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## **President's Report**

Dear fellow ATESL members,

Spring is nearly upon us, and it has been an especially eventful 2018 thus far for ATESL!

### **LTLE**

February's federally-funded Western Canada Language Training Learning Event was a success! This professional development designed for LINC instructors was a team effort between ATESL and NorQuest College of which we are very proud to have been a part!



### **President Elect**

The ATESL Board is thrilled to announce that we have elected a President Elect who will be appointed ATESL President at the October 2018 AGM. We wish to welcome Colyn deGraaff to the ATESL team! More information about Colyn will be found in the June 2018 newsletter.

### **Advocacy**

The mission of the Advocacy Committee is to advocate on behalf of ATESL on issues which affect its members and their learners. Please check the advocacy page on the ATESL website for updates:

[www.atesl.ca/about/advocacy-committe/](http://www.atesl.ca/about/advocacy-committe/).

### **Conference 2018**

ATESL welcomes Eaman Mah and Dorte Weber as this year's Conference Co-Chairs! The next ATESL conference will take place October 12 & 13, 2018 at Fantasyland Hotel in Edmonton.

### **Social Media**

ATESL will be taking steps in the coming months to revitalize our social media presence. Watch for updates.

## Special Interest Group – Educational Technology



Building on the interest generated at the Educational Technology Summit held during the ATESL 2017 conference in Calgary, ATESL is pleased to announce the formation of the Educational Technology Special Interest Group (EdTech SIG).

The purpose of the Ed Tech SIG is to bring English language professionals currently working with technology together on a quarterly basis to support their professional development in the area.

The focus of the meetings will be guided by the SIG members and may include sharing ideas, discussing new technologies, reviewing current literature, and so much more! Meetings will be held virtually using technologies such as Google Hangouts or Zoom.

Wendy Chambers (ATESL President 2015-2016) and Amy Meckelborg are taking the initial lead of the SIG and invite interested ATESL members to join the first online meeting taking place on Monday, April 16th from 7:00-8:00 pm.

Please RSVP to [wchambers@atesl.ca](mailto:wchambers@atesl.ca) by Friday, April 13 to receive log in information for the meeting.

TESL Canada Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) - ATESL is still in negotiations with TESL Canada regarding an interim Memorandum of Agreement. Stay tuned for updates on the ATESL website and in the June 2018 newsletter. ATESL members will still receive correspondence from TESL Canada while the negotiations are taking place.

### Accreditation Review

ATESL's Accreditation Review Committee meets monthly to gather and evaluate information pertaining to professional accreditation needs and options for English language teachers. The committee will make recommendations to ATESL Board in time for the October 2018 AGM.

If you have questions or comments about ATESL's accreditation review, please contact Kim Dudas at [president@atesl.ca](mailto:president@atesl.ca).

### TESL Canada Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

ATESL is still in negotiations with TESL Canada regarding an interim Memorandum of Understanding for 2018. Stay tuned for updates on the ATESL website and in the June 2018 newsletter. ATESL members will still receive correspondence from TESL Canada while the negotiations are taking place.

### Interprovincial Relationships

ATESL makes it a priority to maintain relationships with similar organizations across the country. In addition to having a TESL Canada Representative present at all TESL Canada board meetings, the ATESL presidential chain also meets regularly with associations across the country to discuss pertinent issues and opportunities.

### Want to Get Involved?

The Alberta Teachers of English as a Second Language (ATESL) is a professional organization that promotes the highest standards of teaching and English language program provision for all learners in Alberta whose first language is other than English.

We encourage members to share knowledge and expertise with ATESL through joining a committee, special interest group, or by joining the ATESL Board of Directors.

In October 2018, several exciting opportunities will become available not only in terms of committees and special interest groups, but also on the ATESL Board of Directors. The board holds three face-to-face meetings each year. When there is not a face-to-face meeting, board members meet remotely over Google Hangouts once a month.

Please visit [www.atesl.ca](http://www.atesl.ca) for more information about committees, special interest groups, and board positions. If you have questions about any of these opportunities, please contact Irene Wood, ATESL Business Manager, at [atesl.admin@atesl.ca](mailto:atesl.admin@atesl.ca).

