



ALBERTA TEACHERS
OF ENGLISH AS
A SECOND LANGUAGE

President's Message

Happy Spring 2025!

The last several months have been a tumultuous time in the EAL world with many colleagues adversely affected with the recent funding cuts. In response, the Board and the Advocacy Committee have been working hard to represent our membership. The first letter to IRCC sent in January addressed wage equity and was also co-signed by our interprovincial committee and a second letter regarding funding cuts was also sent in February. Further, a template was created and is available for all members should they wish to send a personalized letter. **The template is linked [HERE](#).** We remain committed to ensuring our voices are heard!



In early December 2024, a survey was sent out to the membership regarding a potential name change. 63% of the respondents to the survey agreed that the ATESL name needed to be updated for better inclusivity. Of the presented options, the favored name was 'ATEAL: Alberta Teachers of English as an Additional Language'. The costs associated with the name change are minimal at both Alberta Registries and with the logo and website update.

We are excited to be able to offer an *in-person* symposium occurring on Friday, May 23rd! This opportunity was made possible through the very generous offer by the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta for the use of their facilities. Thank you!

Lastly, member concerns are always welcome but they cannot be addressed unless they are sent from a valid email or return address. We remain committed to fostering collaboration, growth, and support of all.

Best regards,
May Yeung - ATESL President

Spring Symposium

<https://www.atesl.ca/symposium/symposium/>

This year, ATESL is hosting a one-day symposium on May 23, 2025 in Edmonton. This is an incredible opportunity to exchange insights and expertise, foster collaboration, and build meaningful connections. The theme for the 2025 symposium is "Infinite Paths: EAL for a Transformed World." The theme is reflective of our current teaching climate and rapid changes happening in our field. The possibilities are endless.

Don't miss your chance to present at the 2025 symposium! ATESL is accepting presentation proposals via the [online Google form](#) by April 16, 2025, so be sure to submit yours soon! If you have questions or technical difficulties submitting your proposal, please contact the Programming Committee at - symposium.program@atesl.ca

We are also in the process of investigating organizing same day return group transportation to and from Calgary via a shuttle service. More details to come!

Registration is open until May 16 - Register here: <https://www.atesl.ca/symposium/registration/> We look forward to seeing you at the symposium!

Elina Stop and Janet Kwong
ATESL Symposium Managers

ATESL BOARD

President - May Yeung
President Elect - Johnson Kunnel
Past President - Sofia Elgueta
Secretary - JJ Pulleyblank
Treasurer - Doug Vantour
Calgary Co-Chairs - Jeffrey Robinson & Jani Krulc
Central AB Chair - Melinda Johnston
Edmonton Co-Chairs - Pamela Ndumbi & Indira Cevallos Novillo
TESL Canada Representative - Mehdi Soleimani
Alberta Routes Representative - Lia dela Cruz
Communications Chair- Zuzana Buchanan
Advocacy Chair - Hyeyung Park
Business Manager - Irene Wood



Fall 2025 Conference - Save the date!

Our annual online conference will happen October 17th - 18th.
Mark your calendar!

Local Updates

Calgary Chapter

The Calgary Chapter gathered at the Bank & Baron on February 8th for its **Winter Social**. Over twenty members attended and fun was had by all. On February 25th, we hosted our first online PD of the year, a workshop on **Working with Trauma-Affected English Language Learners** led by Rosalia Dela Cruz of Alberta Routes. The session was highly informative and we had great feedback from the over twenty attendees. We are looking forward to our next PD session, **Irreplaceable EAL Teachers in an Era of AI**, presented by Dr. Johnson Kunnel, which was held on April 8th.

Edmonton Chapter

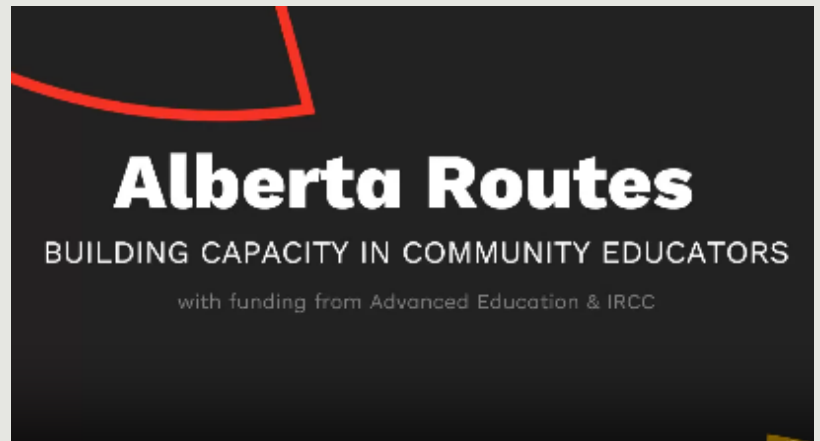
The ATESL Edmonton local chapter has been hard at work with planning and executing webinars and activities all throughout the year. This includes a **Winter Social** at the Cactus Club Cafe in December, as well as webinars on topics such as **AI, Indigenization, and Literacy**. In the coming months, the Edmonton chapter anticipates more exciting webinars on **Stage 1 Writing Skills, Digital Literacy, Listening Skills**, and more.



