

**TESL ONTARIO**  
**2024 – 2025 ANNUAL REPORT**

# ANNUAL REPORT



# MESSAGE FROM THE TESL ONTARIO BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**We continue to listen to members and our 2025 Member Survey helped to gather valuable feedback to guide future planning.**

Dear members of the TESL Ontario community,

As Chair of TESL Ontario Board of Directors, it is my privilege to bring to you highlights from TESL Ontario's 2024/2025 fiscal year. This year brought many opportunities for growth and engagement, rooted in the needs of the membership.

The challenges posed by changes in government policy on immigration and student visas are still being felt, and we remain resilient as we navigate this period. Nevertheless, we continue to work to address these challenges, which I also shared in this report along with our many other achievements.

## MEMBERSHIP SUPPORT AND REPRESENTATION

TESL Ontario engaged IRCC on key issues, launched a member representation campaign in response to funding cuts, and partnered with provincial colleagues to push for fair wages and job security. A major success came in February 2025 with the inclusion of Language Instructors in the National Occupation Classification–NOC 4021, strengthening recognition of our profession. We also launched a new Member Representation webpage to keep members updated on these efforts.

## TECHNOLOGY AND DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE

We launched the redesigned Directory of English Language Teaching Resources, introduced a tax receipt download feature, and expanded the Career Centre with new resources including a career blog series, Career Boost videos, and webinars. We also have a new course website, launched in summer 2025, to house our Specialized Skill Certificate courses.

## MEMBERS AND VOLUNTEERS

Our volunteers are our strength. With a retention rate of 99%, our volunteers are proof of our success. To recognize their contributions, we have introduced new recognition initiatives, including appreciation draws, LinkedIn endorsements, and certificates. In addition, a Volunteer of the Year Award will debut at the 2025 Annual Conference.

I am also pleased to inform you that our membership growth is steady, reflecting the strength and competitiveness of our organization. To acknowledge member commitment, we are also awarding long-term members with well-deserved recognition certificates for 5, 10, 15+ years of commitment. We continue to listen to members and our 2025 Member Survey helped to gather valuable feedback to guide future planning.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND RESOURCES

We continued our strong emphasis on PD offerings and sharing of resources. For the fiscal year 2024-2025, we organized and hosted two in-person regional Professional Development events, launched two Specialized Skills Certificate Courses: 1. Classroom Management and Conflict Resolution and 2. DEI Essentials, which included digital badges and certificates of completion.

In addition, our 52nd Annual Conference in 2024 welcomed 1,268 participants to a total of 75 sessions, and the TESL Connect networking event was also a success. We forged more opportunities for PD with an additional 19 webinars, 2 mentorship events, 3 issues of Contact magazine, and over 40 blog posts with an average of 11,000 monthly readers.

## FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

Our financial performance remains strong. With Eva Csiszar (our Operations Manager) at the helm, we continue to prudently manage our resources to ensure the long-term sustainability of the association. As always, TESL Ontario members are welcome to learn and ask questions about our financial standing at our yearly AGM.

## LOOKING AHEAD

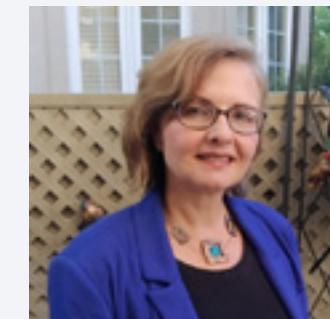
In 2026, we will launch our third Specialized Skills Certificate Course, focusing on Creative Tasks and Activities for Engaging Language Learners. We will also continue our new membership and volunteer recognition initiatives, expand professional development, launch a redesigned blog website, and continue strong membership support work through 2025 and 2026.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As I end this report, I would like to acknowledge and express sincere gratitude to everyone who makes TESL Ontario the great organization that it is: The dedicated board members and committee members, volunteers, and staff who contribute to our achievements. Special kudos to Eva Csiszar, Operations Manager, Reza Mazloom-Farzaghy, Accreditation Services Manager, Dave Fraser, Manager of Member Engagement and Communications, Mohsen Jazeb, Event Coordinator, Kevin Gamble, Office Manager, and of course our Executive Director, Allison Keown, who leads the team to ensure the success of our organization.

I also extend my gratitude to you, our members, without whom TESL Ontario would not exist nor thrive. Thank you for your support and commitment.

With great appreciation,



**Cecilia Aponte de Hanna**  
Chair, TESL Ontario  
Board of Directors

## AFFILIATE CHAPTER EVENTS

### TESL LONDON

In January 2024, TESL London presented a "Free Skate" ice skating social event for their members. Two PD events were scheduled for early 2025.

### TESL WATERLOO-WELLINGTON

In May of 2024, TESL Waterloo-Wellington held their AGM and in-person PD event on *Empowering Communication: New Paths for Language Learning in the 21st Century*. In February 2025, the chapter held an additional in-person PD session at Camelia Bake Shop in Waterloo.

### TESL PEEL-HALTON-ETOBIKOKE

In March 2025, TESL PHE presented their annual general meeting and half-day PD event.

### TESL DURHAM

In April 2024, TESL Durham held a virtual half-day event focused on AI for LINC Instructors. In late November, the chapter held their AGM and a holiday social.