Respectfully submitted by: Kim Dudas, ATESL President

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## Calgary Local Report

The Center for Newcomers welcomed 28 attendees to our first PD session of the year on January 25. We had three great presentations:

1. **Teach more in Less time using Authentic Online Materials:** Shabana Shahzad shared how she had taught Bylaws of Calgary using online authentic materials. She also shared the four tasks which she had developed and used in class along with the hard copies of the tasks.
2. **Using Plain Language in the Classroom:** Rabia Garewal presented on what plain language is; how to write in it; how to speak clearly and how to incorporate it into classroom practice.
3. **Perspectives on Introversion and Engagement in the Adult ESL Classroom:** Research indicates that introversion is a multi-dimensional aspect of personality that can affect how individuals learn English. Dr. Kelti Giles presented her research on how students who display introverted tendencies engage in ESL classrooms and provide some strategies for educators in working with such students.

Our second PD session welcomed 25 participants. It was held on March 8 at SAIT where Brock J. Wojtalewicz facilitated an interactive session “Enhancing Language Assessment, Instruction, and Curricular Design with a Focus on Vocabulary”. He utilized insights from current research in applied linguistics to provide practical advice for improving vocabulary assessment and instruction, as well as for designing materials with an explicit focus on lexis.

The Calgary local would also like to inform that our Treasurer, Peggy Jubien, has recently resigned from this role after two years of dedicated service. We would like to thank Peggy for her contribution to this organization and wish her luck with her future endeavors. The role of the Treasurer was assumed by our new member, Elaine Mew, who works at the Centre for Newcomers.

Our next PD session is to be held at Bow Valley College on May 10. This session will involve three 20-minute sessions on using technology in the classroom. The presentation details will be shared once solidified.

Submitted by: Jyoti Grewal & Irina Derevyanko

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## Central Alberta Report

The Central Alberta local held a very successful Professional Development day on January 27. 18 people attended from Red Deer area and Ponoka. We began the day with a fascinating webinar off Tutela - Shelley McConnell: Visuals and ESL Literacy Learning – Part one before welcoming our first live presenter, Val Baggaley. Val gave us insights into working with Literacy students at CLB 2 and demonstrated a variety of ways to engage these students. She provided many different examples and references for use in the classroom and reminded us to repeat, repeat, and repeat some more. Our second presenter, Hannah Dissen, gave us many new ideas for teaching pronunciation in a PBLA classroom. We ended the day with Part two of Shelley McConnell’s webinar.

On April 7, we will again be holding a Professional Development Day. We have invited Judi Morris from Agape in Calgary to inspire and motivate us to use music in the classroom. We hope to come away with many new techniques for teaching vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar by drawing on the right side of the brain. The second half of our day will be devoted to teaching financial literacy, under the tutelage of Jacky Rivas from the Rural Routes program. All are welcome to join us – please RSVP to Carol Smyth [carol.smyth@care2centre.ca](mailto:carol.smyth@care2centre.ca) by April 3.

Submitted by Anna Robertson and Elise Kruithof

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## Edmonton Local Report

**Past Meeting:** The Edmonton Local meeting on January 26, 2017 was very informative. We are extremely thankful to Justine Light and Anne Merritt for sharing the excitement about the new and improved Learning English with CBC! Attendees also had the opportunity to exchange teaching resources and strategies.

**ESL Directors' Forum:** Our annual ESL Directors' Forum will take place on Friday, March 16 from 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at Sacred Heart. The goal of this event is for all ESL practitioners to be aware of what is available for English language learners in the city of Edmonton and also learn about upcoming developments. Currently, we have eight directors that have agreed to participate in the forum.

**Future Meetings:** We are excited about inviting speakers from across Canada. In December we hosted a Tutela webinar where Jean Campbell from Saskatchewan presented on *Literacy Learners' Strategies: learning to learn*. This webinar was a success and we look forward to hosting more webinars this year. Kelly Morrissey from TESL Ontario will be presenting on April 27 and the link for the event will be shared with all ATESL Locals.

Next ATESL Edmonton Local Meeting  
March 16, 2018

Presentation: *ESL Directors' Forum*

Location: Sacred Heart

Submitted by: Elina Stop and Diana Agudelo, Edmonton Local Co-Chairs

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## Southern Alberta Report

The Southern Alberta Chapter held its first event of the new year at the beginning of February. The event brought educators together to explore the meaning of 'open educational resource' (OER) and relevant concepts associated with it. In addition to learning about different licensing options and how to locate open educational

resources, participants also explored how to use one specific OER, H5P. This resulted in each participant developing a unique resource utilizing the application. The Southern Alberta Chapter would like to thank Joerdis Weilandt for sharing her expertise on the topic and for facilitating such an engaging session!