Alberta Routes

Visit our [website](#) for the calendar of webinars offered each month. Registration closes 48 hours before the webinar date. Most of our workshop content is created for volunteer tutors and instructors in community adult learning programs across the province but can be of interest to other EAL practitioners as well. This spring, we are happy to extend our service beyond Alberta's borders. Alberta Routes will be presenting our webinar on *Creating Accessible Learning Environments* to BC TEAL on April 11.

Follow us on social media! Join our [Facebook group](#) and check out our [YouTube playlist](#) which currently houses videos from our workshop on *The Elders Speak: Promoting Indigenous Awareness*. Indigenous Elders speak about their traditions in short videos created for CLB 3-5 instructors and learners. Contact rosalia.delacruz@norquest.ca for copies of the lesson plans that accompany some of these videos. Plans are underway to add more videos on practical teaching tips for instructors. Stay tuned!



Advocacy

Our committee comprises both a past and current president, a chair, and five members: Sofia Elgueta Duplancic, May Yeung, Hyeyung Park, Livia Fajkusz, Eman Ghanem, Yuji Abe, and Herly Cervera. We convene regularly via Zoom on a monthly basis to discuss a range of issues and initiatives aimed at advocating for our members and learners.

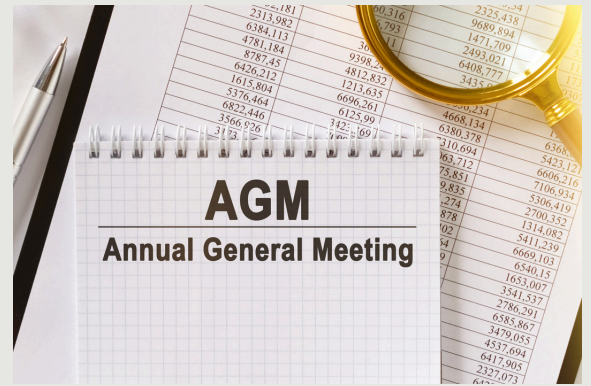
In November 2024, the newly launched Advocacy Committee began actively engaging in a range of initiatives to address members' concerns and sector-wide challenges. The committee focused on policy advocacy, initiating a member survey to inform 2025 priorities and sending follow-up correspondence to IRCC regarding wage equity and funding cuts, including a draft letter targeting Stage 2 LINC funding reductions. Member engagement was a key theme, with the 2025 Advocacy Committee Survey highlighting critical issues such as provincial and federal funding cuts, lack of job security, permanent part-time employment, limited career advancement, and inadequate workplace healthcare. In response to the sudden closure of the Bow Valley College ESL program, the committee explored immediate advocacy strategies, including Livia's proposal for a social business model and Janice McCrimmon's leadership in mobilizing support for affected members and learners. The committee remains committed to responsive and sustained advocacy as the sector navigates funding instability and program disruptions.



TESL Canada

In March, TESL Canada's board met to discuss the recent funding cuts that have led to program closures in Alberta. The board has decided to form an advocacy committee to assess the impact across Alberta and other provinces and to engage with stakeholders in support of affected teachers and students.

For members' information, the TESL Canada Annual General Meeting (AGM) is scheduled for Wednesday, April 30 at 7:00 p.m. EST.



Ethnocultural Grant

ATESL is thrilled to announce that we have received funding from the Alberta Ethnocultural Grant Program for our project **Developing Intercultural Competence through Narrative Métissage**. This Train-the-Trainer initiative supports English as an Additional Language instructors in embedding intercultural competence, anti-racism, inclusion, and Indigenous ways of knowing into their teaching practices.



Rooted in the storytelling method of narrative métissage, the project fosters meaningful reflection, empathy, and connection through the weaving of diverse lived experiences. Stay tuned for news and calls to participate in this exciting project!

Happy Spring from ATESL!

As the days grow longer and brighter, we hope this season brings a renewed sense of energy and optimism to your classrooms and communities. Spring is a time of growth and new beginnings, and we're continually inspired by the work you do to support and empower English language learners across Alberta.

Thank you for your dedication, passion, and commitment to creating inclusive, welcoming learning spaces. We wish you a joyful and refreshing season ahead!

Warmly,

The ATESL Board



Stay Connected with ATESL!

Follow us on [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#) to stay up to date with our latest news and PD initiatives. Join our growing online community!

