



NEWSLETTER

Fall 2015 | Issue 31

Teacher Professional Development

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LISTN community members with EAL colleagues at BC TEAL's 2015 Conference

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Our Mission

LISTN empowers its members, throughout the province of British Columbia, to help their clients achieve language and resettlement goals by providing leadership, communication networks, and resources.

Our Vision

Excellence in Settlement Language Services

Our values reflect our passion for education and support our success.

Excellence
Diversity
Unity
Communication
Accountability
Teamwork
Ethics

The LISTN Newsletter is available in PDF format on the LISTN website: www.listn.info

Newsletter Team

Shawna Williams
Vania Ganacheva
Dawn Cunningham Hall
Nathan Hall
Brenda Lohrenz

LISTN

Language Instruction Support and Training Network
200 - 5050 Kingsway, Burnaby, BC V5H 4H2
Phone: 604-639-3230
Fax: 604-639-8116
resources@listn.info
www.listn.info

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LISTN Update

Message from the Executive Director

by *Brenda Lohrenz, LISTN*



It is difficult to envision this being our last LISTN newsletter; I fondly remember those days of formatting and writing the newsletter from a tiny office of one. As our Board President, Alison, acknowledges in the message that follows, we have come a long way with expert and dedicated staff, a committed board, and greatly engaged members. I am so thankful for having had the opportunity to represent such a resilient and knowledgeable community of professionals.

Things are shifting, and watching the landscape both nationally and internationally over the last number of months, we can be certain that our classrooms will see the impact. We come together as language professionals, but in the broader framework, we also coalesce as an integral component of a broadly defined settlement sector. Our learners trust us to help guide them as they embark on life in BC communities; a transition that presents them with both challenges and opportunities. The big picture and the details of our work start and end with our learners. This is our true focus, which gives us a frame of reference and a vision. We have the capability to ensure that new starts are greeted with the promise of tremendous potential.

In my former roles as TESL Canada Board Chair for the Settlement Language National Network and sector

co-chair of the Newcomer Language Advisory Body, engagement of the language sector in constructing a vision for our role in Canada's settlement process was a long-standing goal. This remains a work in progress, but ELSA Net/LISTN certainly helped set the stage. We have been steadfast in our collective recognition that settlement language classrooms are transformational in the lives of newcomers. We made our way to provincial and federal tables ensuring that this voice was brought forward. We were impactful in what we did and how we did it. The inroads we made in BC allowed our students to benefit from the resulting energy and professionalism of our programs. I think we can all pat ourselves on the back for a job well done—but it doesn't just end here! We remain *an integral component of a broadly defined settlement sector*, and the voice we bring in support of our learners continues to be vital.

Thank you all for allowing ELSA Net/LISTN to be your venue of interaction and collaboration over the past number of years. I look forward to continuing our partnership as LISTN integrates with our provincial professional language association in the coming months. I would like to close with a word of thanks to ELSA Net/LISTN staff past and present who have worked so diligently to maintain the high standards we set for ourselves—it has been and continues to be a true honour.

LISTN Update

Message from the President

by Alison Whitmore, LISTN President

It is with mixed feelings that I write this message. I feel pride in ELSA Net/LISTN, sadness that we have to change, nostalgia for the way things were, and hope for the future.

When I agreed to stand for Vice President of the ELSA Net Board three and a half years ago, I just wanted to do my part and serve an organization that has been helpful and has added value to my working life. It wasn't until later that the penny dropped and I realized that being Vice President would lead to becoming the President! Having no delusions of grandeur, I tentatively accepted my fate and thought, "What could be a problem? I will do this for a couple of years then it will be someone else's turn and things will move on."

Things have certainly moved on! I had no inkling that I would be steering our current course or presiding over the dissolution of a non-profit organization, nor indeed experience these emotions, as I write the last President's message for our last newsletter.

This is truly a member driven organization, one that members have participated in, sustained, and shaped. It has added great value to our work through advocacy, information, and professional development. As we adapted to the changing funding scene and became LISTN, the Board held a visioning meeting and created a legacy document, outlining our contributions to the sector. I would like to thank those individuals who have served on the Board before and with me. It has not been an easy time and we are fortunate to have such a thoughtful group of people volunteering their time and effort. So, thank you to all the board presidents who preceded me: Alison Norman, Loree Phillet, Ming Berka, Yvonne Chard, Dale Hunter, Nina Miller, and Katie Graham. And thank you to everyone who has stepped forward over the years to represent on the board.