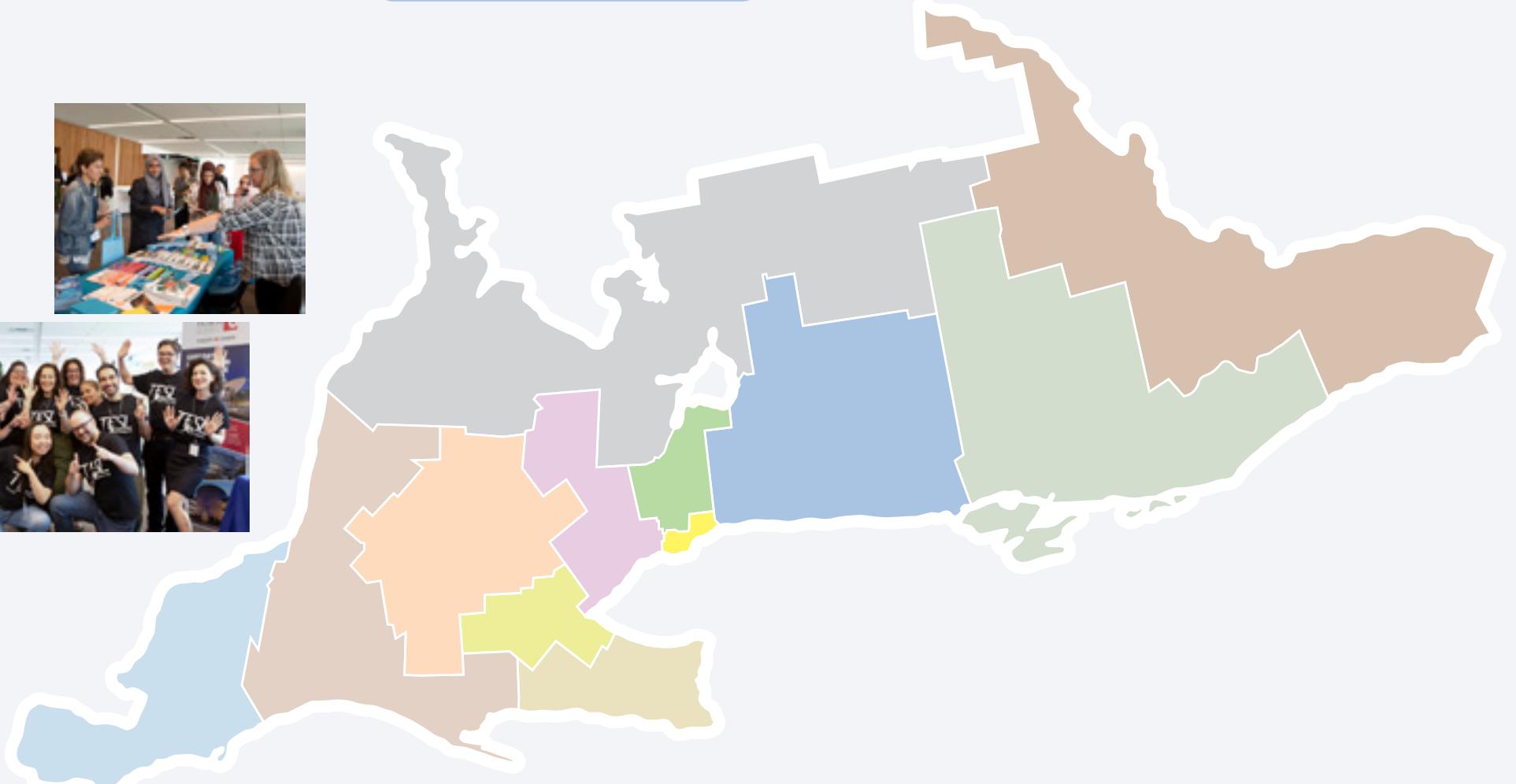
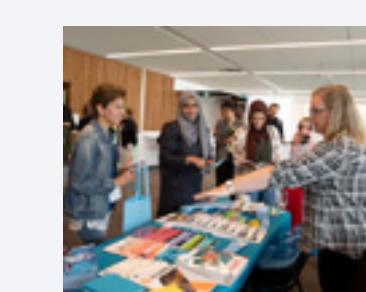
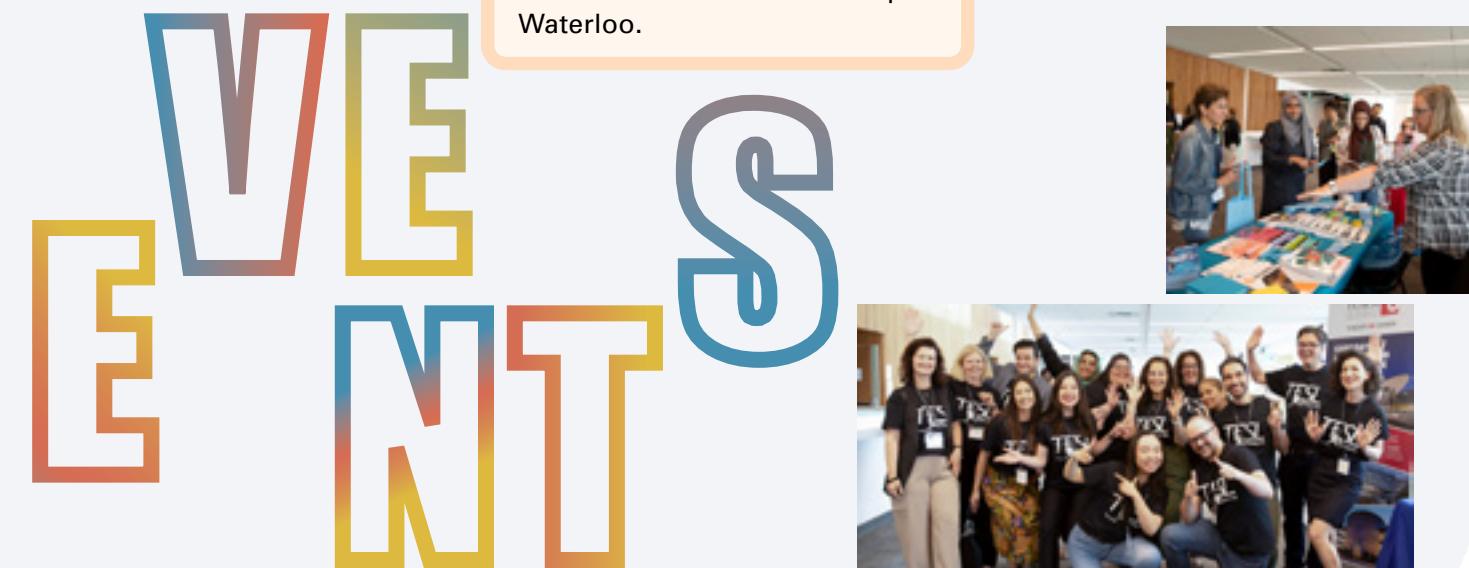
### TESL KINGSTON

In January 2025, TESL Kingston held their first event in over a year with a new working group stepping into the executive role.

### TESL OTTAWA

In May 2024, TESL Ottawa held their AGM and a corresponding PD event entitled *Teaching 3.0: Create. Adapt. Evaluate*.

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### TESL WINDSOR

In October 2024, TESL Windsor held a PD presentation and discussion on low vision strategies in the classroom, text-to-speech options for students with learning disabilities and more.

