



ALBERTA TEACHERS  
OF ENGLISH AS  
A SECOND LANGUAGE

**Alberta Teachers of English as a Second Language  
Annual General Meeting  
Friday, October 27, 2023  
Calgary, Alberta  
4:00 – 5:00 PM  
Location: MacDonald Hall, SAIT**

**Minutes - Unapproved**

- 1. Call to order: 4:12 PM**
- 2. Establishment of quorum: 62 Members**  
( Require minimum 60 members -10% of October 13 Membership)
- 3. Approval of 2023 AGM Agenda**  
No amendments to the agenda.

**MOTION TO APPROVE THE 2023 ATESL AGM AGENDA AS CIRCULATED.**

**MOVED: DORA DILULLO PATTEN**

**2ND: LEILA RANTA**

**OPPOSED: 0**

**ABSTENTIONS: 0**

**IN FAVOUR: ALL**

**MOTION CARRIED**

- 4. Approval of 2022 AGM Minutes**  
No amendments.  
**MOTION TO APPROVE THE 2022 AGM MINUTES AS CIRCULATED.**  
**MOVED: LORI KENNEDY**  
**2ND: ELINA STOP**  
**OPPOSED: 0**  
**ABSTENTIONS: 10**  
**IN FAVOUR: 50**  
**MOTION CARRIED**

- 5. Reports of Officers**  
**Presidents' Report – Doug Vantour**

The President references the formal Presidents' Report and all committee reports as posted to the membership electronically prior to the AGM, and distributed in hardcopy at the AGM. The full Presidents' Report is included on pages 4-10.

### **Treasurer Report – Wendy Ilott**

The treasurer referenced her formal report and reviewed the 2022 Audited Financial Statement with attendees. The full Treasurer's report is on page 10.

#### **6. Reports of Committees**

(Full Committee reports are included on pages 11 -16)

Calgary Local Central

Alberta Local

Edmonton Local

Southern Alberta Local

Bursary Committee

TESL Canada

Alberta Routes

Communications Committee

**MOTION: TO APPROVE THE ATESL ANNUAL REPORTS AS PRESENTED AT THE 2023 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.**

**MOVED: JUSTINE LIGHT**

**2<sup>ND</sup>: GABRIELA JESSOME**

**OPPOSED: 0**

**ABSTAIN: 2**

**IN FAVOUR: 58**

**MOTION CARRIED**

#### **7. Presentation of Awards**

Lifetime Membership Award - Marcia Kim

Carolyn Dieleman Award - Shona Nichols

### **Motions before the membership**

#### **8. Approval of the 2022 Audited Financial Statement**

**MOTION TO ACCEPT THE 2022 AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENT AS PRESENTED TO THE MEMBERSHIP.**

**MOVED: WENDY ILOTT**

**2<sup>ND</sup>: SHERI RHODES**

**OPPOSED: 0**

**ABSTENTION:2**

**IN FAVOUR: 58**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**9. Approval of 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, 2023.**

**MOVED: SHERI RHODES**

**2<sup>ND</sup>: ALANA JOHNSON**

**OPPOSED: 0**

**ABSTENTION: 1**

**IN FAVOUR: 59**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**10. Appointment of Local Co-chairs and Board Members at Large**

The Following ATESL Members have been approved by acclamation to their Local Chapters as Co-chairs, or as Board members at large:

Edmonton Local- Indira Cevallos Novillo

Edmonton Local - Jasnoor Grewal

TESL Canada Representative – Mehdi Soleimani

Advocacy Chair - Justine Light

**11. Election of Officers for 2023-2024**

President Elect

Alisa Zavialova has been nominated for the position of President Elect. No other nominations have been brought forward from the floor.

**MOTION TO APPROVE ALISA ZAVIALOVA AS 2023/24 ATESL PRESIDENT ELECT.**

**MOVED: SOFIA ELGUETA**

**2<sup>ND</sup>: LEILA**

**RANTA**

**OPPOSED: 0**

**ABSTENTION:1**

**IN FAVOUR: 59**

**CARRIED**

**12. Acknowledgements of Retiring Board Members**

Edmonton Local Co-chairs- Rigvi Kumar, Shiran Wang

Southern Alberta Local Co-chairs- Lauren Barrows, Alana Johnson

Advocacy Chair - Alexandra Marshall

TESL Canada Representative – Dora DiLullo Patten

Past President- Gabriela Jessome

### **13. Passing of the gavel – ATESL President 2023-2024 – Sofia Elgueta**

### **14. Adjournment: 4:48 PM**

## **REPORTS OF OFFICERS**

### **Presidents' Report**

October 2022 to October 2023, what an amazing year we have had at ATESL!! It has been great to see how we have been able to transition from the tail end of the pandemic into a return to in-person events. Despite our eagerness to return to face to face events, we encourage everyone to take care, be safe and attend events in your preferred model.