LISTN Board of Directors 2014/15

Our organization has been so effective for many reasons, but paramount has been the outstanding staff we have been privileged to work with. Brenda has gathered individuals with talent and work ethic to sustain our vision of ELSA Net/LISTN. I speak for all members when I give heartfelt thanks to our present and past employees. I know that you will all join me in wishing these hard-working individuals success in their next jobs.

Our role has changed with the move from the province to CIC (now IRCC); professional development is taking place on a national scale and we have a limited role in program advocacy, with CIC (IRCC) preferring to disseminate information and receive feedback via our contract managers. The Board recognized the path that CIC wanted to take and we have acted with the sector's best interests at heart.

Next spring, as LISTN is dissolved, we will move our intellectual assets to Tutela and to BC TEAL. We are also very fortunate to have Brenda Lohrenz moving to BC TEAL as Interim Executive Director. I am currently the LISTN Representative on the Board of BC TEAL. As we move forward, BC TEAL will become the host for a LINC Committee that will give providers the opportunity to meet in person and online, allowing us to continue our advocacy role on behalf of LINC providers and learners.

As we move forward, we need to be aware of the changing role and direction of language instruction across Canada. LINC classes are only part of the continuum of ways in which newcomers will learn language. Through BC TEAL, we have to broaden our perspective and recognize that the ELL landscape for newcomers has expanded to include post-secondary, public bodies (e.g. libraries) and employers, to name a few.

In conclusion, I encourage you to not lose sight of the following truth: what you do every day is important. Your work truly matters to individuals, families and communities. Your commitment to your students and programs is an investment in our shared future. So continue with your outstanding work and we will see you at BC TEAL, at conferences, PD and meetings.

Feature Article

I've Got My Certificate. Now What? Ongoing Professional Development

by *Shawna Williams*

The work of the Instructional Resource Coordinators at LISTN—and ELSA Net before that—has always centred on providing LINC instructors in BC with tools and resources to become increasingly better equipped teachers. I like to think that the work we do not only helps LINC instructors' classroom practice, but also contributes to their ongoing professional development.

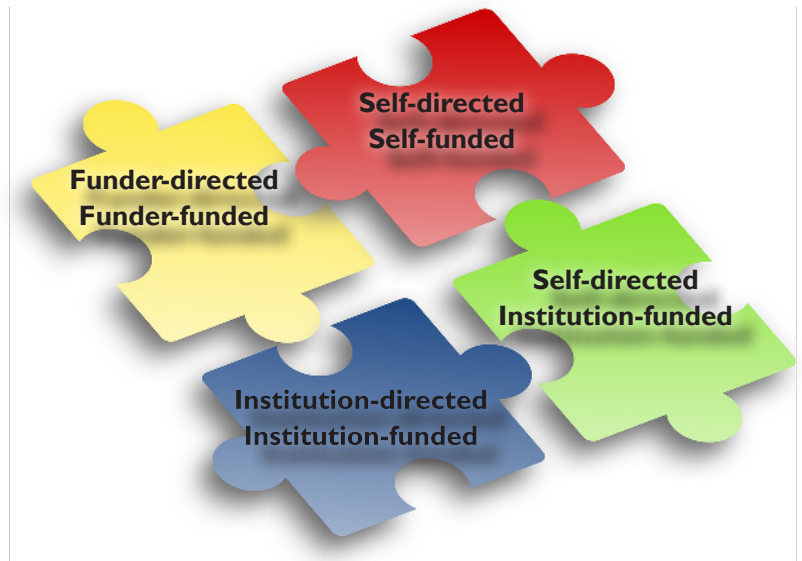
The theme of this last issue of the LISTN newsletter is Professional Development, a topic that resonates with our community of teachers and administrators. The articles in this issue focus on the importance of lifelong learning: how we conceptualize it, how we engage with it in our workplaces, and how we evaluate its utility in our practices.

For busy professionals, PD is often construed as a series of events that are squeezed in between teaching class, planning lessons, and creating assessments. But to fully understand the importance of PD, it is better to conceive of it as “a process of continual intellectual, experiential, and attitudinal growth of teachers” (Lange, 1990 as cited in Wong, 2011). This is a process, not an event.