### TESL HAMILTON-WENTWORTH

In April 2024, TESL Hamilton-Wentworth presented their annual Spring PD event and AGM at the Marriott Hamilton, featuring five speakers on a variety of topics.

### TESL NIAGARA

In May 2024, TESL Niagara held an in-person conversation evening for members at Johnny Rocco's Italian Grill in St. Catharines. In September 2024, the chapter held another Conversation Café for members to connect. A holiday social was held in early December.

### TESL TORONTO

In March 2024, TESL Toronto presented their annual employment event in person. In June 2024, the chapter presented the annual TOSCON event and then held an additional PD workshop with their annual general meeting in October. In February 2025, the annual T4T – Technology for Teachers event was held virtually.

### TESL NORTH YORK/YORK REGION

TESL North York/York Region was largely inactive during the 2024/2025 year until a new executive came together in late Spring 2025. There will be several exciting events to discuss in next year's report.



The Association continued to maintain an average membership of 4500-4600 members in 2024, with seventeen percent of members holding a "standard" or non-certified membership, while eighty-three percent hold certificates of accreditation.

TESL Ontario has continued to actively build an engaged member community with a wide variety of professional development and networking opportunities, while further building and enhancing additional valuable resources through social media platforms, the TESL Ontario YouTube channel, the Directory of English Language Teaching Resources, CCPLAR pathways to certification, our TESL Career Centre and a return to in-person professional development events.

The TESL Ontario webinar program had a very successful year in 2024, with nineteen (19) webinars held during the year, along with two (2) TESL Mentorship events and other special online, interactive events. The live PD series featured a variety of topics to address all areas of professional development, including Gamification for LINC teaching, revolutionizing assessment strategies, incorporating drama into ESL education, reflections on five years of PBLA, and teaching

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mental health within the EAP context. All webinars and TESL Dialogue sessions were scheduled as live events, free to TESL Ontario members, and made available in a recorded format following the airdate. Additional topic-specific series were included within the webinar program for 2024, including a diversity, equity and inclusion stream and a research series, curated with the assistance of TESL Ontario's committees.

Mid-2024 saw the discontinuation of the TESL Dialogue series. A very popular addition to TESL Ontario PD opportunities during the remote learning & connection days of the COVID pandemic, the TESL Dialogue series was gradually replaced with additional webinars and in-person events as the demand for online networking sessions dwindled.

The TESL Ontario blog, available through the association's website, remains a valued resource for ESL professionals across the province and beyond. Updated regularly with new content every week to ten days, the blog features contributions from TESL Ontario members through an open call for submissions. Today, it attracts an average of more than 130,000 individual visitors and over 1.5-million page views annually - equivalent to over 2500 unique visits each week.

TESL Ontario maintains regular communication with its membership through a monthly email series highlighting upcoming professional development opportunities, social media events, available resources, and recent publications. In addition, quarterly publications such as *Contact* magazine and the *Membership Minute* newsletter offer deeper insights into issues, events, and resources relevant to the English language teaching community in Ontario. Throughout the year, members also receive

targeted emails about volunteer opportunities, external PD events, research surveys, TESL Ontario's member representation and advocacy efforts, and other initiatives. Notably, over 90% of TESL Ontario members choose to stay connected through these regular communications.

In addition to TESL Ontario's regular email communications, the membership is also actively engaged through updates, outreach, event marketing and resources on social media platforms. Under the supervision of the Coordinator, Social Media and Professional Development, several teams comprised of dozens of volunteers work to ensure content is regularly curated and updated on TESL Ontario's LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube platforms, in addition to supporting the blog, webinar series and more. These dedicated volunteers continue to be the lifeblood of the association, bringing passion and innovation to their roles and TESL Ontario extends heartfelt thanks for their contributions.

2024 saw the inclusion of a second consecutive in-person component (TESL Ontario Connect) at the Annual Conference, an in-person professional development opportunity held in the Kitchener-Waterloo area, as well as an increased number of in-person professional development and networking events attended by the TESL Ontario staff to promote association membership and certification, including a regional PD event presented by TESL Ontario.

# CERTIFICATION AND ACCREDITATION SERVICES

# ACCREDITATION

## PROMOTING TESL ONTARIO CERTIFICATION

In the 2024-2025 fiscal year, TESL Ontario actively promoted its certification through various events and initiatives. This included creating a blog post titled "Maximize your potential: Why OCELT Certification Maintenance Matters"; attending TESOL Toronto's Employment Event in March 2024 and TOSCON Spring Conference in June 2024; and giving presentations on TESL Ontario certification application pathways for clients/students at a wide range of institutions and organizations.

## ACCREDITED TRAINING PROGRAMS RELATIONS

Over the 2024-2025 report period, TESL Ontario's relations with accredited training programs were marked by several key developments. The organization worked on refining its annual reporting process by providing the accredited training programs with an Excel document summarizing past data to facilitate updates. Also, a joint meeting was held with the standards committee, the training program representatives, and the guests from the CCLB. The discussion topics included updates from and questions for the Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks; practicum hours outside Canada; Challenges related to recruitment of in-person mentors and the TESL Ontario practicum standard; and the results of TESL Ontario's surveys on TESL training delivery modalities.



Due to policy changes on student visas, TESL Ontario saw notable changes in the accreditation status of several TESL Programs. However, some positive developments emerged with two training providers receiving approval for online-synchronous delivery of their theory and methodology courses while maintaining in-person practica. The University of Toronto's OISE also began pursuing accreditation for its Master of Education program.

In February 2025, TESL Ontario notified accredited training providers of its decision regarding global practica (observation and/or practice teaching hours conducted outside Canada). According to this decision, the required 50-hour practicum component of accredited TESL training must be completed in English language programs located in Ontario or in contexts similar to those of Ontario (in terms of language learners' needs and goals, curricula, program types, etc.) in other Canadian provinces.

Also, in February 2025, TESL Ontario notified accredited training providers of its decision to discontinue CTESOL program accreditation as of April 1, 2025. TESL Ontario introduced CTESOL program accreditation and CTESOL teacher certification in 2018 as a contingency measure, aiming to support TESL Canada Standard 1 certified training providers and their graduates in case of disruptions to TESL Canada certification services. Since TESL Canada has continued to deliver these services, TESL Ontario's parallel certification was no longer deemed necessary.

