



ALBERTA TEACHERS  
OF ENGLISH AS  
A SECOND LANGUAGE

**Alberta Teachers of English as a Second Language  
Annual General Meeting  
Calgary, AB  
Friday, October 20, 2017  
4:30 – 5:30 PM  
Location: Westin Hotel, Mayfair Room**

**AGENDA**

- 1. Call to order**
- 2. Establishment of quorum** (require 71 members – as of Oct.6.17)
- 3. Approval of agenda**
- 4. Approval of 2016 AGM minutes**
- 5. Approval of the December 31, 2016 Audited Financial Statement**
- 6. Appointment of the Auditor**  
**MOTION: Move that ATESL contract Halpert Monsma Chartered Accountants to audit the financial statements of the Association of Alberta Teachers of English as a Second Language for the year ending December 31, 2017.**
- 7. Reports of Officers**  
Presidents' Report
- 8. Reports of Committees**  
Calgary Local  
Central Alberta Local  
Edmonton Local  
Southern Alberta Local  
Bursary Committee  
TESL Canada Representative  
Rural Routes Member at Large  
Advocacy Committee
- 9. Presentation of Awards**  
Carolyn Dieleman Award - Maroro Zinyemba  
Dawn Seabrook deVargas Fellowship - Daniel Stark  
ATESL Lifetime Membership - Sheri Rhodes
- 10. Discussion**

## **Motions before the membership**

### **11. Appointment of Local Co-chairs**

Calgary  
Edmonton  
Southern Alberta

### **12. Election of Officers for 2017-2018**

President  
President-Elect

### **13. Acknowledgements of Retiring Board Members**

### **14. Passing of the gavel**

### **15. Adjournment**

## **REPORTS OF OFFICERS**

### **Presidents' Report**

Welcome to the ATESL 2017 Conference, *Expanding Possibilities: Diversity and Innovation* and in collaboration with our BC TEAL counterparts, we are also pleased to present the Educational Technology Summit taking place on Saturday.

Thank you for supporting ATESL throughout the year and for attending the AGM today. ATESL continues to grow and has increasing membership outside of the major urban areas. Our membership numbers are as follows:

- Southern Alberta: 55
- Central Alberta: 29
- Calgary: 357
- Edmonton: 262
- Other: 4
- Lifetime Members: 12
- Total: 719

### **Governance**

ATESL Board meetings were held each month, except during the month of July, and two face-to-face meetings were held, one in Edmonton and one in Red Deer.

Again this year, the local chapters in Edmonton, Central Alberta, Calgary, and Southern Alberta provided an array of quality professional development opportunities for members including a mini-conference in

Edmonton. The hard work of our local co-chairs and active members ensure there are a variety of activities throughout the year.

### **ATESL 2016-2017 Board**

President	Dr. Lisa Rochman
Past President	Dr. Wendy Chambers
President Elect	Chris Warton
Treasurer	Seppy Masoodi
Secretary	Wendy Illot
Southern Alberta Chair	Dr. Greg Ogilvie
Calgary Co-chairs	Nadia Khan, Jyoti Grewal
Central Alberta Chair	Anna Robinson, Elise Kruithof
Edmonton Co-chairs	Janet Kwong, Elina Stop
TESL Canada Representative	Kim Dudas
Rural Routes Representative	Martha Urquhart
Business Manager	Irene Wood

This year we had a mid-year change in our Southern region and we thank the Southern Co-Chair for supporting the region on his own. Recently a second co-chair stepped forward and we are excited to welcome David Fuller on as Southern co-chair along with Greg Ogilvie.

### **Board Positions**

This year's AGM will see the election of two new board members, president and president elect. With regret Chris Wharton, president elect will be stepping down from his role for personal reasons. We thank Chris for his years of dedication to ATESL.

## **ATESL 2017 Conference**

The ATESL 2017 conference is taking place October 20th and 21st at the Westin Calgary. The theme is *Expanding Possibilities: Diversity and Innovation*. The theme is intended to capture the creativity and responsiveness English language professionals demonstrate on a regular basis, particularly in light of emerging opportunities and challenges. Over 450 delegates are expected to attend the conference to take in over 90 presentations delivered by over 150 speakers.

The keynote speakers include Dr. Bonny Norton (University of British Columbia), Dr. Darren Lund (University of Calgary), and Dr. Greg Kessler (Ohio University). Each keynote speaker is also offering a workshop session. Invited speakers include Espen Stranger-Johannessen (University of British Columbia) and a panel of experts from Bow Valley College, including Joy Stillwell, Tiffany Allard, Dan Merryfield, Wanda Warkentin, and Nadia Khan. ATESL is very grateful to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and SAIT for sponsoring the keynote and invited speakers. IRCC is also the generous sponsor of American Sign Language supports for the keynote and invited speakers.

The Educational Technology Summit (ETS), a collaborative initiative organized by ATESL and BC TEAL, is taking place concurrently with regular conference sessions on Saturday, October 21<sup>st</sup>. The ETS features a stream of presentations focused on educational technology and language learning, including the Ed Tech Jam.

New to the conference this year, is the use of the online platform, Sched. It is a user-friendly and cost-effective app that provides delegates a detailed online conference program. A printed at-a-glance program continues to be available for conference delegates, and this year, we are also providing a pen sporting the refreshed ATESL logo. In an effort to reduce ATESL's carbon footprint, no conference bag is offered this year.

### **ATESL Awards**

ATESL is very proud to also offer four First-time Presenter Bursaries, Carolyn Dieleman Award, and ATESL Lifetime Member Award. ATESL is also the administrator of the Alberta Workforce Essential Skills Society (AWES) sponsored Dawn Seabrook de Vargas Fellowship.