Through a series of engaging conversations, Kathryn Rockwell (a former IRC) and I conceptualized PD as a matrix whereby a teacher might bring together jigsaw pieces with the aim of forming a complete picture. We envisioned four quadrants—or pieces—of shared responsibility, which we tweaked for a LINC-specific context. Each is explained below, piece-by-piece.

The first piece is “Funder-directed, Funder-funded.” These are events where all staff are expected to partake in PD that is mandated by the funder. This model is frequently used for PD in LINC programs; PBLA training and implementation is the obvious example.

The second piece is “Institution-directed, Institution-funded,” which is a common PD model within ESL. These are whole-staff events determined by the employer, but



this one-size-fits-all approach may not resonate with all teachers. That said, this kind of PD/training is necessary when there are programmatic changes afoot, and it also serves to foster a sense of team among the staff. The

next piece is “Self-directed, Institution Funded.” In this scenario, funds are made available to instructors to tailor to their own PD needs. This may enable instructors to attend workshops, join a professional association, or travel to a conference. The highlight of this part of the PD puzzle is that it allows instructors to engage in PD that they have a keen interest in.

The fourth piece is “Self-directed, Self-funded.” This is often the very first piece of the puzzle, as individuals embark on their teaching careers through degree or certificate programs. The cost of education and conference participation may be high, but if viewed as an investment into one's career, the expense is well worth it. For teachers who have limited means to pay out of pocket, there are many avenues available to apply for grants, scholarships, and awards (e.g., BC TEAL offers conference bursaries each year). “Self-funded” can also mean “free,” and there are a myriad of opportunities available to teachers at no cost.

(continued on page 6)

Feature Article

Engaging in free, ongoing development is an incredible way to become richer within the profession.

Ideally, teachers would have all four pieces to round out their professional development, though this is not always the case. Therefore, it is important to leverage the opportunities available to us to engage meaningfully in whatever avenues we pursue. Professional development should be planned with intent, be related to teachers' needs, and constructed according to one's short-term and long-term professional goals (see Wong, 2011). Finally, instructors and administrators should intentionally evaluate PD opportunities and reflect on what works and what doesn't.

Understanding the many facets of PD, and who is responsible for what, is a key aspect of understanding the "big picture" of PD. The IRCs at LISTN have a unique role in that our primary responsibility is to create, share, and distribute resources to the LINC community and to find ways to respond to questions that directly relate to teachers' practice. In essence, we are vehicles for contributing to the professional development of instructors. It has been such an honour and privilege to have served in this capacity; and as we have been contributing to others' PD, we have certainly grown and developed in our own professional capacities.

References:

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Since 2012, Shawna Williams has been the Instructional Resource Coordinator at LISTN/ELSA Net. She is passionate about not only her own professional development, but also about fostering opportunities for all EAL professionals in BC. She is the president of BC TEAL.

Research and Practice: Rethinking Professional Development Practices

by Amea Wilbur

In August 2015, I completed my doctorate at UBC. My research explored the assumptions and understandings that LINC teachers bring when teaching students who they believe have experienced trauma. I took on this action research project because of my own work as an EAL instructor and as a result of many discussions with other EAL instructors who were struggling to support their students.

My study illustrated the complex and contradictory understanding that instructors have about trauma, and the dilemmas they face in supporting students affected by trauma in a government-funded EAL program for newcomers. One of my most important findings noted the need to rethink current professional development and highlighted the importance of communities of practice.

The research participants criticized PD practices for focusing only on administrative tasks and technical competencies. Several participants also observed that some PD did not recognize the instructors' experience and knowledge.

The participants proposed alternative conceptualizations of PD. They spoke about PD and communities of practice that would promote reflection and reciprocal learning between like-minded professionals. They envisioned PD that would use a problem-posing approach and would address the realities of their experience. In particular, the participants spoke about PD that would encourage instructors to reflect on their own privilege and power, as well as helping teachers to explore their own assumptions about students and teaching practices.

To read my study in its entirety, please visit the [UBC Open Collections: Theses and Dissertations](#) website.

Dr. Amea Wilbur has just completed her studies at UBC. She was the Coordinator of the Access Community through English program at Vancouver Coastal Health. She has worked with marginalized learners in a variety of contexts for over 15 years.