## POST TESL CERTIFICATE TRAINING (PTCT)

PTCT courses build upon a foundation of professional knowledge and skills established during TESL Certificate training and further developed through classroom practice. In 2024-2025 period, there were two TESL Ontario-approved PTCT courses offered by New Language Solutions:

LearnIT2Teach Stage 3 and LearnIT2teach Stage 4. Also, New Language Solutions met with TESL Ontario to discuss the approval process for two new leadership training courses.

To streamline the application process for PTCT course approval, a new PTCT Outline template in an Excel spreadsheet format was developed and made available on the TESL Ontario website.

## TESL PROGRAM ADJUDICATOR

In May 2024, Sharon Rajabi was appointed as TESL Program Adjudicator. She took over from Joan Reynolds, who served in the role from January 2018 to May 2024. Sharon has extensive knowledge and experience in the field of English Language Education and substantial experience in the LINC/ESL sector. Furthermore, she has a long history of dedicated volunteer service with TESL Ontario, including serving as the Chair of the Board of Directors and contributing to the technology and research committee for several years. She also co-organized the Tech Fair for the annual Conference for many years and received the Distinguished Contribution Award from TESL Ontario in 2013.

## STATISTICS

During this report period, TESL Ontario approved 294 new applications for OCELT certification (including 62 CCPLAR applications), 43 certification reinstatement applications, 13 TESL trainer certification applications, and 4 CTESOL certification applications. Also, we conducted 16 CCPLAR interviews on different competency areas during this period.

We reviewed 22 TESL and CTESOL program annual reports for the 2023-2024 period. All reports were approved, and renewed TESL/CTESOL program certificates for the 2024-2025 period were issued. Also, TESL Ontario approved the renewal of two PTCT courses.

## 2024 RECOGNITION AWARD RECIPIENTS



### 2024 Sparks of Excellence Award Recipients



#### ANJUM KARIMI

**Polycultural Immigrant and Community Services**

As a TESL teacher of 17 years in Canada, Anjum has amassed a wealth of experience in teaching. She has worked with learners of different nationalities, cultures and varying English proficiencies. Her experience spans working with learners from foundation literacy to the CLB 7+ level. Through her incredibly generous spirit, she has always been willing to share her experiences with new teachers through mentoring.

In the classroom, Anjum has always embraced inclusivity and student-centered learning. One outstanding example of her commitment to her students is when she took on the challenge of including two learners—one fully visually impaired and the other partially impaired—into her class. Anjum personally consulted with her manager and crafted a supportive, adaptive learning environment.

One of the students later remarked, “I enjoyed receiving new information every day, and my grammar and pronunciation became better. This was a good experience for me. I thank teacher Anjum for that.” This level of care, planning, and attention to individual needs exemplifies Anjum’s ability to create a truly inclusive classroom that fosters growth for all learners.

Anjum’s work with her peers is equally impactful. She has mentored numerous new teachers, helping them navigate the complexities of teaching ESL and LINC programs. Through professional development sessions, like her virtual presentation on supply teaching at Humber College, she has shared valuable insights, helping to guide the next generation of TESL professionals. Anjum’s passion for fostering growth in her colleagues is evident in her leadership, particularly in her role as PBLA Lead Teacher at

Polycultural Immigrant and Community Services, where she guided her peers through the intricacies of portfolio-based language assessments.

Anjum has also excelled as an ELT Instructor, helping many foreign trained professionals understand the invisible work market in Canada and find positions in their fields. She used the lessons she developed and tested in class to write her book, *An ELT Experience*, which is a testament to her dedication. Based on more than 30 successful training sessions, it offers invaluable insights to help new immigrants navigate the Canadian job market and provides practical tips on job searching, breaking invisible barriers, and thriving in their chosen fields. This work has been instrumental for both new immigrants and the trainers who guide them, further solidifying Anjum’s role as a leader in the TESL community.

Anjum is also a tireless advocate for the mental health and well-being of educators. She has been a key voice in promoting mindfulness and self-care within the TESL community. Her international mindfulness sessions for educators, including those she led for instructors in Mexico, highlight her belief that fostering a positive, clear mindset is essential for both teaching and personal well-being.

Outside of the classroom and her professional obligations, Anjum has delivered numerous presentations for TESL Ontario and has served as a mentor in the TESL Ontario Mentorship Program. Anjum is not a person who will say “no” when help is needed.

#### MARY MACKERACHER

**Canadian College of Educators**

Although Mary MacKeracher is modest about her accomplishments and her impact on her students, her nominators write that it was evident from their very first class that they were witness to a master practitioner. Mary generously imparted the wealth of wisdom she accumulated over years of dedicated service to adult ESL students and aspiring educators. She even went so far as to share with her students “The Best Chocolate Chip Cookie Recipe Ever.”

## 2024 RECOGNITION AWARD RECIPIENTS

Based on the classroom anecdotes shared by her nominators, Mary's career did not follow a straight path. Her journey in ESL education was preceded by various other professional pursuits, including teaching engineering, working as a dictionary editor, and performing semantic field categorization. This breadth of experience enriched her lessons, significantly enhanced her teaching and mentoring, and bolstered the skills and knowledge of her student teachers.

Mary's commitment to her students did not stop at the end of class. She routinely stayed late to field questions, provided additional resources and support for assignments, and offered extra tidbits of wisdom. All to say, she went out of her way to ease the anxieties of her students in this highly intense program of study. With compassion and honesty, Mary prepares her students to stride confidently into their careers, equipped with the tools necessary to face the array of challenges that adult ESL educators often encounter.

Mary's support extends beyond just her students and includes her colleagues, as she always spoke highly of their contributions as experienced professionals, to the TESL Diploma program. Mary is a loyal pillar to both her peers and students. To

her learners, she was a teacher and mentor whom they could trust, respect, and look to for reliable perspectives and insights.

With her unique breadth of experiences and her dedication to students and colleagues, Mary MacKeracher is a treasure within the teaching profession.

Among the many testimonials included by her nominators, are the following comments:

*"Mary has a heart of gold and she saves no efforts to put educators on track to pursue their optimal career."*

*"Mary is an institution! I have deep respect for her, greatly appreciate her generosity in knowledge sharing and one of the most well-rounded educators I have ever known."*

*"Mary was an exceptionally helpful and knowledgeable instructor when I was working toward my TESL Diploma in 2023. She consistently took the time to answer questions of classmates and support our learning. Mary readily gave up her own time after class to provide additional guidance as needed."*

In fact, her students are frequently heard to comment how they aspire to be "like Mary" in



their own future teaching practice. The unique gifts Mary has offered, her exceptional talents, and her leadership, do not go unnoticed.