In the last year, we have had a focus on engaging our members on EDI & Anti-Racism projects. ATESL is committed to Anti-Racism and will continue to support and encourage our members in these areas. The ATESL Board submitted three proposals for grants from the Government of Alberta. ATESL was successful in two of these proposals: an Anti-Racism Symposium on December 3, 2022, and resource development for a Multicultural and Anti-Racism project.

As we continue to find ways to support our current members, encourage new members, and focus on new initiatives, we are encouraged with the direction we are seeing. The theme of this year's conference is a fitting theme that many of us have had to have over the last few years. Many of us have had to find the resiliency to not only get through the pandemic, but to now find our way through the new normalcy.

We'd like to extend our heartfelt thanks to our amazing conference team led by Conference Managers; Johnson Kunnel, Jani Krulc and Rosanna Quintieri, our keynotes, featured speakers, guest speakers, presenters, planners, and volunteers who have taken part in the conference planning, and of course our ATESL Business Manager, Irene Wood, whose hard work and dedication helps us to have a successful organization.

ATESL would like to recognize the following individuals for their leadership and contributions to making the conference such a success:

- Jani Krulc, Johnson Kunnel, and Rosanna Quintieri – Conference Managers
- Dora DiLullo Patten and Fariha Asif– Program Chairs and their team of program reviewers
- Julie Clements, Jason Andrews and Majid Nikouee – Scheduling and Communications Committee
- Nura Mohamed and Jenifer Soto – Publishers and Exhibitors Chairs

- Desiree Pomerleau – Donations & Hospitality Chair
- Hannah Nguyen – Publicity and Social Media Chair
- Holly Sadowsky – Student Volunteer Chair
- Doug Waite – Conference Logistics Chair
- Irene Wood – Registration Chair
- Sofia Elgueta Duplancic – Guidance, Conference Manager 2021
- Sarah Kopichanski - Guidance, Conference Manager 2022

ATESL would also like to thank the generous sponsors of our 2023 Conference for their support and financial contributions:

**Diamond Level:**

- Bow Valley College
- CCIS (Calgary Catholic Immigration Society)
- Centre for Newcomers

**Platinum Level:**

- Ellii
- Norquest College
- SAIT

**Gold Level:**

- AWES (Alberta Workforce Essential Skills)
- British Council (IELTS)
- Columbia College
- University of Alberta

**Bronze Level:**

- Assist Community Services Centre
- Cambridge University Press & Assessment
- Mount Royal University
- TESL Canada

**Conference Rates**

We know that some of our members have continued to experience financial hardship over the past few years, so the Board has kept conference registration fees on par with what we had for our past online conferences as opposed to our in person conference rates.

**Annual Membership Fee Increase**

As we continue to grow as an organization, there is an ongoing need to be transparent and have scheduled fee increases for membership. As we see increasing costs of doing business, it is unfair to have significant fee increases once every 4 or 5 years. In the coming year we will continue to discuss what annual increases might look like. In the interim, the Board has approved a 2.5% increase for 2024, which will become effective on January 1, 2024. The purpose of this initiative is to have a steady increase in membership fees on an annual basis, as opposed to increasing membership fees at unknown intervals.

**Table 1: Membership Fee Increase**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Fee Increase Rate</b>	<b>Membership Fee</b>
2023	N/A	\$60.90
2024	2.5%	\$62.42

**Note:** The fees in the table are based on a 1 year Regular Membership. All membership rates will be adjusted accordingly.

In the coming months, the Board will consult with the membership and continue to have discussions to develop a long term plan for an annual membership fee increase. It is anticipated that this will be brought for a membership vote at the 2024 AGM.