First-time Presenter awards are given to ATESL members who are presenting at the conference for the first time. A random draw from the pool of all eligible candidates drew the following four winners: Janis Goad, Rennais Gayle, Rouzbeh Ghahreman, and Wendy Maloff. Each received a cheque for \$250.

The Carolyn Dieleman Award celebrates individuals who have made an impact on the delivery of and access to innovative, quality language and ESL literacy programs in Alberta. The recipient of the 2017 Carolyn Dieleman Award is Maroro Zinyemba. Maroro is the Chair of Language Training at NorQuest College. She will receive complimentary registration for the next ATESL Conference.

ATESL Lifetime Member Award winner, Sheri Rhodes, is recognized for her exemplary contributions and dedication to the profession. Sheri Rhodes has been a tireless supporter of the field and the profession and highly engaged with ATESL in various capacities over the years. Sheri will receive a life membership for ATESL.

The Dawn Seabrook de Vargas Fellowship, thanks to the generous contribution of Alberta Workplace and Essential Skills (AWES), has been awarded to Daniel Stark.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to nominate their colleagues and fellow ATESL members. Please join us in congratulating the bursary and award winners.

### **Partnerships**

This year's conference demonstrates a growing partnership in the area of professional development. BC TEAL and ATESL have partnered to offer the Educational Technology Summit (ETS), and this is hopefully the start of many joint provincial initiatives. Thank you to the leaders of this event for taking the initiative.

This is the first year that Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada will be offering the Language Training Learning Event. IRCC is partnering with ATESL and NorQuest College to organize and a professional development event in February, 2018 for LINC instructors and coordinators in Western Canada. This event is anticipate to rotate yearly between Alberta, Winnipeg and Manitoba. We are excited to be a part of the planning and shaping of this event.

### **ATESL Newsletter**

The ATESL newsletter was published four times this year, in January, March, June, and September. Each issue is available for viewing on the ATESL website. In June, Dr. Marian Rossiter retired from her position as the ATESL newsletter editor. On behalf of the ATESL Board, we would like to thank Marian for her many years of dedicated service to ATESL and to the newsletter in her many capacities. We would also like to thank Dr. Marilyn Abbott for her many valuable contributions to the *Focus on Research* column of the newsletter. ATESL warmly welcomes Frankie Ning Chin as the 2017-2019 ATESL newsletter editor.

## **Intercultural Communicative Competence: Online PD for ESL Project**

The *Intercultural Communicative Competence: Online PD for ESL* project, funded by the Government of Alberta's Immigrant Settlement and Language Training Programs, is now complete. The deliverables for the project included three components: an online intercultural communicative competence resource in the form of a CLB-referenced e-book, professional development workshop resources for participants that are freely available online, and delivery of professional development opportunities through hybrid workshops. The project included three phases. Phase 1 of the project took place from January to August 2016. The project teams at NorQuest College and Bow Valley College signed MOUs and contracts with ATESL to formalize the working relationships. In early 2016, the project teams developed a set of ICC lesson plans addressing strands 2, 5, 6, and 7 of the intercultural communicative competence model introduced in the *ATESL Adult ESL Curriculum Framework*. An expert committee of representatives reviewed the lessons in early Spring 2016 and their recommendations were incorporated into the e-book resource. During the months of May through to August, the e-book was finalized. During Phase 2 of the project (September to November 2016) the professional development hybrid workshops were developed together with a feedback evaluation form. During the final phase of the project (November 2016 to March 2017) seven workshops were delivered, including 3 in Calgary, 3 Edmonton, and 1 in Vancouver. One final workshop was held on Friday, October 20th at the ATESL 2017 Conference.

The self-guided professional development ICC resources are posted on the ATESL website at <https://www.atesl.ca/resources/enhancing-intercultural-communicative-competence/>. The materials include background readings and guiding questions, two professionally narrated slidecasts, the e-book, *Enhancing Intercultural Communicative Competence: A Resource Based on the ATESL Adult ESL Curriculum Framework*, and a feedback survey.

## **Raising ATESL's Profile: Contributing Locally, Provincially, And Nationally**

As part of our Strategic Plan launched last year, ATESL has been actively engaging with immigrant serving agencies and organizations at the municipal, provincial, and federal levels to raise our presence and influence as well as to provide support. ATESL informs the Local Immigration Partnership in Edmonton by having its president as a member of the Council as well as attending several ELIP Working Group. ATESL presidents regularly attends and contributes to quarterly meetings at LARCC and ILVARC. The presidents have participated in various discussions and meetings led by the Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies' (AASIA).

ATESL continues to strengthen its relationship with Rural Routes (NorQuest College) for the purpose of better strengthening professional development opportunities for rural instructors in the province.

At the national level, ATESL once again contributed to the IRCC Immigration Roundtable Consultations with Minister Ahmed D. Hussen held in Edmonton.

Also at the national level, ATESL presidents continue to maintain open communications with representatives from other provincial TESL organizations as well as TESL Canada. This year, we have seen increased communication and collaboration between the various provincial organizations across Canada. Board members from the provincial organizations meet quarterly. While participation varies

from meeting to meeting, the following organizations have participation; TESL Ontario, BC TEAL, ATESL, TESL Saskatchewan, SPEAQ, TEAL Manitoba, TESL New Brunswick, TESL Nova Scotia, and TESL Newfoundland. The group has quarterly meetings with a rotating chair. ATESL chaired the first online meeting, followed by BC TEAL. This group discusses current issues including topics like related to advocacy, professional development, conferences and membership. We are exploring possibilities for shared PD opportunities. We have shared advocacy related issues with the understanding that we have a stronger voice together.