To that end, Mary's nomination letter for this prestigious award was co-signed by **twenty-seven** current students. In addition, a letter of support for Mary's nomination was submitted that carried the signatures and support of an astounding **seventy-six** former students, some of whom now sit on TESL Ontario committees and Affiliate Chapter executive groups.

### ALENA STRANIKOVA LINC Home Study Ontario

Alena Stranikova has been with LINC Home Study Ontario since 2008, where she has been a valuable contributor to the program as an instructor, as well as in additional roles such as mentor for new instructors, PD Committee member, presenter, moderator, and Newcomer Information Center presenter with Achev.

Alena has also put her name on LHSO's 311 directories to help any instructor who may need additional support using various technologies such as Office 365, using digital platforms such as Ellii or Google Drive, and creating learning plans, or working on other platforms. It is well known with instructors that they can lean on her for her knowledge and support. She has also been a mentor for practicum TESL students with Humber College for nearly 15 years.

Alena has volunteered her time to assist with PD events when she was not part of the committee, and to participate in LHSO's Talk & Share workshops.

Alena's colleagues from LHSO and other organizations always have something good to say about her too. Recently, Alena submitted Real World Tasks/lesson plans to the LHSO's PBLA Resource Bank that are well thought out and helpful for instructors using Real World Tasks in their skill using and assessments for their classes.

Alena has also taken on a new role with LHSO by facilitating the Newcomer Information Center webinars for Achev. She gladly took up this role, on top of everything else she does, as it is vital to the success of newcomers who need information regarding settlement and their job searches as they navigate a new country and system in Canada.

As LHSO's PBLA Lead, Sarah Hedley, commented, "...I received some excellent instructor made PBLA Google Forms related to needs assessments, quarterly reflections and autobiographies from Alena S."

A colleague and the Continuing Education Officer from the Peel-Dufferin Catholic School board also commented on Alena's work ethic and dedication to the English teaching profession in Canada. Rosa Ricchezza states, "Alena is known for her leadership qualities, guiding her learners with patience and support to help them achieve their full potential, no matter the challenge they face."

Hulya Kahraman, who is also an instructor with LHSO and the Chinese Association of Mississauga, where Alena has also taught, states, "Alena is an exceptional ESL teacher with whom I have worked for over seven years. She is a remarkable mentor and an outstanding educator, consistently demonstrating dedication to teaching ESL."

It is evident from many colleagues that Alena is not only a great teacher but a well-liked colleague where her value and contributions are well-known.

Alena is also a lifelong learner as she is always trying to improve and keep current with the latest trends in the English teaching field. She recently completed the Change It Up Facilitator course. As a PBLA lead, she is also not only attending professional development events to learn for herself but also planning and creating them for other instructors.

Due to Alena's tireless service in the ESL industry in Canada since 2001, thousands of learners have directly and indirectly benefited not only through her teaching but through other instructors through her.

## 2024 RECOGNITION AWARD RECIPIENTS

### 2024 Distinguished Contribution Award Recipient

#### DAVID WOOD

Carleton University

David Wood has been a prolific contributor to the field of Second Language Learning for the entirety of his professional career. His impressive academic credentials include a Doctorate of Philosophy in Education from Carleton University with a thesis in Formulaic Language in Speech Fluency Development in English as a Second Language.

From the outset of his ESL career David served in the capacity of teacher, international educator, author, mentor, language proficiency assessor, course developer, textbook author, teacher trainer in Methodology, Pedagogical Grammar, ELT Practicum, and Teaching Beginner and Literacy courses, a language test developer with the Public Service Commission of Canada for English in the Workplace program.

He broadened his exposure to different learning and cultural environments by serving as a visiting professor of English at Naruto University of Education, Japan. He developed courses on teaching oral language at the University of Havana, Cuba, and taught as an Adjunct assistant Professor with the Department of Linguistics, University of Victoria.

David is the author of three books, one published in 2010, "Making the Grade: An Interactive course in English for Academic Purposes", the second entitled "Fundamentals of Formulaic Language" and the third, "Fundamentals of Formulaic Language" was published in 2015.

His academic output includes nine journal articles, eleven paper presentations in a variety of academic publications, book editing, six book reviews, as well as six TESL Ontario Conference presentations.

David's leadership in the TESL profession is evidenced by his participation in TESL teacher education. As a teacher, he taught courses in

linguistics and coordinated the program for the Certificate in Teaching of English as a Second Language for several years at Carlton University (2006 - 2011). He also published an article, "Practicum Host Teachers in TESL Education in Canada: Effects of the Hosting Experience" in 2019.

In 2009 he was the award winner of the National Capital Educators' Award.

David has been a very active TESL Ontario volunteer, serving on the TESL Ontario board, the Ottawa affiliate board, contributing to the Annual Conference Research Symposium and participating in the TESL Ontario Steering Committee for Post Certificate Training Courses.

Most recently David stood as a Member of the TESL Ontario Standards Committee where he offered his insights and experience to a full range of issues. One difficult issue was how the standards would adapt in a just and reasonable manner to the constraints imposed by the COVID lockdown which affected the TESL programs across the province. He was always fair-minded and attentive to the challenges programs in the field were facing.

David served as a consultant to the Ontario Ministry of Education as an ESL resource for drafting listening and speaking benchmarks and drafting and revising reading and writing tests. In addition, he reviewed many articles for a variety of publications including Canadian Modern Language Review, Linguistics and Education, Language Learning, Applied Linguistics and Language Learning, to name a few.

David's impressive career and broad experience in the ESL and TESL fields marks him as an outstanding and distinguished member of the ESL community. He has brought to the field a broad spectrum of expertise and influence with enduring impact on the community of language learners and professionals.

## TESL ONTARIO WORKING COMMITTEES



#### COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES COMMITTEE

The Colleges and Universities Committee had a productive year focused on advancing professional development opportunities for members working in Ontario's postsecondary ESL/EAP sector. The committee planned a series of activities including webinars, blog contributions, conference sessions, and its annual meet and greet. One of the highlights was a session at TESL Ontario's 2024 conference titled *Introducing ESL/EAP Teaching Employment at Ontario Colleges/Universities*. This session supported members seeking employment in the sector and was well received, generating strong engagement and meaningful discussion among attendees.