### **Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Safe Space Policy**

In July 2023, the Board approved the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Safer Space Policy. The purpose of this letter is to provide a Vision, Principles, and Commitment to an EDI Safe Space for all ATESL environments and our members. This policy was drafted by the Advocacy Committee and we would like to thank everyone who had a hand in completing this. A special thank you to Alexandra Marshall for taking the lead on this project and providing a wonderful policy for review. The policy has been posted on the ATESL website since August 2023 and we encourage all members to become familiar with it.

### **Wage Equity**

At the end of 2022, we drafted a letter to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship. The purpose of this letter is to advocate for the employment practices throughout Alberta, specifically in the disparity in wages, work conditions and health benefits. Since this letter was drafted, we shared it with other provincial organizations and we have received support from TESL Ontario, TESL Manitoba and TESL Saskatchewan. The next step for this letter prior to delivering it to the Minister will be to gather support from TESL Canada.

### **Anti-Racism Symposium**

In the last year, we have had a focus on engaging our members on EDI & Anti-Racism projects. In December we held an Anti-Racism Symposium, where three speakers: Suzanne Clavelle, Iftu Hargaaya, and Alexandra Marshall led discussions on topics of Indigenous Awareness, Racism, 2SLGBTQ+. A special thank you to Irene Wood, Sofia Elgueta, and Gabriela Jessome for coordinating this effort.

### **Multiculturalism and Anti-Racism Grant (MARG)**

In the fall of 2022, ATESL submitted a proposal to the Alberta government for their Multiculturalism and Anti-Racism Grant. ATESL was successful in being engaged to develop Multicultural and Anti-racism resources for CLB 3 to CLB 4 levels. This project is currently ongoing and we would like to extend a warm thank you to our Project Coordinator Haimei Wang, Resource Developer Jeremy Wilson, and their amazing team of experts. We hope you were able to attend their session. They are sending out calls for volunteers for their pilot program and we encourage you to join if you are able.

### **Communications Chair and Social Media Committee**

ATESL created advertising guidelines and role descriptions for a developed Communications Chair role and a social media coordinator. As we see a higher need to be more involved and engaging through online advertisement and on social media, we saw a need to have dedicated positions. The role of the Communications Chair is to design Professional Development and ATESL related posts, as well to schedule posts and event reminders in a timely manner. In addition to these responsibilities, the Chair will also coordinate the social media posts on specific calendar events.

A special thank you to Sarah Kopichanski for accepting the role of Communications Chair and to Zuzana Buchanan for stepping into the Coordinator role. Additionally, we want to extend a warm thank you to Hannah Nguyen for handling the social media posts for the 2023 ATESL Conference.

### **Let's Talk About Series**

On the third Thursday of every month ATESL holds a "Let's Talk About....." series. These are incredible sessions that have been coordinated by Donna Clarke from The Immigrant Education Society (TIES) Literacy Centre of Expertise. A very special thank you to Donna for all of her hard work and coordination of these events.

### **Local Chapter Summaries**

The locals resiliently continue to provide an outstanding number of Professional Development opportunities to members through virtual sessions and workshops. A heartfelt thank you to the local chairs for their hard work and commitment. I encourage you to read their reports so you can learn more about the professional opportunities they provided.

### **Bursary**

The bursary committee consists of three individuals; Wendy Illott (Treasurer), Tingyi Sun (Secretary) and Gabriela Jessome (Past President). Bursaries are some of the benefits offered to ATESL members. The Board approved applications totalling **\$1395** this year for three recipients. Additionally there were bursaries provided to four speakers at the 2023 conference for the First Time Conference Presenter bursary at \$250 each.

### **Alberta Routes**

ATESL's relationship with Alberta Routes (formerly Rural Routes) continues to grow and we are devoted to continuing our extremely valuable partnership with NorQuest College to reach our members and learners in more remote areas of the province.

ATESL takes this opportunity to thank all members of the Alberta Routes program with NorQuest College, including our new Board member Rosalia Dela Cruz who has done an amazing job keeping the Board informed of changes that took place over the last year.

### **Inter-Provincial Partnerships**

ATESL continues to meet with interprovincial associations sharing issues such as upcoming initiatives, association updates, ideas, and information, as well as discussing joint efforts to advocate for wage equity. These interprovincial meetings have provided a great opportunity for collaboration across provincial boundaries, as seen with the engagement from several interprovincial organizations with the newly drafted wage equity letter. We look forward to

continuing these efforts with all of the provincial organizations.