### **Advocacy Committee**

This is the second year the of the Advocacy committee since it was reactivated and it was chaired by Dr. Tracey Derwing. For additional information on the activities of the committee, please see the Advocacy committee report.

### **Strategic Plan**

The ad hoc Strategic Planning committee was put in place in 2014 under the leadership of ATESL President, Dorte Weber, for the purpose of developing a strategic plan to guide future ATESL Boards. Over the past three years, the president or president elect has chaired the committee and last year the Strategic Plan was presented at the AGM. This year, the Strategic Planning committee met for the first part of the year and established which objectives committee members wanted to focus on. The committee members continue to focus on initiatives to move the strategic plan forward.

### **ATESL Website and Logo**

The new ATESL website launched this year. The redesign was necessary as the platform used for the old website was quickly approaching an expiration date wherein future security updates would no longer be possible. The new website includes updated, user-friendly features, including an improved membership renewal and payment process, an improved search engine for the Resource Library, improved pages for each of the local chapters and the annual conference, and a more streamlined and aesthetically appealing design. In conjunction with the launch of the redesigned website, ATESL also refreshed its logo.

### **ATESL 2018 Conference**

In light of a noted decline in volunteers interested in taking on the conference co-chair position, decreasing professional development funds for some in the field of TESL, and an increase in conferences happening in the area, ATESL sent out a survey to the membership regarding how they would like to see this addressed. The results were as follows:

### **Continue with annual conferences with the expectation that local co-chairs step forward.**

111 responses

- 1<sup>st</sup> choice: 34.2%
- 2<sup>nd</sup> choice:25.2%

**Offer the conference bi-annually.**

110 responses

- 1<sup>st</sup> choice: 30%
- 2<sup>nd</sup> choice: 27.3%

**Offer the conference bi-annually with mini-conferences in the interim years.**

111 responses

- 1<sup>st</sup> choice: 36.9%
- 2<sup>nd</sup> choice: 30.6%

**Continue to hold the conference annually, but raise the cost of the event to allow for hiring of an event planner.**

110 responses

- 1<sup>st</sup> choice: 8.2%
- 2<sup>nd</sup> choice: 21.8%

**Summary: Best choice in order of preference:**

1. Offer the Conference bi-annually with mini-conferences in interim years: 36.9%
2. Continue annually with expectation that local co-chairs step forward: 34.2%
3. Offer conference bi-annually: 30%

Overwhelmingly the least popular option was to hold the conference annually, but raise the cost of the event to allow for an event planner.

This AGM will allow us an opportunity to explore this issue further and determine how we would like to proceed in 2018.

**TESL Canada**

On Monday, October 16th we received a letter from TESL Canada head office, regarding the fact that TESL Canada has begun the suspension of all of its services immediately. We had received no prior notice that this may happen or was imminent. This is quite significant and we need to understand the implications and options available. Since we have just received the notification, the ATESL board has not had a chance to meet and discuss this. Therefore, we are not able to answer questions or respond to concerns yet. This will be a priority issue in the weeks to come.

We are committed to keeping our membership involved and welcome input, thoughts and concerns. Please send them to [atesl.admin@atesl.ca](mailto:atesl.admin@atesl.ca) where they will be compiled and reviewed by the board. Members can expect more communication on this issue in the weeks to come.



ATESL is a growing and thriving professional association thanks to its dedicated membership, enthusiastic volunteers, and hardworking board members. We are looking forward to another productive year ahead in 2018!

**Respectfully submitted by:**

**Lisa Rochman -President**

**Wendy Chambers -Past President**

**Chris Wharton- President-Elect**

**REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

**Calgary Local Annual Report 2016/2017**

Co-Chairs: Nadia Khan and Jyoti Grewal

Treasurer: Peggy Jubien

Secretary: Edi Casimirri

The Calgary Local hosted seven PD sessions between November 2016 and September 2017.

November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● InterCultural Communicative workshop (ICC)</li> </ul>	<i>Bow Valley College</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Veena Zarour-Murthy</li> </ul>
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Holiday Social</li> </ul>	<i>Moxies</i>
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● ICC workshop</li> </ul>	<i>SAIT</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Veena Zarour-Murthy</li> </ul>
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Literacy Talks</li> <li>● Incorporating Literacy Skills into Thematic Lesson Planning</li> <li>● Connecting to Community Resources in the ESL classroom</li> <li>● Movement,Placemaking and ESL Literacy</li> <li>● Oral First: Language Development in the Literacy Classroom</li> </ul>	<i>CIWA</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Liette Wilson</li> <li>● Theresa Wall</li> <li>● Shelley McConnell</li> <li>● Val Baggaley</li> </ul>
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● ICC workshop</li> </ul>	<i>Mount Royal University</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Veena Zarour-Murthy</li> </ul>
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Peer Mentoring</li> </ul>	<i>Centre for NewComers</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Tyler Elliott and Shelley McConnell</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increasing Student Motivation</li> <li>● Project Based Learning to increase motivation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Jyoti Grewal and Chris Wharton</li> <li>● Nilay Thomas</li> </ul>
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Integrating EdTech into Language Teaching and Learning (Tutela online workshop)</li> <li>● Cultural Identity: Icebergs and Ice Breakers</li> </ul>	<i>Bow Valley College</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Bonnie Nicholas</li> <li>● Edi Casimirri and Andrea Scholes</li> </ul>
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Back to School Idea Share</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Nadia Khan and Jyoti Grewal</li> </ul>

The Calgary Local would like to acknowledge and sincerely thank all of the facilitators and panelists who contributed to professional development in our community over the past year. We would also like to welcome Irina Derevyanko onto the local committee to replace outgoing co-chair Nadia Khan.