Following the conference, the committee reviewed member feedback and began preparing new initiatives to continue building valuable learning opportunities. A leadership transition also took place, with outgoing Chair Jim Papple concluding his volunteer service and Danielle Freitas assuming the role of Chair. The committee extends its gratitude to Jim for his contributions and looks forward to Danielle's leadership in guiding its work in alignment with TESL Ontario's strategic priorities. TESL Ontario also extends sincere appreciation to all members of the Colleges and Universities Committee for their time, commitment, and contributions throughout the year.

# TESL ONTARIO WORKING COMMITTEES

## CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT

The committee meets monthly throughout the year in planning, hosting and evaluating the annual conference. The work of the committee would not be possible without the dedication and hard work of the volunteers and the TESL Ontario staff.

The 2024 annual conference took place on November 12-15, 2024. It was a great success with 1268 people attending. There were 75 sessions, including 2 keynotes, a research symposium, 66 concurrent sessions, 3 career connection sessions and 3 special sessions including the AGM, and program administrator meeting. The sessions covered a range of topics including learning strategies, technology, research and resources. Gamification added a chance for more online engagement. Moderators and presenters reported they were well prepared through the orientation sessions. The sponsors were happy with the response from participants to their sessions and products. TESL Ontario Connect, our in-person event was attended by 100 people and included a panel discussion focused on technology, followed by roundtable discussions among the attendees. During the in-person session, we were pleased to honour 3 Sparks of Excellence Award recipients and 1 Distinguished Contribution award winner.

The theme for the 2025 conference is "Igniting the Future of Language Education". It will be held November 19th - 21st. The conference will again be online with an in-person event. The format for the conference will be similar to last year with keynote speakers, concurrent sessions, and the special sessions including the AGM and government panel. The keynote speakers are Vicky Saumell – "Developing Strategies to Address GenAI Issues" and Christina Gkonou "Emotional Labour and Identity in Language Teacher Lives". From the 92 concurrent proposal submissions, 44 were chosen. TESL Ontario Connect (our in-person event) will take place on November 19th at Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU). The theme for the in-person event is "Evolving Excellence: Teaching Strategies That Grow with You" with both a presentation and

a panel discussion. The conference website is live and our social media campaign has begun and will continue up to and during the conference.

## DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE

Now in its fourth year since establishment, TESL Ontario's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Committee has continued to enact its guiding principles through a series of projects and initiatives.

In 2024, the DEI Committee presented a three-part DEI Activity Challenge to the membership, engaging registered members in a series of tasks over the course of three months to strengthen and enhance the way they think about and incorporate DEI principles in the classroom and in life. Subsequent feedback surveys demonstrated positive responses to this type of self-paced learning opportunity.

In addition to regular meetings and the three-month challenge, the DEI Committee also participated in a Committee Meet & Greet during the Annual Conference, presented several conference sessions, and helped to curate a series of DEI-themed webinars. In May 2024, the then-chair of the DEI Committee co-facilitated an in-person presentation for TESL Ontario in Waterloo.

## RESEARCH ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Research Advisory Committee focused its efforts this past fiscal year on advancing research engagement and professional development opportunities for TESL Ontario members. The committee played a central role in organizing the annual Research Symposium and Teacher Researcher Workshop, both of which were delivered at TESL Ontario's 2024 conference and were highly attended and well received. These sessions created valuable opportunities for members to share and apply research to classroom practice, while also fostering a culture of inquiry within the profession.

In addition to conference planning, the committee supported TESL Ontario's Accreditation Standards Committee by assisting with the development



of surveys on TESL training delivery modalities, distributed to both members and employers. Early survey results were shared with program managers of training providers, contributing important insights into evolving training practices. In addition, the committee helped to identify potential speakers for the research webinar series. TESL Ontario extends sincere appreciation to the members of the Research Advisory Committee for their commitment and contributions throughout the year.

## ACCREDITATION STANDARDS COMMITTEE

The TESL Ontario accreditation standards committee develops the standards for Ontario Certified English Language Teacher (OCELT) certification, TESL program accreditation, TESL trainer and Post TESL Certificate Training (PTCT) instructor certification, and professional development (PD) recognition. It also supports accredited TESL training providers by developing guidelines to help them maintain the quality of their training. Currently, the Standards Committee includes a chairperson, one LINC

teacher, one ESL teacher, two TESL Trainers, two LINC/ESL program managers and the TESL Ontario adjudicator.

The volunteer members of this committee are recruited from the TESL Ontario membership. The committee chair is appointed by and reports to the TESL Ontario Executive Director.

During this report period, the standards committee held four meetings through Zoom. The major topics discussed in these meetings included employer and instructor surveys on TESL training delivery modalities and analysis of survey findings, updates to English language proficiency standard of certification application, updates to PD requirement of OCELT certification reinstatement, global practica, alleviating practicum placement challenges, modernizing TESL training topics and program accreditation standards, and discontinuing Canadian Teacher of English to Speakers of Other Languages (CTESOL) program accreditation.

## ADVOCACY AND MEMBER REPRESENTATION

# ADVOCACY

#FundLanguageEducation

The 2024–25 fiscal year brought significant challenges as Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) announced sweeping cuts to settlement and language training programs and deep reductions to international student study permits. These changes have had far-reaching consequences for Ontario's language education sector, impacting both educators and the immigrant communities they serve.

In response, TESL Ontario mobilized quickly to represent our members and the learners they serve. Key initiatives included:

- Issuing public statements on the impacts of IRCC's cuts to LINC and Stage 2 language training.
- Writing directly to Ministers Marc Miller and Lena Metlege Diab, outlining sector concerns and amplifying member voices.
- Launching the *Lend Your Voice* campaign, providing members with customizable letter templates to send to their MPs in support of grassroots advocacy.
- Rolling out the *#FundLanguageEducation* social media impact campaign, amplifying the voices of educators and learners and raising public awareness.

- Making a pre-budget submission to the federal Standing Committee on Finance with clear recommendations to sustain language education.
- Participating in IRCC consultations, including surveys on immigration levels and Express Entry categories.
- Building partnerships with other organizations across the settlement and education sectors to strengthen coordinated advocacy efforts.