### **ATESL Advocacy Committee**

The Advocacy Committee is made up of a group of dedicated and devoted professionals, inspired to action from their dedication to quality education and commitment to further causes that support the well-being of ESL learners and teachers.

The ATESL Board would also like to formally thank Alexandra Marshall for her leadership, guidance and hard work for the Advocacy Committee over the past few years . While we are saddened to see Alexandra move from this position, we are equally grateful to welcome Justine Light to the position of Advocacy Chair. We are excited to see how this committee will continue to grow over the next year. We'd like to thank committee members, Yuji Abe, Herly Cervera, Cristina Constantinescu, Eman Ghanem, Bianca Khan, Danica MacDonald, Yana Mikhailovski, and Rebecca Scheiris for their participation this past year.

A great way to support the Advocacy Committee is to consider volunteering for it. Contact [advocacy@atesl.ca](mailto:advocacy@atesl.ca) for more information.

### **Financial Statement**

ATESL remained fiscally positive this year. After three years of online conferences, we were in a financially advantageous position to host an in person conference again. As we return to a face to face setting, it has become apparent that there are some required cuts, such as not providing lunch, to maintain a financially responsible approach.

Our yearly audit was successful once again, and we are grateful for our auditors at Halpert Monsma for all their advice and feedback. ATESL continues to explore alternate avenues for funding and the Board is committed to increasing annual revenue in order to keep the organization profitable.

### **Strategic Plan**

As we are entering the second year of the three year plan for our strategic directions, we would like to communicate that we are remaining focussed on the strategic plan and we did so by:

- continuing to provide professional development activities with topics requested by the membership.
- advocating for members' needs by establishing an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Safer Space Policy.
- the delivery of the Wage Equity Letter to provincial organizations for approval and final distribution to IRCC.
- developing a social media strategy and creating a Communications Committee, as well developing a Digital Marketing Strategy.
- continuing to engage our existing partners to continue the strategic agreements, such as with TESL Canada and Alberta Routes.

Should you wish to view the strategic plan in its entirety, please visit the ATESL website to view, <https://www.atesl.ca/about/atesl-documents/>.



## **TESL Canada**

TESL Canada and ATESL partnership continued to flourish during the 2022-2023 year. As a TESL member you are able to take advantage of the many complimentary professional development opportunities offered by them. Visit <https://www.tesl.ca/membership/membership-benefits.html> for additional information.

TESL Canada AGM will be held on October 28 from 4:15 to 5:15 pm in MacDonald hall at SAIT. We invite all ATESL members to attend, as your input is appreciated to help direct TESL Canada in the coming year.

TESL Canada Professional Standard 1 holders can now apply for Standard 2 by demonstrating completion of Professional Development (PD) activities. The system of PD points outlined in the application form below allows Standard 1 holders to claim their professional experience and specific PD activities they have completed and apply for Standard 2 certification without completing a recognized training program. This system of points may also allow an applicant to bridge from Standard 1 directly to Standard 3 with a completed graduate degree in a relevant area. This year, 25 ATESL members applied for certification.

A special thank you to our outgoing TESL Canada representative Dora DiLullo-Patten for her dedication and commitment to ATESL. Her vast experience will be missed on the ATESL Board. We are thrilled to have Mehdi Soleimani take on the role and we are confident that he will do an amazing job in his new role as TESL Canada representative for ATESL.

### **New Board Members**

We are thrilled to be welcoming the following new Board members whose appointment will happen during the AGM. We are also actively looking for members to take over the co-chair roles in southern Alberta as well as an additional member in central Alberta to join Melinda Johnston.

- Edmonton: Indira Cevallos Novillo and Jasnoor Grewal
- TESL Canada Representative: Mehdi Soleimani

### **Outgoing ATESL Board Members**

ATESL and I would like to express our most sincere gratitude to our outgoing ATESL Board members for their contributions throughout the last year. I personally would like to thank everyone of you as my time as president wouldn't have been the same without you. I thank you all for your leadership, mentorship and commitment to our great field.

- Southern Alberta Local Co-chairs – Lauren Barrows and Alana Johnson
- Edmonton Local Co-chairs – Rigvi Kumar and Shiran Wang
- TESL Canada Representative – Dora DiLullo-Patten
- Advocacy Committee Chair - Alexandra Marshall
- Past President – Gabriela Jessome
-

## **Conclusion**

I would like to end with a heartfelt thank you to all of the members of the ATESL Executive Board. All of your hard work and continuous efforts to improve the quality of services that we provide is such an amazing gift.