Peggy, Jyoti and Edi would like to thank Nadia for her dedication and commitment to the ATESL Calgary local chapter.

**Respectfully submitted by Nadia Khan and Jyoti Grewal**

**Central Alberta Local Annual Report 2016/2017**

Co-Chairs: Anna Robertson and Elise Kruithof

Treasurer: Heather Frayjo

Secretary : Carol Smyth

Most of the CA-TESL meetings were held at Central Alberta Refugee Effort on the third Wednesday of the month unless otherwise noted. At the September meeting, a new executive was put into place.

October was conference month and several members attended the ATESL conference in Edmonton. It was a wonderful weekend for professional insights and connecting.

In November, some of the members who attended the conference shared some of the information, tips and strategies they picked up at the various workshops in Edmonton.

In December, the local hosted a social gather for members. Close to 20 individuals attended and enjoyed an evening of developing friendships and sharing ideas.

The February meeting was a joint event hosted at the Dawes Library in Red Deer. The title of the evening was “Discovering Syria”. Attendees were introduced to the culture, customs and foods of Syria. It was an educational and informative evening.

In March, one of the LINC teachers, Heather Frayjo, facilitated a workshop titled “Creative Connections”. Attendees learned how to design module and lessons plans using the five senses.

In April, Anna Morgan-Wold hosted a workshop on memory and attention.

The May event was an ESL Literary workshop. Three literacy instructors from Calgary facilitated the day-long workshop. There were close to 20 instructors from Central Alberta in attendance. Feedback from this event was extremely positive and attendees noted that they daylong event was very helpful.

In August, the current executive members agreed to continue in their positions.

**Respectfully submitted by Anna Robertson and Elise Kruithof**

**Edmonton Local Annual Report 2016/2017**

Co-Chairs: Janet Kwong and Elina Stop  
 Treasurer: Nick Williams  
 Secretary: Mariam Sakka  
 Communications Officer: Rosemary McMahon  
 Hospitality: Irene Wilson, Rosalia De La Cruz

The Edmonton chapter met six times this past year, including a one-day mini-conference in May. Edmonton also hosted a series of 3 Intercultural Communicative Competence Workshops in November, January and February. The ATESL Conference took place in Edmonton in October, so we did not host a meeting that month.

<b>September</b>	Pronunciation in the classroom: what you really need to know	Jennifer A. Foote, University of Alberta
<b>December</b>	Winter Social	
<b>January</b>	Practical PBLA: A guide to PBLA in the LINC classroom	Fiza Abedin, Alison Vickerman, and Hilda Hildebrand, ASSIST Community Services Centre
<b>February</b>	ESL Directors’ Forum	
<b>April</b>	The Role of Aptitude in Teaching Grammar	Galyna Ozarko, NorQuest College

<b>May</b>	Enhancing Teaching with Technology Mini-Conference	Joan Wall, Faculty Development, NorQuest College  Petchphilin Ismael, One World One Centre  Roger Moore, NorQuest College
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This year, we have seen growth in the number of attendees at our meetings, averaging 30-40 people, due to the outstanding work of our board members.

Our Annual General Meeting took place on September 29, 2017, and I would like to welcome Diana Agudelo as the new Edmonton Local Co-Chair. As well as, Belinda Escandallo - the new secretary, Julie McArthur and Renuka Jantz - our new hospitality team. I would like to express my gratitude to all of the outgoing volunteers, Janet Kwong, Mariam Sakka, Irene Wilson, and Rosalia De La Cruz, for their dedication and commitment.

We look forward to bringing you many more interesting meetings and events in the upcoming year with the Edmonton Local!

**Respectfully submitted by Elina Stop and Janet Kwong**

**Southern Alberta Local Annual Report 2016/2017**

Chair: Greg Ogilvie

The Southern Alberta Chapter held two events this past year. The first event took place on March 29, 2017 at the University of Lethbridge campus. The event was titled “How can we address changing demographics in ESL classrooms? Insights and strategies for teaching diverse ESL learners.” The panel for the event included diverse educators, including teachers and administrators from local elementary schools, secondary schools, and an adult education institution. The event was attended by over twenty local teachers and administrators, and involved rich discussion about how evolving demographics have changed the work of second language educators. The panel discussion was followed by an informal social event attended by approximately ten teachers.

The second event took place on May 11, 2017 at the University of Lethbridge campus. The event was entitled “Bringing Context to the Classroom: Incorporating Soft Skills (Pragmatics) into ESL Instruction.” The workshop facilitated by South Alberta Rural Routes Regional Advisor, Alana Johnson, introduced the 15 attendees to the concept of pragmatics and how it can be incorporated into instruction in the ESL classroom. In addition to exploring the topic more generally, the workshop also introduced participants to various resources and provided practical exemplars of how pragmatics can be brought to life.

Surveys have already been distributed to ESL educators in the southern region of the province to ascertain their professional development needs so that planning can begin for the upcoming year. The Southern Alberta Chapter hopes to expand its activities to include multiple professional development and social events in Lethbridge and the Medicine Hat/ Brooks area.

**Respectfully submitted by Greg Ogilvie**

### **Bursary Committee Annual Report 2016/2017**

Chair: Wendy Ilott – ATESL Secretary  
Seppy Masoodi – ATESL Treasurer  
Wendy Chambers -ATESL Past President

With our budgeted amount of \$4000 bursary fund dollars, ATESL was very pleased to support the professional development pursuits of six members who participated in a variety of activities, including attending the 2017 TESL Canada conference and the International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching & Learning (ISSOTL) Conference as well as completing a Leadership, Learning, and Technology course, and two TESL Master's degree courses. In the spring, the bursary committee received 3 applications. All three were awarded their requested amount though one application was later withdrawn by the applicant prior to attending or receiving the money. In the fall, we received four applications and found that three applications met the bursary criteria. We awarded these three applicants the amount requested, up to the maximum of \$500.