Professional Development

Embrace your Passion for Professional Growth

by Ryan Drew

Recently, as part of my Master's course work, I completed a module on Teacher Learning and Development. This was of particular interest to me as I have engaged in in-service teacher training for many years. I was able to connect my own experiences—both personal and professional—to the prevailing findings covered in the module. I was prompted to reflect on my own journeys in ELT.

I feel I truly began to grow in this field around 2008 when a colleague of mine “pushed” me to start learning about different aspects of teaching. I had moved into an administrative role, and was able to participate in classroom observations, allowing me to watch both seasoned and new teachers in different level classes. I realized that we all had similar objectives, but our teaching styles and paths looked different. I also began to engage in teacher training and quickly noticed that some teachers blossomed while others faded into the background. These experiences prompted me to reflect on professional development needs of diverse teachers.

I perceived there are two types of teachers: those who are accountable for their professional growth and those who are not. Wallace (1991) states that “...all of us as language teaching professionals can, and even must, take on the responsibility for our own development.” This strongly resonates with me. I have witnessed the greatest growth in those who have taken on the responsibility. Those who place that responsibility in others' hands tend to remain stagnant. While responsibility is a major underlying factor, I still found that there are other considerations that contribute to stagnation or growth.

John Dewey identified four personal attitudes that contribute to development: whole-heartedness, high self-confidence, open-mindedness, and a sense of responsibility (as cited in Rogers 2002). It's true: teachers need to ‘give their all’ and throw themselves into the developmental process with both feet. I believe that high self-confidence truly influences teachers' willingness to make mistakes and

recognize that development is a learning process. Having an open mind to new ideas, approaches, and standards is vital to develop. Finally, teachers need to take responsibility for their development; they need to seek out opportunities and apply what has been learned to their practice.

Another strategy for teachers' professional development, and one which has become very popular, is that of reflection. A key contributor to this concept, Thomas Farrell, enthused that teachers can control their own development through a reflective process of looking at their practice (Richards and Farrell, 2005; Farrell, 2007). This approach to development is not easy as professionals need to fully commit to the reflective process, look critically at their practice, and be willing to make changes.

What can a language teacher do to maximize their growth? First and foremost, take responsibility! Join a professional association such as BC TEAL, attend and present at conferences, attend or give webinars, read and publish in newsletters and journals, talk to your colleagues, find out what is happening in your field, reflect on your practice, or a myriad of other possibilities. When you do these types of things, do them with your whole being. Embrace the opportunities to learn from others, relish the time you devote to reading, and be motivated to reflect on what you're doing with your learners. When you do these things, open your mind. Listen to what is being said, see what is being shown, try it out and reflect on the results before you discard the idea/approach/method. Finally, have confidence in yourself! You are a professional that has been trained to teach English. When an activity or lesson collapses as you implement it, know that you are not a failure: reflect on what happened and how you can change it. Have the confidence to analyse that situation critically so that you can do it better next time. As you engage these things, you will experience growth and you will become connected to a greater community.

(continued on page 8)

Professional Development

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Ryan Drew is a long time ELSA instructor and manager at SUCCESS. Currently, Ryan is the Regional Manager for the Tri-Cities Immigrant Settlement and Integration Program at SUCCESS, and a Regional Coach for the national implementation of PBLA. She recently completed a Master's degree in Applied Linguistics and TESOL.

LISTN's Moodle Courses for Self-Paced Instructor PD

Optional, Free & Flexible

Course 1: Introduction to Settlement Language

LINC | CLB and Curricula | Placement, Assessment & Progression

Course 2: The CLB and Task-Based Instruction

The CLB & Key Documents | CLB Module & Lesson Planning | Learner Profiles, Performance Indicators & Features of Communication

Course 3: Classroom Assessment Toolkit (CATK)

Assessment for Learning | Learner Self-Assessment | Using the CATK

Course 4: Tools and Best Practices for Working with Literacy Learners

Approaches, Strategies, and Techniques | Applying CLB: ESL for ALL in the LINC classroom | Using Literacy Tools in the CATK

New!



Interested? Here's how to register:

1. Contact your coordinator to express interest.
2. Your coordinator contacts resources@listn.info with the names and email addresses of interested teachers.
3. Once registered, begin the course work and finish at your own pace.