I want to also thank Irene Wood, our Business Manager, who has an ability to know the answer to almost every question. Irene's unwavering support for everyone on the Board often goes under appreciated, but all of us owe Irene a great deal of gratitude. On a personal note, I want to thank my friend Irene for being there for me throughout this last year as president. I could not have succeeded without you.

Secondly, I'd like to thank our Past President, Gabriela Jessome who was a supportive element in my transition from past president to president. Thank you Gabriela for your support through the good and difficult times.

I'd also like to thank Sofia Elgueta, our next president. I was really comforted to know that Sofia had agreed to join the Board and accept the role of President Elect. I immediately knew that Sofia and I would have a great working relationship. Sofia is bright, hard working, respectful and dedicated to her craft. I truly believe the organization is in better hands with Sofia at the helm and look forward to supporting her as we move forward into the 2024 year.

Respectfully submitted by Doug Vantour, ATESL President, 2023

## **Treasurer Report**

ATESL remained fiscally positive this year. After three years of conferences online, we were in a financially advantageous position to host an in person conference again. Though the opportunity to meet again in person is invaluable to so many of us, we will be spending more this year to support our in person gathering. Ultimately, we will be fortunate to end the year in the black but we must continue to be mindful of our spending as we resume in person events. Our yearly audit was successful once again, and we are grateful for our auditors at Halpert Monsma for all their advice and positive feedback. They recommended an additional layer of fiscal oversight which will be implemented beginning in November.

Finally, I want to thank Irene and the outgoing board members for keeping us on track and organized throughout the year.

Respectfully submitted by Wendy Ilott- Treasurer

## Reports of Committees

### Calgary Local Chapter Report

2023 was a good year for Calgary Local as we had 3 successful PD sessions which were presented via Zoom. The sessions offered a variety of topics relevant to our teaching practices and mental health. We would like to thank all the presenters who took the time to share their expertise with us.

January	<b>'Avenue Pt. 1'</b> by Kevin Simpson
April	<b>Reading Room and Computer Access for Literacy Learners (CALL)</b> by Nadejda Savca, Irina Copil, and Joanne Hingley
May	<b>"Mental Health Awareness"</b> - Priscilla Lee

We would also like to thank the local committee members for their time and commitment this past year: Nura Mohamed and Jenifer Soto Co-chairs

We would like to introduce our newest member to the board Michael Vandenberg. He will be serving as the Treasurer.

Our goal for next year is to provide more PD sessions that would include in person and online attendance.

Lastly, we would like to thank our local members for their support, participation and suggestions. We will be having an in person December Social coming up. We look forward to seeing you all there.

Respectfully submitted by Jenifer Soto and Nura Mohamed, Calgary Local Co-chairs

### Central Alberta Local Chapter Report

Over the past eight months, I've experienced a significant learning curve. In mid-December 2022, Sara Chavez invited me to be the second co-chair, starting in January 2023. My role involved covering monthly ATESL Board Meetings when she couldn't attend. Following the initial meeting, Sara had to resign due to personal reasons, leaving me as the sole co-chair for the Central Alberta Chapter. My experience with the executive board has been positive and supportive.

Throughout this period, I've observed that ATESL members in Red Deer and Central Alberta utilize the Alberta Routes program for professional development. Lia dela Cruz, the ATESL Alberta Routes Representative, has been a valuable collaborator, also serving as the Norquest College's-Alberta Routes regional advisor for Central Alberta. Lia's involvement expands professional development options for Central Alberta AB Region members. I'm exploring partnerships with the Central Alberta Regional Consortium to provide learning opportunities for

our members and inviting teachers from the region to join our ATESL professional development workshops. I'm currently awaiting contact from the Executive Director of the Central Alberta Consortium.

I extend my gratitude to Irene Wood for assisting in partnering with the Southern Chapter of ATESL for the first 2023 PD workshop on May 17. The workshop, led by Suzanne Anderson, covered the Change it Up Orientation course—an online, interactive program promoting a strengths-based, trauma-aware approach. Despite challenges, including the absence of Southern Alberta Chapter Co-Chairs, the workshop was successfully moderated, and Suzanne Anderson did an excellent job facilitating.