Beyond funding-related advocacy, TESL Ontario has also raised concerns about the working conditions of language educators, who continue to face inconsistent wages, lack of benefits, and job insecurity. Together with TESL organizations across the Canada, we engaged the federal government through a series of joint letters and responses, highlighting the need for equitable compensation, sustainable funding, and meaningful representation in policy discussions. In addition, TESL Ontario successfully advocated for the inclusion of *Language Instructor – Language School* under the National Occupational Classification (NOC 4021), a step forward in recognizing the profession and improving access to employment-related benefits.

## CONTACT MAGAZINE

# CONTACT



All past and current issues are available online at: [www.contact.teslonario.org/Issues](http://www.contact.teslonario.org/Issues)

**Contact**, TESL Ontario's professional development magazine, has been supporting the research and teaching needs of the English Language Teaching (ELT) community since its founding in 1974.

The magazine is published three times annually—on March 31, August 31, and November 30. The March issue features selected presentations and content from the TESL Ontario Conference, while the August and November issues offer a wide range of content from theoretical explorations to personal reflections, from EAP to LINC, vocabulary learning to AI exploration.

The *Spotlight* section showcases ELT professionals from across Ontario, highlighting the diverse and impactful work they do. We are grateful to all our contributors for generously sharing their knowledge and perspectives, offering readers valuable insights into the evolving landscape of English language teaching.

Our goal is to publish issues that inspire reflection and spark conversation—encouraging ELT professionals to critically engage with their work and its broader implications. As always, we welcome and appreciate submissions to *Contact* to ensure the magazine's continued relevance and success.

## DIRECTORY OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING RESOURCES

# DIR REC T O R Y

Throughout the 2024-2025 report period, the Directory of English Language Teaching Resources underwent significant changes to improve its service. The new Directory website, formerly known as Ontario's Directory of Best Practices, was launched in May 2024. The Directory is a rich collection of resources for language teachers, categorized into three main areas: Curriculum Development, Learning, Research and Development for Instructors, and Tech for Language Teaching and Learning.

The Directory team continuously updates the content by vetting new materials and adding them monthly. The visitors to the Directory were from a wide range of countries including Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, China, Singapore, France, Germany, Spain, and many others.



## OPERATIONS

# OPER A T I ON S

TESL Ontario now serves over 4,500 members, a large number of whom are TESL Ontario certified.

The operations of TESL Ontario are carried out by our staff members:

**Allison Keown**  
Executive Director

**Eva Csiszar**  
Operations Manager

**Reza Mazloom-Farzaghy**  
Accreditation Services Manager

**Dave Fraser**  
Manager, Member Engagement and Communications

**Kevin Gamble**  
Office Manager

**Mohsen Jazeb**  
Event Coordinator

**Judy Chau**  
Coordinator Social Media and Professional Development

Under the direction of the Board of Directors, and supervision of the Executive Director, the office staff carry out the functions of membership support, including membership benefits, webinars and social media, TESL Ontario accreditation, which includes TESL Ontario's CCPLAR service, financial management, project and contract administration, office administration, liaison function with ministries, other agencies and the public and, of course, the delivery of our significant TESL Ontario Conference

# TECHNOLOGY

## REDESIGNED DIRECTORY OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING RESOURCES

In May 2024, TESL Ontario proudly launched the newly redesigned **Directory of English Language Teaching Resources**, formerly known as the *Directory of Best Practices*.

Originally established in 2016, the directory was created to identify and share best practice resources in a wide range of English language learning contexts including ESL, FSL, ESL Literacy, Citizenship, Special Needs, CLARS, and Specialized Language Training. Since then, it has become a valued repository for teachers seeking reliable, relevant, and pedagogically sound resources.

The 2024 relaunch included not only a rebranding of the directory's name but also a comprehensive overhaul of the website's design, functionality, and user experience. The new site is more intuitive, accessible, and visually engaging, making it easier than ever for instructors to locate and integrate valuable tools into their teaching practice.

We invite all English language educators to explore the updated directory and discover the resources that will inspire and enhance their teaching.



Visit the new Directory of English Language Teaching:  
[www.bestpractices.teslontario.org](http://www.bestpractices.teslontario.org)

## NEW MEMBER TAX RECEIPT PORTAL

In January 2025, TESL Ontario launched a new **Tax Receipt Portal**, providing members with a convenient and secure way to access and download tax receipts for their annual membership fees.

This new member service was developed in direct response to ongoing requests for easier access to tax documentation. The user-friendly portal allows members to log in to their account and download their receipts at any time, eliminating the need to request documents manually. This development reflects our continued commitment to improving member services through practical and accessible digital solutions.