Professional Development

The Difference between Professional Development and Training, and Why it Matters

by Fiona Shaw

Perhaps at some time you have asked yourself, at a conference or at an in-house PD event: Is this professional development? Or is this training? Often in our field these terms are used interchangeably, but for me there is an important difference. To me, training is what is needed to do your job. When your job requirements change, you need training. For example, PBLA is about a significant pedagogical shift in the way we teach and assess students. In order for LINC instructors to implement this form of assessment and classroom practice, they need training. The job depends on them knowing how to do this work, in this specific context, with a specific outcome.

Professional development is something else. Professional development should be exactly what it says. It should be the development of instructors as professionals, not necessarily as implementers of a set of classroom practices. As professionals, training enables us to make sound pedagogical decisions based on our knowledge, experience and training. Our commitment to ongoing PD deepens and broadens our classroom practice though greater understanding of the field as a whole, our own practice within that, our students and ourselves as educators.

Professional development requires a degree of individual engagement with and towards the subject matter. It should be personal to each of us as educators. Good PD often asks us to think about the macro issues of the topic—the why and the how. Although it is often less concerned with the question of ‘what to do in the classroom,’ good PD should also always connect back to ‘real classroom life.’

So, you could ask, is some training professional development, too? It can be. When we engage instructors in the wider thinking behind implementing a new program, such as PBLA, this develops our deeper understanding of Second Language education. The implementation phase asks us to reflect on our practices and sometimes shines new light into dark corners of ‘the way it has always been’ in our classrooms. This active reflection and the changes that come from it

develops us as professionals. During the PBLA roll out, for example, we are overwhelmingly engaged in good training. It is very important; it is not optional. Without it, instructors would struggle to do their jobs. But a just like a CELTA course, it is not really professional development.

Finally, you might ask, why do these differences matter? They matter when we are asked or required to prioritize one at the expense of the other. Due to ever-looming budget constraints, programs may not be able to offer instructors the quality and variety of PD opportunities they might otherwise. Although the immediate importance of training is clear—instructors need it to do their jobs properly in their current context, and administrators and lead teachers need it to be able to support instructors and manage programs—I argue that it should not come at the expense of quality, personally expansive, professional development. Nor should training be passed off as such.

I believe that employers should support, encourage and enable quality PD, but instructors must also assume responsibility for their own personal professional development. Now more than ever we are able to do just that, whether it be dedicating a few hours to face-to-face workshops or attending a weekend-long conference. Online, our options are seemingly endless—from Twitter chats, to online real-time lectures or courses that you take at your own pace. Building a Personal Learning Network (PLN) is something each of us as educators should actively take on for ourselves.

Professional development is about expansion of knowledge and expertise. It’s about deepening our understanding of our work and ourselves as professionals. Training can be a part of that, but it is not all of it. As educators and professionals we need both.

Fiona Shaw is an enthusiastic self-described ‘PD nerd’ and the Site Coordinator of the LINC program at the Douglas College Surrey Learning Centre.

Professional Development

PBLA: MOSAIC's Journey

by Diana Ospina and Linda Davies



Our journey with PBLA began 3 years ago, with 4 guiding principles: transparency, training, time and support.

From the outset, we gave instructors clear expectations, shared timelines, and were upfront about the realities of the learning curve and implication for prep work. Ongoing, we highlighted successes, openly responded to setbacks, and communicated refinements.

Our professional development framework consisted of consolidating fundamentals and working towards specific areas of need: CLB calibration, lesson planning, assessing resources, and finer points of PBLA (such as assessing productive versus receptive skills). Our instructional developers designed in-house workshops and explored other options, such as LISTN workshops, to support both program and instructional needs.

Our relatively long implementation phase gave ample time for instructors to receive feedback and refine their process while putting training into practice, and working towards mastery. We also implemented policy to maximize the available time for PBLA administrative tasks.

Providing sufficient support was our most important guiding principle. It informed the responsiveness

of our training and the length of time we allotted towards implementation. We reorganized our curriculum to ensure CLB alignment, and to provide enhanced real world task-based activities which cover a wide range of competencies across skills. We developed topic checklists for needs assessments and learning reflections. Instructional developers worked together with instructors to create an assessment bank. Our administrative team supported the process by streamlining policy, and clearly communicating procedures for move-ups, progress meetings, and report cards.