During our recent board meeting, I proposed that ATESL regional co-chairs maintain a contact list for sharing PD workshop ideas and collaborating on workshops. The ATESL Board will address this as an action item after new board members join post the 2023 conference. Additionally, I'm planning my first workshop in November, featuring Tyson Seaborn presenting "Creating Safe Spaces" to better support LGBTQ+ students in rural classrooms. I hope to network with him during the upcoming conference.

As I approach my second year in this role, I feel more comfortable and look forward to continued volunteer work, eager to meet new faces in the ATESL Central Alberta Chapter.

Respectfully submitted by Melinda Johnston, Central Alberta Local Chair

#### **Edmonton Local Chapter Report**

The Edmonton chapter met 8 times this past year, averaging between 10 - 20 members attending.

<b>Month</b>	<b>Presenter</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Modality</b>
September	Krista Schwabl	Sept 23, 2022	Hybrid
<i>November</i>	<i>May Young</i>	<i>Nov 22, 2022</i>	<i>Hybrid</i>
December	Christmas gathering	Dec 23, 2022	MKT bar + Fare
January			Canceled
February	Kent Lee	Feb 24, 2023	Hybrid
March	Chenfan Wu	Mar 24, 2023	Online
April	Emily Yukes	Apr 28, 2023	Online
May	Raghda Abdelqader	May 26, 2023	Online

June	Jennifer Foote	June 23, 2023	In-person
------	----------------	---------------	-----------

### **Highlights and New Initiatives**

- Encouraged hybrid/hyflex sessions to encourage members to attend in-person and online for more connectivity.
- Included a variety of topics for our PD sessions
- Opened up ATESL Edmonton Online PDs to all ATESL members
- Continuation of certificates (PDFs)
- Instagram/Twitter/Facebook Social media initiatives

### **Upcoming**

- ATESL Conference in Calgary (October 27 and 28)
- Next Edmonton Local meeting - tentatively set for **Friday, November 24th, 2023**

**If you have a suggestion for upcoming PD, or want to present at one of our monthly meetings, please email [edmonton@atesl.ca](mailto:edmonton@atesl.ca)**

Respectfully submitted by Rigvi Kumar and Shiran Wang, Edmonton Local Co-chairs

### **Southern Alberta Local Chapter Report**

In-person professional gatherings in Southern Alberta resumed in May 2023 with a well-attended event on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion at Lethbridge Family Services. Member engagement and professional development also occurred through workshops and webinars hosted by other local chapters throughout the year. These virtual events garnered participation from members in Southern Alberta, allowing interested members to attend a broad range of educational and knowledge-sharing opportunities. Southern Alberta members are also presenters and attendees at the 2023 ATESL Conference. Looking ahead, the incoming co-chairs will have a foundation on which to build the chapter's reach and impact.

Respectfully submitted by Lauren Barrows and Alana Johnson, Southern Alberta Local Co-chairs

### **2023 Bursary Committee Annual Report**

The Bursary Committee consists of three ATESL board members: Gabriela Jessome (Past President), Wendy Ilott (Treasurer), and Tingyi Sun (Secretary).

The ATESL bursary for professional development is one of the many advantages of membership. This year, four applications were received for the March and September deadlines, three of which met the criteria. The Bursary Committee is pleased to have supported three members for their participation in TESL-related academic/professional conferences (i.e., Canadian Association of Applied Linguistics Annual Conference) and for post secondary coursework (i.e., Anti-Racism Strategies for the Workplace, Teaching Reading, Writing and Grammar). A total of \$1,395.00 was distributed upon committee recommendation and Board approval. In addition, four first time conference presenter bursaries (\$250 each) were approved for the 2023 ATESL conference with a total of \$1,000.00.

We are pleased to support ATESL members for their ongoing professional development. For bursary consideration, kindly refer to the eligibility criterion, note the bi-annual application dates, and complete the fillable application form found at <https://www.atesl.ca/membership/bursaries/>.