With decreased professional development funding to LINC programs in the province, ATESL is pleased to help our members access professional development opportunities that may have become beyond reach for individuals. We are also pleased to support all ATESL members across Alberta. If you are considering applying for a bursary, please remember the following:

- Your initial application must mention both the financial need as well as the professional development opportunity.
- The maximum amount available is \$500.
- We receive applications bi annually: September 15 and March 15 each year.
- Each approved applicant is expected to submit all receipts for tuition/registration expenses.
- Each applicant must submit a 250-word summary/evaluation of the event or course they have attended, which may be selected for publication in the ATESL Newsletter (available online at [atesl.ca](http://atesl.ca)).

**Respectfully submitted by Wendy Ilott**

## **ATESL Representative to TESL Canada Annual Report to ATESL – 2016/2017**

Representative: Kim Dudas

As ATESL Representative to TESL Canada, I serve on both the ATESL board and the TESL Canada board. Over the past year, I have also had the privilege of sitting on three committees affiliated with TESL Canada: that of the Provincial Representatives, the TESL Canada Educational Foundation and the Second Language National Network. Through the Provincial Representatives Committee, I have had the opportunity to connect regularly with representatives from TESL Saskatchewan, Manitoba TEAM and Manitoba TEAL, TESL New Brunswick, TESL Nova Scotia and TESL Newfoundland. I have spent this past year familiarizing myself with TESL Canada's role in terms of membership services and coordination with the provincial affiliates. I effectively serve as liaison between ATESL and TESL Canada, reporting to both organizations on a monthly basis.

TESL Canada Office:

You may recall that TESL Canada was without an Executive Director for a portion of 2016. The new Executive Director, Claude Lloyd, was hired in September 2016. Since then, TESL Canada has established a physical and staffed office in Ottawa. The TESL Canada office has been focusing its resources on serving its members via teacher certification, teacher training program recognition and general membership administrative support. The hope is that this will result in improved service quality and standards related to membership and stakeholder services.

TESL Canada Staff:

Claude Lloyd – Executive Director

Jessica Tomlin – HR/Office Manager

Veronica Sanchez – Certification Coordinator

Al Johnson – Bookkeeper

Rebecca Derry – Administrative Support

Support of ATESL Advocacy:

In July 2017, ATESL's Advocacy Committee invited TESL Canada to support its initiatives regarding the Citizenship Study Guide and the Refugee Loan Program. In alignment with the TESL Canada mandate on advocacy, the TESL Canada Executive wrote letters of support to the IRCC (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada). TESL Canada has subsequently been invited by the IRCC to provide its feedback on the Citizenship Study Guide and TESL Canada has assigned this task to its Second Language National Network committee.

TESL Canada 2017 – Niagara Falls:

The conference ran June 8-10, 2017 in Niagara Falls, Ontario. Conference presentation materials are available for download on the TESL Canada website.

**Respectfully submitted by Kim Dudas**

**Rural Routes Member at Large**

Member: Martha Urquhart

Over the past year Rural Routes and ATESL have collaborated to spread the word about the two major projects that Rural Routes is involved with:

1. <https://satie.norquest.ca>

SATIE is an automated self-assessment tool that is easy to use and meant for ESL programs, ESL staff, and ESL volunteers. SATIE is FREE to use and assists with identifying individual and group professional development needs.

89 individuals have recognized the value in using SATIE, the online professional self-evaluation tool offered by Rural Routes to help practitioners determine what training would suit them best. For more information contact: [ruralroutes@norquest.ca](mailto:ruralroutes@norquest.ca).

2. <http://norquest.ca/online-learning>

The Preparation for Online Learning course is designed to equip adult English language learners in the CLB 4-8 range with digital literacy skills, online learning strategies, and associated vocabulary required to access and engage in online courses.

Help the learners in your community meet their educational needs by helping them to learn how to learn online. Rural Routes now offers Prep for Online Learning for CALPs and other non-profit rural ESL providers. The complete course is available for downloading or eligible coordinators and instructors can request access through the Moodle site hosted by Rural Routes.

Non-profit ESL providers, such as CALPs, can utilize this resource in a variety of ways. For example, the program can be offered completely on-line or face-to-face sessions can be offered in conjunction with the course. For more information, contact your Rural Routes advisor. If you don't know who your advisor is, contact [ruralroutes@norquest.ca](mailto:ruralroutes@norquest.ca).

**Respectfully submitted by Martha Urquhart**

## **ATESL Advocacy Committee Annual Report 2016/2017**

Chair: Tracey Derwing

Members: Wendy Chambers – ATESL Past President

Lisa Rochman – ATESL President

Chris Wharton – ATESL President Elect

Stacy Norrbom – Member at Large

Theresa Wall – Member at Large

The Advocacy Committee is a standing committee of ATESL. Ex-Officio officers include the Past-President, President and President-Elect. The ultimate goal of the Advocacy committee is to take an active role in the successful integration of immigrants into Alberta’s education system, communities, and workplaces. The Committee undertook several initiatives in 2017 (meetings were held in January, February, March, April, May, June and September).

The first meeting of the year was held on January 16, 2017 (all meetings are on Google Hangouts). It was decided at that meeting to ask the Board to agree to send a mass email to the membership regarding information about a petition to waive the refugee transportation loans, and to agree to the committee sending a letter to other provincial TESL organizations, urging them to do the same. The Board agreed to these actions, and the number of signatures went up significantly the following week, and the number required to have the petition presented to parliament was achieved.