MOSAIC's journey continues as we gain insight into better facilitating students' goal setting and learner reflection, and continuously refine our PBLA practice. We're celebrating our success, thanks to the collaborative efforts of instructors, coordinators, and administration.

Diana Ospina is the manager of the MOSAIC Vancouver Language Centre. Previously she was a team leader and instructor in the ELSA program. Diana believes in open communication and teamwork.

Linda Davies is an Instructional Developer at MOSAIC Vancouver English Language Centre. Linda values a collaborative approach to teaching and leadership, and endeavours to be a facilitator both in and outside of the classroom.

Professional Development

Twitter is my Community of Practice (CoP)

by Kathryn Rockwell

When I first got a Twitter account, I was sceptical and a little nervous. At first, I wasn't even sure what I was supposed to post or who to follow. I spent at least two years lurking and "following" interesting people and organizations.

Eventually, I got up enough courage to actually tweet. It wasn't until I tried tweeting a conference ([#ELSA2013](#)) that I moved from **casual tweeter** to **connected tweeter**. I was amazed by the power of connecting with other LINC educators in real time on issues of mutual concern.

Here is what I get from my CoP on Twitter:

- Answers to my big and small questions
- Invitations to present at conferences
- Opportunities to collaborate
- Shout-outs for my workshops
- Articles to read I wouldn't have found on my own
- Friendships and fun

I can't say it enough. If you want to connect with your community of practice and to engage in continuous learning, get on Twitter! See you in the Twitter-sphere.



I am now passionate about my Twitter CoP. I have connected with educators across Canada and around the world. Recently, Shawna Williams (LISTN/BCTEAL), Karen Densky (TRU), Sara Yuen (Langara) and I presented a panel on leadership at [#bctea15](#). My chance to collaborate with these amazing professionals was the result of a 30 second Twitter conversation during the [#realize15](#) conference between Sara and me.

Here is what I contribute to my CoP on Twitter (other people contribute differently!):

- Share resources by adding links to my tweets or by re-tweeting other people's tweets
- Share event announcements and conference registration information
- Comment on developments in settlement policy and educational innovations
- Promote my CoP's events and workshops
- Post pictures of my CoP collaborating and connecting in person
- Tweet conferences by posting pictures of slides and sharing the things I'm learning (Note: I always ask the presenter permission before I do this.)

Kathryn Rockwell taught and coordinated ELSA for many years and was, until recently, an IRC at LISTN. Follow her on Twitter @kathrynrockwell.

Resources for Learning How to Get More out of Twitter:

[How to Use Twitter for Teaching and Learning](#), on Edudemic
This is a short, but useful article for educators who want to engage themselves and their learners on Twitter.

[Twitter 101: How to Tweet](#), on GCF Learn Free
This covers the basics of tweeting, retweeting, sharing links and more.

[Tweet to Learn](#), on Scientific American
This is an excellent article that outlines the value of engaging in continuous learning on Twitter.

Professional Development

Professional Development Wherever You Are

by *Nathan Hall*

When it comes to professional development, is it possible to create a situation that is flexible in terms of location and time while providing access to targeted, relevant information? The answer is yes, and best of all, it is free.

Increasingly, educators are turning to Twitter to connect and share with like-minded individuals from around the world. Here are some tips on how to join in the conversation.

1. **Accounts:** Choose a good “handle,” your unique Twitter name that starts with @. Select something that isn’t too long and that you will be happy to keep for a long time.
2. **Following:** Jennifer Chow (@jennifermchow) has compiled [a list of tweeters who are related to LINC](#). Simply look down the list and click on the “Follow” button next to the description of the person.
3. **Tweeting:** To send your own messages, click on the “Tweet” button, type or paste in your text, and hit “Send.” You can also share tweets you find by simply “retweeting.” Keep in mind that anything you tweet is public and could be seen by anyone, even someone without an account.
4. **Hashtags:** Twitter uses hashtags (text that starts with a # sign) as keywords for tweets. For example, #cdnELT is used for information related to teaching English in Canada.
5. **Chats:** During Twitter chats, people get together at a set time to discuss a topic using a single hashtag. Every other week, a lively discussion on LINC-related topics takes place under the hashtag #LINCchat. Anyone can participate by following and using the hashtag during the time of the chat. Moderators use questions to keep the conversation moving. People share their thoughts, experience, questions, concerns, and resources so everyone can grow together.