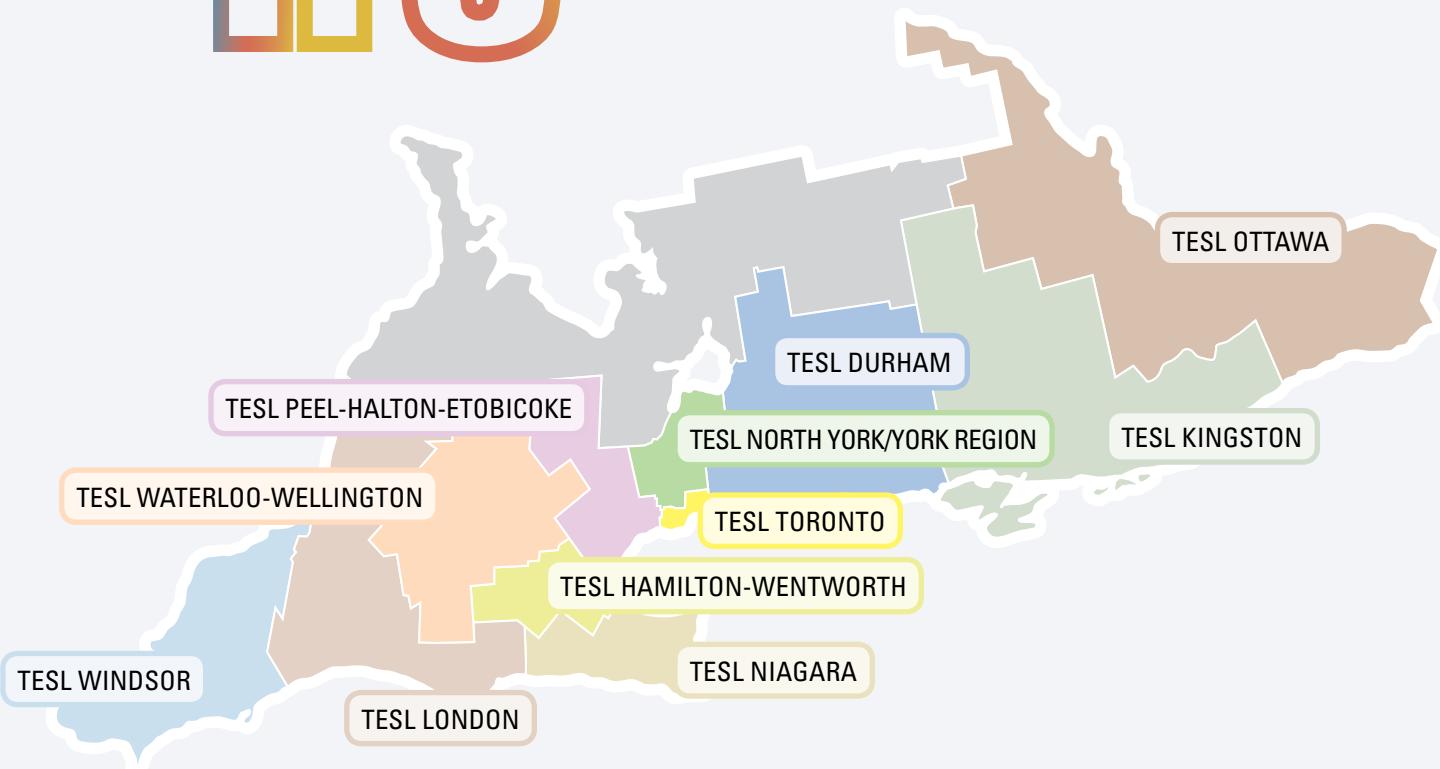


We encourage all members to take advantage of this new feature and access their tax receipt next year at  
[www.taxreceipts.teslontario.org](http://www.taxreceipts.teslontario.org)

## AFFILIATE CHAPTERS

# CHAPTERS

Each of the 12 TESL Ontario Chapters has an executive body consisting of a President, Chapter Representative, Treasurer, and Membership Secretary, but may also include other positions such as Event Chair, Communications Officer, and Members at Large. Both the Chapter Presidents and Chapter Representatives meet annually with the TESL Ontario Board of Directors to contribute to the Board's awareness of the strategic issues of their members.



## 2024-2025 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

# BOARD

**Chair** Cecilia Aponte de Hanna  
**Vice-Chair** Diane Mensch  
**Treasurer** Ban Al-Saffar  
**Secretary** Kate Paterson  
**Member-at-Large** Jennifer Artan  
**Member-at-Large** Nicola Carozza  
**Member-at-Large** Danielle Freitas  
**Member-at-Large** Mary Rizzi  
**Member-at-Large** Christopher Smrke

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors is comprised of nine members, all designated members-at-large. A chair, vice-chair, secretary, and treasurer are elected each year from amongst these nine directors, following the annual general meeting. The Board meets a minimum of five times per year. Operational matters of the association are managed by the executive director. The executive director is guided and governed by board policies and serves a pivotal role in the organization.

The TESL Ontario board uses a policy governance model as its "operating system". Policy governance enables the board to focus on the larger issues, to delegate with clarity, to control operation's job without interference, to rigorously evaluate the accomplishment of the organization - to truly lead the association. The job of the board's directors is to decide, through strategic planning, the kind of "targets" the association is to produce. It relies on the Executive Director to interpret and work with staff, paid and voluntary, to achieve the means to meet those targets.





The condensed financial information below represents the abbreviated annual financial statements of TESL Ontario for the year ended March 31, 2025.

Readers of the condensed financial information are cautioned that the information contained may not be appropriate for their purposes and may be misleading without referring to auditors' report and the information contained in the notes to the financial statements.

The independent auditors' report and complete audited financial statements, which include notes and more detailed supplementary financial information, are available on the TESL Ontario website at:

[www.teslontario.org/about](http://www.teslontario.org/about)

## Statement of Financial Position as of March 31, 2025

	2025	2024
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	336,191	296,384
Short-term investments	805,524	814,561
Amounts receivable	750	–
Prepays and deposits	15,475	13,499
	<b>\$ 1,157,940</b>	<b>\$ 1,124,444</b>
<b>Capital Assets</b>	16,495	18,706
<b>Intangible Assets</b>	35,505	18,633
	<b>\$ 1,209,940</b>	<b>\$ 1,161,783</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
<b>Current Liabilities</b>		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	65,978	67,442
Deferred contributions	330,000	318,001
	<b>\$ 395,978</b>	<b>\$ 385,443</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		
<b>Unrestricted</b>	413,962	776,340
<b>Internally restricted</b>	400,000	–
	<b>\$ 813,962</b>	<b>\$ 776,340</b>
	<b>\$ 1,209,940</b>	<b>\$ 1,161,783</b>

## Statement of Operations and Changes in Net Assets Year Ended March 31, 2025

	2025	2024
<b>REVENUES</b>		
Membership fees	347,756	336,328
Accreditation fees	388,441	386,258
Annual TESL Ontario Conference		
Publisher fees	3,050	5,725
Registration fees	170,211	153,045
Sponsorship	3,500	3,000
Project revenue		
Employment and		
Social Development Canada (ESDC)		
Canada Summer Jobs	–	9,742
Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development (MLITSD)		
Pay Equity Program	9,259	9,259
Interest and other income	61,130	63,553
	<b>\$ 983,347</b>	<b>\$ 966,910</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>		
Membership	163,484	169,592
Accreditation	173,464	177,471
Projects	–	11,597
Annual conference	145,631	143,713
Affiliate Chapters' operations	44,871	41,490
Office and administration	363,870	344,276
TESOL affiliation	791	783
Board and committee meetings	21,544	27,531
Occupancy	32,070	31,280
	<b>\$ 945,725</b>	<b>\$ 947,733</b>
<b>Net excess of revenues over expenditures for the year</b>	<b>\$ 37,622</b>	<b>\$ 19,177</b>
<b>Net assets, beginning of year</b>	<b>\$ 776,340</b>	<b>\$ 757,163</b>
<b>Net assets, end of year</b>	<b>\$ 813,962</b>	<b>\$ 776,340</b>



CONNECTION • COMMUNITY • EMPOWERMENT

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