	Before	After
Alberta	471	686
British Columbia	247	387
Manitoba	101	239
New Brunswick	7	39
Newfoundland and Labrador	10	12
Northwest Territories	1	1
Nova Scotia	12	64
Nunavat	0	1
Ontario	257	563
PEI	0	26
Quebec	29	135
Saskatchewan	101	125
Yukon	1	1
Other Countries	21	25

Given the negative press towards immigrants in the USA, the Advocacy Committee draft a message to be sent to the membership early in the new year (see Appendix).



The Advocacy Committee planned a panel discussion for the ATESL Conference to address some of the issues that members had brought to the committee. Some individuals were wondering why different programs paid their instructors differently. The range of programming and types of institution is broad; the Committee felt that an overview of several different programs would shed light on some of these matters for the Membership. *The Breadth of Adult English Language Programming in Alberta* will be hosted by Lisa Rochman, who will moderate a panel of representatives from a wide range of learning contexts from large cities to small centres who will discuss features of their programs such as learner characteristics, curricula, teacher qualifications, funding, and more.

The Advocacy Committee planned a **Town Hall** for the Membership, which was held on May 17 at 7:00 pm. Members were invited to call in and bring up any issues of concern for ATESL. Lisa Rochman moderated the Town Hall. One issue that was raised was the CLB 4 requirement for immigrants to write the citizenship exam. A member wondered if there was a way to have that waived. The Committee responded that a change in policy regarding the level necessary to write the citizenship test was unlikely to happen (although people who fail twice are offered an oral interview), but they felt that it would be valuable to offer support to the federal government in their efforts to improve the Citizenship Study Guide. A letter was sent to the Minister of IRCC and the individual who is overseeing the revision of the Guide. The Advocacy Committee sent this letter to other provincial organizations and to TESL Canada for their support – TESL Canada wrote IRCC urging them to take ATESL up on their offer, and offering their own support. Both a member of the Advocacy Committee (Tracey Derwing) and the TESL Canada President (Joy Salzberg) have been invited to review and comment on the new Citizenship Study Guide in November of this year. (Letter sent to IRCC appears in the Appendix). IRCC has since reached out for information on individuals and organizations who could help with the French version and we were able to provide names and contact information for both.

Another issue that came up at the Town Hall was the possibility of providing an awards ceremony for refugees, similar to the event that BC TEAL hosts. The Committee did not pursue this suggestion, given that both Calgary and Edmonton have settlement agencies that have awards honouring newcomers. A member asked about the refugee transportation loans, and was given an update on the committee's activities. The Committee then wrote a letter in support of rescinding the refugee transportation loans. Again, we wrote to our provincial counterparts and TESL Canada, asking them to contact IRCC on this issue as well. TESL Canada followed through. Although IRCC has decided not to rescind the loan program, they have changed the repayment start date and have eliminated interest charges: <http://www.gazette.gc.ca/rp-pr/p1/2017/2017-09-30/html/reg1-eng.php>

Finally, another member at the Town Hall asked if ATESL could mediate in a situation involving TESL Canada's certification program. Lisa offered to communicate with the member privately.

Another ATESL initiative this summer was to provide our support for the adoption of the CLBs as opposed to the CEFR for Canadian Heritage's civil servants who need to improve their proficiency in another official

language. Wendy Chambers wrote on behalf of the ATESL Board; from the Advocacy Committee's perspective, it makes sense to use a Canadian developed framework that is available in both English and French (see letter in Appendix).

The Advocacy Committee also planned a Town Hall that will take place on Saturday at the Conference. Members who have suggestions for either the Committee or the Board should come and meet with the new Executive.

Throughout the year, the Committee discussed many other issues, and will continue to advocate on behalf of instructors and learners.

**Respectfully submitted by Tracey Derwing**

## **APPENDICES**

### ***Terms of Reference for Advocacy Committee***

#### **General Purpose/Mandate:**

The ATESL Board believes that it has a role to play in advocating on behalf of its members on issues which affect the members and their learners. The mandate of the Advocacy Committee is to provide recommendations to the Board on issues to be addressed and strategies to be used in addressing them. The ATESL Board will make any public statements through the President or the Chair of the Advocacy committee or a person delegated by the President. The ATESL Board, through the President, the Chair of the Advocacy committee, or a person(s) delegated by the President will make regular representations to appropriate government officials to inform them of priorities and concerns.

#### **Accountability:**

The Advocacy Committee is accountable to the Board. It is also accountable for reporting to the membership through the website and at the annual general meeting.

### ***Message to the Membership***

#### **ATESL: Welcoming to the World**

Over the last year or so, attitudes towards refugees and immigrants have changed considerably on the world stage. Although the Canadian federal government welcomed Syrian refugees with open arms in December

2015, the currents from other countries have chilled the international response to newcomers. These have been surprising times for all of us: Brexit and the election of Donald Trump were both unexpected by many pundits, and the implications of both of these events have been serious for many refugees and immigrants. The discourse in several European countries has become somewhat xenophobic, but Canada has stayed the course of acceptance and humanitarian openness.

ATESL, an organization in which members come into close contact with newcomers, is in a position to help other Canadians understand how important it is to assist our fellow human beings. Let us consider our mission statement:

As the professional organization of Teachers of English as a Second Language in Alberta, ATESL's mission is to promote the highest standards of teaching and provision of English language programs for learners in Alberta whose first language is other than English. We do this by:

- encouraging and providing professional development opportunities which are consistent with generally accepted principles of adult learning and with currently understood principles of second language learning and teaching
- encouraging and supporting the participation of learners in the decision-making process which determine their educational choices
- communicating with English language program providers and learners to encourage awareness of issues of accountability and program standards
- communicating with government, business, and the general public to create awareness about immigration, settlement of immigrants and English language learning
- liaising with other organizations, local, provincial, national and international, which are engaged in education
- working collaboratively with government to develop policies and procedures which govern the provision of English language programs and related services for immigrants to Canada.