In the coming months, the Southern Alberta Chapter is planning on hosting two more professional development workshops and an end of the school year barbeque. Stay tuned to learn more about upcoming events!

Submitted by: Greg Ogilvie & David Fuller

## ATESL Board 2017-2018

Kim Dudas  
President

Colyn deGraaff  
President Elect

Lisa Rochman  
Past President

Wendy Ilott  
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Martha Urquhart  
Rural Routes Representative

Dr. Tracey Derwing,  
Stacy Norrbom,  
Theresa Wall,  
Wendy Chambers  
Advocacy Committee Members

Irene Wood  
Business Manager

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## TESL Canada Report

TESL Canada continues trying to re-organize and re-calibrate following its near dissolution in the fall of 2017. Paula Kristmanson of the University of New Brunswick has taken over as Acting President and has been focusing on four areas: TESL Canada Journal; Teacher Certification; Teacher Training Accreditation; improved communication with members. Paula has sent two letters at the end of January and February basically trying to keep the membership up-to-date with TESL Canada's efforts in the four areas. Please refer to Paula's letters for the most accurate information on the organization's activities. These letters are a promising sign, however, of TESL Canada's efforts to be more open and communicative. A part-time assistant has also recently been hired to reply to any communication with the office, so inquiries sent directly to TESL Canada should be dealt with in a timely manner.

TESL Canada has been trying to get an interim MOU signed by its affiliates so that it can continue to operate. As the largest affiliate, ATESL has been asking some necessary questions about what exactly the organization plans to do with membership fees before agreeing to the MOU. It is an ongoing process, but I feel that TESL Canada is trying to be a more responsive and open organization that serves the English as an Additional Language community well.

Respectfully submitted by: Celia Logan, TESL Canada Representative

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## ATESL Accreditation Review Committee Report

The ATESL Accreditation Review Committee (AARC) has been organized to respond to the October 13, 2017 announcement of the suspension of TESL Canada's teacher accreditation process by gathering information about professional accreditation of English language

teachers and identifying options around this. The committee is responsible for evaluating these so that the ATESL Board can make recommendations to the ATESL membership at the October 2018 AGM.

ATESL's ARC will remain active until the recommendations have been made at the October 2018 AGM. The committee is in full swing and is currently working out the details of its Terms of Reference.

TESL Canada emailed a letter to ATESL members in February 2018 to announce that they had reopened TESL Canada teacher certification. If ATESL members wish to apply for TESL Canada certification, TESL Canada membership fees will be paid by the applicant directly to TESL Canada.

We welcome your input. If you have questions or suggestions regarding ATESL's ARC, please email Kim Dudas at [president@atesl.ca](mailto:president@atesl.ca).

Submitted by: Kim Dudas & Sheri Rhodes

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## 2018 ATESL Conference Update

Conference Committee Chairs: Andrea Cheuk (Program), Peter Myhre (Registration), Ping Ping Li (Publisher), Ruth Jordan (Hospitality) had a meeting on February 6 to discuss possible keynote speakers.

Alison Vickerman has joined the committee as the facilities chair.

The conference co-chairs and the facilities chair will be going to the venue soon to discuss catering and space.

A contract with MacEwan Conference Services has been signed, and they will be responsible for online registration.

The theme of the conference will be on immigration/migration.

A call for volunteers will be circulated soon.

Co-chairs met on March 10 and came up with a draft budget.

Next conference meeting is scheduled for March 13.

The following keynote speakers have been confirmed:

1. Ingrid Johnston for Friday, October 12 in the morning

Dr. Ingrid Johnston is a Professor of English Education and Curriculum Studies in the Department of Secondary Education at the University of Alberta, Edmonton. She grew up in Britain and South Africa, where she completed a BA and teaching diploma at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal. Currently she teaches courses in Postcolonial Theories, Issues and Curriculum. Her research focuses on postcolonial literary studies, multicultural literary education, questions of culture, migration and teacher education

2. Jennifer Foote for Friday, October 12 in the afternoon

Dr. Jennifer Foote is an assistant professor of in the Faculty of Extension at the University of Alberta. Jennifer believes difficulties with pronunciation can create barriers to employment and successful integration for newcomers to Canada. Her research explores what

contributes to the intelligibility of speech for second language users communicating in different language contexts and, further, seeks evidence-based solutions to help learners improve intelligibility, thus facilitating greater communicative success in their communities and workplaces.