Respectfully submitted by Tingyi Sun, ATESL Secretary - Chair of the Bursary Committee

### **TESL CANADA REPORT**

One of the advantages of being an ATESL member is that it provides automatic membership to TESL Canada. Because of this partnership, ATESL members are entitled to apply for bursaries, group benefit plans, professional development and scholarships provided by TESL Canada. Here is the link for membership benefits: <https://www.tesl.ca/membership/membership-benefits.html>

It has been a busy year for TESL Canada. The strategic plan was completed. There were also changes to the certification process. TESL Canada Professional Standard 1 holders can now apply for Standard 2 by demonstrating completion of Professional Development (PD) activities. The system of PD points outlined in the application form below allows Standard 1 holders to claim their professional experience and specific PD activities they have completed and apply for Standard 2 certification without completing a recognized training program. This system of points may also allow an applicant to bridge from Standard 1 directly to Standard 3 with a completed graduate degree in a relevant area. This year, 25 ATESL members applied for certification.

TESL Canada has revised their MOU with ATESL to allow them to participate in the ATESL 2023 Conference- Resilience, Resources and Strength in Language Teaching at SAIT on October 27-28, 2023 in Calgary. TESL Canada's objectives are: to have a meaningful TESL Canada presence at an ATESL Conference; to bring awareness of TESL Canada benefits to all members and to strengthen relationships between organizations and members. TESL Canada will have their AGM after the ATESL conference in Calgary on Saturday October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023 . All ATESL members are encouraged to attend and consider participating in committees and on the board.

Respectfully submitted by Dora Di Lullo-Patten, ATESL representative to TESL Canada

### **Alberta Routes Report**

The ESL Rural Routes Program Initiative carried out by NorQuest College is now *Alberta Routes*. In 2022, responding to a recommendation from Advanced Education, the Rural Routes team embarked on a process of finding a new name, one that better reflects the scope of the program's reach and practice beyond 'rural' and 'ESL'. Surveys and focus groups were conducted with partners from the Community Learning Network, and in Spring 2023, the new name was launched: **Alberta Routes: Building Capacity in Community Educators**. The name change also coincides with the belated celebration of the program's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary and expresses its ongoing commitment to supporting community adult learning programs across the province.

Alberta Routes continues to provide free professional development workshops and study groups on the following general categories of topics:

- Teaching Strategies & Frameworks
- Tools and Resources
- Teaching Online
- Assessment
- Community Connections and Programming
- Inclusion and Diversity

Other services include classroom visits, mentorship support for tutors, instructors, and program coordinators, and a library of online resources.

Over the past year, Alberta Routes:

1. Completed two (2) community needs assessments supporting four (4) community adult learning programs and several communities in Southern Alberta
2. Created new content for workshops (*Best Practices for Online Teaching* and *Integrating Anti-Racism in EAL Teaching Practices*) and a new study group on *EAL Tutor Essentials*, which builds on its popular *ESL Tutor Training* workshop and received a great deal of interest especially from new tutors

The current Team of Advisors are:

- Alana Johnson, Program Lead (Region 4, South)
- Rosalia Dela Cruz (Region 3, Central)
- Selestia Herrera-Ganton (Regions 1 & 2, North-West-East)

A calendar of upcoming webinars and a map of the regions are available on the website **[albertaroutes.norquest.ca](http://albertaroutes.norquest.ca)**.

Respectfully submitted by Rosalia Dela Cruz, Alberta Routes Representative

### **Communications Report**

ATESL has continued to thrive on social media in 2023. We have maintained an active and engaging presence on platforms including Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. Regular membership updates, event promotions, and job/volunteer opportunities were posted and shared on stories. This includes posts on PD sessions for all Alberta local chapters, ATESL updates/reminders, and ATESL project and bursary opportunities. All posts included thorough explanations and details under each visual promotion.

In addition, ATESL expanded its social media presence by creating posts for various holidays and special dates. Some of these included Easter, Eid, Pride Month, and National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

Canva was used to create and schedule visually appealing promotional items. Posts were strategically scheduled to avoid interfering with conference-related posts.

At the beginning of 2023, ATESL opted to reduce its social presence on Twitter. After a meeting

in October, ATESL made the decision to deactivate its account. ATESL is currently exploring the possibility of creating a social handle on Threads. More information will be shared as it unfolds.

We encourage our membership to connect with our social media platforms to stay informed with current events and opportunities. We also encourage members to connect with ATESL on LinkedIn and include any work or volunteer experience associated with ATESL.

ATESL looks forward to strengthening its social media presence by reaching a wider audience and fostering a sense of community among its current members.

Respectfully submitted by Sarah Kopichanski, Communications Chair