We, as ATESL members, have a responsibility to help other members of our communities – our neighbours, friends, and families – to see that newcomers to Canada are looking to rebuild their lives. They come here, as our ancestors did, to build a new life – a life of freedom, and most importantly, peace. It is our job to assist newcomers integrate by helping them learn English, but also by helping them learn about their new communities. We know newcomers better than anyone else and we are here to support them. The Board encourages you to speak out. ATESL supports newcomers and supports their integration into our wonderful society, enriched by diversity at every turn.

## **Letters to IRCC**

Dear Minister Hussen:

On behalf of Alberta Teachers of English as a Second Language, we are writing to congratulate the department on the revisions to the citizenship study document (as outlined in the National Post: <http://nationalpost.com/g00/news/canada/taxes-census-treaties-described-as-obligations-of-citizenship-in-new-guide/wcm/016bf5ad-58df-4924-82b4-78ea5168e768?i10c.referrer=>). We were very pleased about the content changes, but we have some concerns regarding the length of the new document, and a problem that may not be addressed in the new version. *Discover Canada* was written at uneven levels of difficulty; using a standard reading test, some parts of it register at Grade 17. Rest assured that Grade 17 is far more complex than CLB 4, the level expected of citizenship applicants. Moreover, there is considerable information in the current study guide that is unnecessary for citizenship, (e.g., the different architectural styles of the provincial legislatures). Significantly, research has shown that unnecessary detail, such as this example, contributes to difficulty understanding the text as a whole, and to determining which facts are important. Thus, as language experts, we laud the promise of a new document, with the new focus on Indigenous Peoples.

As the department is well aware, the failure rate on the citizenship test since *Discover Canada* was introduced has far exceeded the rate when *A Look at Canada* was the primary guide. It is our understanding that currently, approximately 25% of the people who write the test fail it, whereas with the previous document as the source content, more than 90% of test-takers passed. This is, in part, because it is difficult to create a test written at CLB 4 when the content of the source document is written at much higher CLB levels. Just ensuring that the test questions are at CLB 4 is not enough. The current *Discover Canada* is a confusing, complicated document that makes it unsuitable for study for individuals who are at CLB 4 or even CLB 7. We urge your department to ensure that the new study guide is accessible to a broad range of newcomers. A document written in plain language at CLB 4 would ensure that fewer individuals fail the test. The Canadian government is rightly proud of the welcoming nature of our country. Ours is one of the only immigrant-receiving countries where the majority of citizens hold positive attitudes towards immigration, and in fact, for many Canadians, our multicultural nature is a defining feature of our country. The members of ATESL would like to see a return to a fairer approach to assessing readiness for citizenship, so that more of our students and former students can join the Canadian family and become active, participating members of civic society. If there is anything ATESL can do to help make the text more readable, we as an organization would be more than happy to invite some of our literacy experts to provide suggestions. We look forward to hearing from your Department.

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Dear Minister Hussen:

In September of 2015, the Research and Evaluation Branch of CIC (now IRCC) produced an Evaluation of the Refugee Transportation Loan program, concluding that the requirement to repay the loans interferes

significantly with the settlement of refugees. They pointed to several specifics. For instance, Visa Officers overseas must determine both need for humanitarian aid and ability to pay the loan, but, appropriately, the former issue outweighs the latter, thus only 1-5 minutes is spent explaining the loan. When refugees arrive in Canada, although many are aware of the loan, they do not understand that they are supposed to start repaying within 30 days, and often do not know how much they owe (loans can be as high as \$10,000). IRCC is unable, in many cases, to set up loan accounts and send statements until 4 months after the refugees' arrival, so their first statement usually indicates that they are already in arrears. The government's own evaluation determined that a significant number of refugees quit language training to work to pay back the loan. Furthermore, if the family has children in high school, they often work 5-6 hours a day while going to school fulltime to help the family repay the loan, thus jeopardizing their own educations. Clearly, the transportation loan program has long-term negative effects on the outcomes of many refugee families. The loan program costs roughly \$13,000,000 annually. In the grand scheme of things, this is a very small amount that could be absorbed by the government, and made up eventually in higher income taxes from refugees who stay in school or language training in order to secure better jobs in the future.

The loan program started in the 1950s to facilitate the travel of Europeans to Canada, who were needed in the labour market, but who could not afford to pay their own transportation. In other words, the loans expedited the recruitment of newcomers to the benefit of the government. The clientele has changed substantially since then; refugees typically come to Canada with nothing but their own human capital. They come on humanitarian grounds, not to speed up a deliberate influx of workers to the economy. Given the complete change in clientele since 1951, and the entirely negative evaluation of the program in 2015, we recommend that IRCC eliminate the transportation loan for refugees. It makes more sense economically to allow refugees to settle, to learn an official language to the best of their ability, to finish school, and to find the best jobs possible. The current loan program hinders these goals.

The members of our organization, Alberta Teachers of English as a Second Language, see first hand the stress the loan causes our students. It is debilitating for many and it interferes with their learning. For this reason we urge you to cancel the transportation loan program. We are aware of a petition that recently went to the House of Commons asking for the repeal of the loan program. People from all over Canada signed it – the loan program reflects poorly on Canada and our reputation as a welcoming nation.

