grades 11 and 12 (three subject areas), December 2022.

With the development of curriculum underway, Alberta Education will be working with stakeholders to support the implementation of future curriculum. Current curriculum remains in effect until future provincial curriculum is approved by the Minister of Education. Timelines for implementation of future provincial curriculum have yet to be set.

Future curriculum will be available digitally in the Curriculum Development and Management Application. It will build on the strengths of the current curriculum and will place a greater emphasis on reading, writing and math across all subjects and grades. This approach will help build an even stronger foundation for student success in a dynamic, global society and diversified economy.

Submitted by Leisa Townshend

Alberta Voices Annual Report

The last two issues available on the web are interesting. You might have noticed the change to the picture on the cover. Still in the blue frame and with the same design and lettering, the new inserted picture is more inclusive. When the journal won a national media prize for educational journals/magazines, the plan, apparently, was to change the pictures; but that did not happen. If you

look at a previous cover carefully, you will see all girls (one African-Canadian) reading a French book on what looks like the floor of a library. From now on those pictures will change with the issue. Using high-quality iStock photos will cost \$50.00 each -- money that exists in the budget. We could also consider original photos or art submitted by members or other readers.

I invite peer reviewers for specific articles rather than use an editorial board as some other ATA specialist-council journals do. Two reviews are common, sometimes three. The authors receive the reviews that advocate print as is, consider some input and print, revise for content or language, or decline. I hope that would involve several members each year. Please volunteer if you would like to review by contacting the editor at miveson@ualberta.ca, and indicate the ELA areas or genres know well.

I have not created themed issues nor fixed deadline competitions for material. Barnett House is our publisher: from questions to substantive and copy edits, to formatting and layout. The quality and professionalism of the staff is exceedingly high, for our journal and the other specialist-council journals too. That process usually takes four months but sometimes is faster depending on the rhythm of all ATA publications. The print and distribution staff are visionary, organized, and efficient in their work for us. My gratitude and our thanks to Sandra Bit and her staff, and Phil and Jim in the print shop and distribution.

The upcoming issue is a celebratory one looking back on beginning teaching. I have submissions for this next refereed issue, one longer than usual. If you would like to add a piece about your first day or first year, please consider writing a short article or in another genre of a page or two to share your experiences. We welcome stories, analysis, creative non-fiction, even parody or poetry. Mostly we do get "critical" exposition or argument. If you have pictures be sure the quality is high: I can send the ATA specifications for printing photographs or art created by teachers or students. There are guidelines for manuscripts on the web under publications, plus outdated ones in the journal. They will be revised in the next issue to present a consistent set of guidelines.

I currently have a book for review about multiple languages at work in schools from a sociological perspective. If you would like to review it, please contact me. I usually find the book reviewers but some reviews have originated with authors who know of a book through their own professional reading or from the Barnett-House Library synopses in the ATA News and other sources. I can see a duo of university people as reviewers here, but open the invitation to conference attendees and others.

Some context:

The shift to refereed status for our journal has been relatively easy. Karen Virag, from Barnett House Publishing, was very helpful in assisting with this change: essentially we declared what we were doing and did it. The journal is indexed in national data bases (see information on the Table-of-Contents page in any issue). Our contributions did increase from Alberta to Texas to Ontario.

Another option that another council used for its last issue was all reprints from journals that teachers probably were not reading themselves. For us, the articles would be reprints of earlier ELAC and NCTE pieces. I did publish an article on research with children using multimedia presentation forms, printed by CASS, the Administrators' journal, as our lead article in a recent issue.

The executive decided a few years ago to provide one publication annually through the mail. One issue of Celebrating Words and one Alberta Voices were mailed to members. I received some feedback to the journal mailing, but not very much. I believe four people responded: three in person and one via e-mail. Our survey of members provided some suggestions, most of which we initiated.

The Survey Monkey on line or Xeroxed available at the conference invites responses. There are honoraria for people who either complete the survey or provide other feedback. Look for the prizes and surveys in the hotel. I will also accept notes or oral comments, so find me around the hotel on Friday and Saturday or until the items are depleted. Thank you for the Executive's and members' interest and support,

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret L. Iveson
Professor Emerita, University of Alberta
miveson@ualberta.ca

Inclusive Literature Committee Report

It has been my absolute pleasure chairing this committee since its inception in November 2016. After eighteen months of reading and reviewing numerous books, the committee assembled "ELAC Recommends: Gender and Sexual Diversity in the English Language Arts Classroom". This document will serve as a valuable resource for English teachers who are committed to celebrating diversity in their classroom. In addition to being made available online, the list was also sent to the Minister of Education, along with a letter advocating for consideration of gender and sexual diversity in the new program of studies. While I will be stepping down from my role as chairperson, the committee will continue its work, with a new focus on Indigenous literatures. I would like to thank the members of the executive council and ELAC members at large who assisted with this important work.

With gratitude for your support in this project,
Kevin McBean

Calgary Regional Report

I can't believe this year is nearly at its end. Calgary Regional was delighted to have sponsored door prizes for the Calgary Beginning Teachers' Conference as well as hosted a Social meet and greet event during Calgary City Teachers' Convention.

It is with sadness that I will be resigning my role as Calgary Regional Representative at the end of this conference. Getting to know and work with the numerous talented people who make up ELAC has been a truly wonderful and humbling experience. I'd like to take this time to thank you very much for the opportunity to be part of a unique and welcoming team.

Kindest regards,
Caterina Letizia

Edmonton Region Representative

This has been an exciting and fulfilling first year as part of the council. This year the Edmonton Region sponsored gift baskets for the Beginning Teachers' Conference in Edmonton, and I attended to meet and welcome our newest ELACers.

The focus of this year's work has been to get to know our membership in preparation for upcoming social events and the 2019, Un-Conference. This year's Making Meaning Conference, has been a great pleasure to be part of; it is so wonderful to meet and connect with teachers from the region, across the province too, and to build relationships over our shared love of books. I must mention what a delight it has been to select and share books for our conference book give away!

I have appreciated the support and counsel of our Executive members as I find my way this year. Thank you for the opportunity to be part of this council and to do what I love- sharing what it means to be an English teacher- sharing stories and resources.

Respectfully submitted,
Jelena Radcliffe

Central Region Representative

This year, my first as Central Region Representative, has been a rewarding and learning-filled year.

My work this year has been focused on being a visible and accessible member of the Executive for the members of the Central Region. To that end, we have had a successful year! The region sponsored several door prizes and giveaways for Beginning Teachers' Conferences in both Calgary and Edmonton, the 2018 Making Meaning Conference, and a session at the Palliser District Teachers' Convention. I also presented on behalf of the council at the PDTCA. I am looking forward to presenting at the Red Deer convention next spring as part of my work with Council.

As my position has been vacant for several years, this year was about gearing up and getting my bearings. Members can look forward to more meetups and local PD in the coming years.

With many thanks for the opportunity to serve English teachers in the Central Region this year,
Bailey Almborg

Website Report

Big changes are happening to the ELAC website in September. We are currently redesigning a new site with a fresh look, more user friendly functions and opportunities for member contributions to content. Check Twitter and the *Much Ado Newsletter* for a launch date.

It has been a great year serving on the committee and I look forward to 2018-2019,
Angela Contrada