3. Michel Chikwanine has been confirmed as a keynote for Saturday, October 13

Former Child Soldier/Inspirational Speaker on the Ability to Create Change

Michel Chikwanine has overcome unimaginable pain and struggles. Born in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Michel grew up amid the terror of the Great War of Africa. Much of his childhood was ravaged by the death and decay of a war that claimed the lives of 5.8 million people, his father included, and forced him to be a child soldier. Now, a United Nations Fellow for People of African Descent, Michel inspires people to believe in their ability to make a difference and leaves audiences with a new perspective on life, a sense of hope through social responsibility, and a desire for change.

Please let us know if you have any questions.

Submitted by: Eaman Mah & Dorte Weber

## LGBTQ Advocacy & Awareness

As members of the Advocacy Committee of ATESL, we seek to advocate for the needs of newcomer groups, as well as teachers of English as a Second Language. In this newsletter, the committee would like to take this opportunity to provide a brief overview of some recent research on one such newcomer group – individuals who identify as LGBTQ - and share a few resources for both teachers and for students in your classes who may wish to connect with these resources.

A recent influx of LGBTQ newcomers has led to an increase in awareness and services for this population, in particular, refugee claimants seeking asylum because of their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. A 2016 report entitled “Provisioning Settlement Services for LGBTQ Newcomers to Edmonton” prepared for the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers (EMCN) offers some insight for individuals working with LGBTQ newcomers:

- Confidentiality is critical for LGBTQ newcomers because of the homophobia that exists within many newcomer communities (p.4)
- Settlement agencies may have a role to play in connecting LGBTQ newcomers to their co-national communities and combating homophobia in these communities to make LGBTQ individuals feel safer.
- LGBTQ individuals may need to be referred to counselling and supports to help them navigate their new life in Canada, including the homophobia that they may encounter, as well as the re-traumatization that they may face as they go through the refugee process.

The full 85-page report can be found at <http://refugeealberta.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Provisioning-Settlement-Services-for-LGBTQ-Newcomers.pdf>.


For newcomers, there are several new supports available to help them find their way in Edmonton.

- In September 2017, EMCN hired Basel Abou Hamrah to work as an LGBTQ settlement practitioner. His role at the centre is to assist refugee claimants with their refugee applications, and to help them find housing, medical care, and social connections.
- Basel and another colleague from EMCN, Sara Buczynski, also started up an LGBTQ newcomers group to encourage them to support each other and socialize together. Interested individuals can contact Basel at EMCN for details about when the group meets. The group can also be found on Facebook by searching “LGBTQ + Newcomers Edmonton.” Allies (individuals who are supportive but do not identify as LGBTQ) are also welcome to attend weekly events and offer connection.

For teachers or other interested allies, the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI) offers a free LGBTQ+ Positive Space Webinar Series that provides some general training on LGBTQ topics. Go to [OCASI.org](http://OCASI.org) to sign up for these free webinars or search for other useful resources on their site. Additionally, teachers may wish to find information on the following websites:

- International Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association ([ilga.org](http://ilga.org))
- Egale Canada (Canada’s LGBT Human Rights Organization ([egale.ca](http://egale.ca)))
- The Pride Centre of Edmonton
- Calgary Outlink: Centre for Gender and Sexual Diversity ([calgaryoutline.ca](http://calgaryoutline.ca))

Submitted by: Stacy Norrbom



## **NEW to ATESL! Join the Educational Technology Special Interest Group!**

Building on the interest generated at the Educational Technology Summit held during the ATESL 2017 conference in Calgary, ATESL is pleased to announce the formation of the Educational Technology Special Interest Group (EdTech SIG). The purpose of the Ed Tech SIG is to bring English language professionals currently working with technology together on a quarterly basis to support their professional development in the area. The focus of the meetings will be guided by the SIG members and may include sharing ideas, discussing new technologies, reviewing current literature, and so much more! Meetings will be held virtually using technologies such as Google Hangouts or Zoom. Wendy Chambers (ATESL President 2015-2016) and Amy Meckelborg are taking the initial lead of the SIG and invite interested ATESL members to join the first online meeting taking place on Monday, April 16 from 7:00 - 8:00 p.m. Please RSVP to [wchambers@atesl.ca](mailto:wchambers@atesl.ca) by Friday, April 13 to receive log in information for the meeting.