***Letter regarding the CLBs vs. CEFR***

To: Mr. Sean Casey, MP:

We, the Board Members of the Alberta Teachers of English as a Second Language (ATESL) are writing to contribute to Canadian Heritage's deliberations concerning the selection of a national language framework for civil servants. ATESL supports and endorses the Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLBs) and niveaux de compétence linguistique canadiens (NCLC).

The development and implementation of the CLB/NCLC has been strongly supported by English language professionals in Alberta, including instructors, program managers, researchers, and teacher trainers. In addition, IRCC (formerly Citizenship and Immigration Canada) and provincial governments, including the Government of Alberta, have provided extensive financial support of the CLB/NCLC contributing to its many successes across the nation. In 2010 - 2012, in consultation with a national team of experts, the CLB underwent revisions. The 2012 version is user-friendly, addresses a wide range of communicative competencies, and includes a comprehensive set of instructor companion documents. After 20 years of extensive research, development, and implementation across Canada, the CLB/NCLC have applicability as a framework for language training and assessment of civil servants.

The CLB and NCLC are made-in-Canada language proficiency frameworks that include reliable and valid assessment tools; use criterion referencing to measure language progress; are recognized with broad national acceptance; and are used in expanding contexts including English for academic purposes, high-stakes assessment, workplace and skills development training, and vocational training. For example, the CLBs have been used to develop the occupation-specific assessment tool, Canadian English Language Benchmarks Assessment for Nurses (CELBAN). The CELBAN assesses the communicative competence of internationally trained nurses. The current CLB/NCLC has expanded its applicability beyond settlement for newcomers to Canada and can be successfully used or modified for use in language training and assessment of federal civil servants seeking to acquire either French or English for employment purposes.

The CLB/NCLC supports a balanced approach to bilingualism and reflects uniquely Canadian cultures and contexts. Access to one or both of Canada's official languages fosters linguistic integration of individuals into Canadian workplaces, communities, and classrooms, without forcing assimilation. It is our understanding that the Common European Framework of References for Languages (CEFR) is also being considered. It might interest you to know that the Government of Alberta uses the CEFR for foreign language teaching in K-12, but opted for a Benchmarks approach for teaching English to immigrant K-12 students, because language teachers, consultants, and members of the Ministry of Education determined that the general CLB approach is a better fit for the Canadian context.

The Canadian Language Benchmarks and the niveaux de compétence linguistique canadiens offer strong English and French frameworks with a proven record of applicability in a range of high stakes language learning contexts. ATESL strongly encourages Canadian Heritage to select the CLB/NCLC as the national language framework.



October 16, 2017

Dear Lisa Rochman,

On October 13, 2017, the TESL Canada Board of Directors held an emergency board meeting and made the very difficult, but carefully thought out, decision to begin the process of suspending all TESL Canada services effective immediately.

As you know, in the past two years both TESL Ontario and BC TEAL have left the Federation. That resulted in a reduction of our membership by almost 50%, which had the effect of drastically reducing a main source of income, and at the same time increasing the workload on board members and committees to set up new systems to better serve our members. This circumstance has impacted TESL Canada negatively.

In the past few years, provincial partners have been saying that the model of running joint conferences with TESL Canada was too onerous and unevenly balanced between workload and profit-sharing. In response, TESL Canada chose to deliver the 2017 national conference last June 2017 without a provincial partner. At the same time, changing directions at the federal level with IRCC meant that LINC teachers did not receive their normal funding support to attend the conference. This circumstance had a significant negative impact on registration numbers at the conference. While the conference was a great success in terms of professional development and networking, it did not make sufficient profit to cover the loss in membership revenue.

Another area of financial challenge for us has been around our core services: Teacher Certification and Teacher Training Program Recognition. Both programs have been operating with antiquated systems supporting too few adjudicators resulting in unacceptably slow processing times and frequent glitches. Under the direction of the Executive Director, office staff did a comparative analysis of cost structures and found that TESL Canada's fees were far below comparable programs and, in fact, were not even breaking even from a cost recovery perspective. When notice went out that we were raising service fees

– for the first time in more than a decade – there was opposition from our members.

All of the above are indicators to us that the membership, for whom we exist, does not or cannot support our existence.



Rest assured that the TESL Canada Board of Directors is committed to shepherding this transition for the membership with diligence and care. All outstanding applications and certifications will be processed but effective immediately, we will not be accepting any new applications. In addition, we have already started negotiations with the accreditation company Orion so that our members and teacher training programs will have access to these types of services. The board will remain intact after the dissolution of

the head office to wrap up various projects and business and to manage the transition of other products such as the TC Journal. Likewise, we are committed to the responsible, transparent, and ethical management of the financial assets and intellectual property of the organization.

We will continue to communicate and consult with the TESL Canada Board and ensure due diligence in all of our actions. For the time being, the Head Office closure and the efficient and careful attention to member services, including transparent communication, will be our priority. An AGM will be held at a later date to make further motions as to the future of TESL Canada itself.

We thank you for your understanding during this challenging time.

Sincerely,

The TESL Canada Board of Directors

Joy Lin Salzberg – President

Paula Kristmanson – Vice President

Judy Sillito – Past President

Shahid Abrar-ul-Hassan – Secretary

Brian Courtney – Treasurer

Liliana Dominguez – Provincial Representative, Saskatchewan

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Kate Johnson - Provincial Representative: Newfoundland & Labrador

Darlene McInnis – Provincial Representative: Nova Scotia

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Kathy Whynot – Provincial Representative: New Brunswick

Jennifer Foote – Chair, Professional Development Committee

Elsie Johnson – Chair, Settlement Language National Network

Caroline Payant – Chair, Journal Advisory Committee

Dmitri Priven – Chair, Standards Advisory Committee