More information on using Twitter for professional development, including #LINCchat, can be found on the [LISTN website](#).

Nathan Hall is an Instructional Resource Coordinator for LISTN. He has worked for Douglas College as an EAP and TESOL instructor and is an advocate for the proper use of educational technology in the language classroom. Nathan recently joined Tutela as a community coordinator. He is also an avid blogger and Twitter user in the areas of language teaching and educational technology. You can find out more at info.nathanhall.ca

#LINCchat in December



December 1, 2015

6-7PM PST (9-10PM EST)

□ Learning-Oriented Feedback □

December 15, 2015

6-7PM PST (9-10PM EST)

□ Project-Based Learning □

#LINCchat is a Twitter chat for anyone working in LINC in Canada. If you have never taken part in a Twitter chat before or simply would like more information about what it is, join the #LINCchat group on Tutela or read more about it at <http://j.mp/lincchat>

Twitter: @LISTNCanada
www.listn.info



From Our Members

Success in Canada: A Learner-Fueled Inspiration

by Paula Mannington, Abbotsford Community Services

Sardul Singh Bal inspires me. He has navigated torrential rivers of change throughout his life with an impassioned quest for lifelong learning and a “can do” attitude that surpasses CLB goals. Sardul, who was born in the Punjab region in 1942, immigrated to Canada with his wife in 2010 to join their family in Abbotsford.

Unconstrained by traditional ideas of retirement, Sardul wanted to upgrade his language skills and pursue new goals. At the age of 70, he proudly became the oldest student in his ELSA 4/5 English for the Workplace class. His diverse career path in India, which included posts as an army nurse and a regional dairy inspector, equipped him with a wealth of transferrable skills. His immediate goals were to gain confidence in speaking and learn basic computer skills (he had never used a computer before). He eventually graduated from Skills Connect and CLB 8, worked as an insurance agent, and volunteered at both the Gurdwara and Red Cross.



Sardul Singh Bal at work

In February 2014, Sardul began volunteering with our agency’s Seniors Services. He has already completed more than 1500 tax returns and related electronic documents—a true testament to his retooled qualifications! When asked about his ability to embrace change, Sardul responded, “I am a Sikh, and Sikh means one who is always trying to learn new things. We should always be content with what we’ve got, but try to get more and more knowledge to improve our lives. Also, if you give happiness to others, you will be happier.” Thank you, Sardul. I couldn’t agree more.

Why PBLA?

by Astrid van der Pol

PBLA, like a Sudoku puzzle, can be so intriguing that as we try to integrate its parts, we forget to ask why we are doing it. However, as a Lead Teacher and LINC 3 instructor, thinking about the “why” both energizes me and gives me the will to persevere, even when it seems overwhelming. Here are a few of the “whys.”

One: PBLA is testing that works. Research says that assessments should be sources of information for both students and teachers. Assessments must be followed by high-quality corrective instruction, and should allow students to have second chances to demonstrate success (Guskey, 2007). When viewed as part of the ongoing process of instruction, classroom assessments provide feedback on performance and help students to reach their learning goals.

Two: PBLA is something to reach for. In the *Portfolio Based Language Assessment: Guide for Teachers and Programs*, we find the following phrases: “engages students in dialogue,” “comprehensive, systematic, authentic,” and “enhances exemplary teaching” (Pettis, 2014). PBLA is an ideal. We may master one aspect now and another later.

Three: PBLA improves our teaching. Doing needs assessments and goal-setting in the classroom has led to greater buy-in from my students. In addition, assessments help me reach all of my students, especially those who are struggling. PBLA provides me with a systematic way to improve my teaching. Before, I would focus on one area—for example, how to improve vocabulary—and then another specialty later on. Now, I have a bigger picture of how each of the areas are connected.

With PBLA, I feel I have the competence to meet my students’ needs.

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Astrid van der Pol is a LINC instructor at MOSAIC’s North Shore English Language Centre. She is also a PBLA Lead Teacher.

From Our Community

BC TEAL

BC TEAL was established in 1967 as Canada's first professional association for EAL educators. For almost 50 years, BC TEAL has endeavoured to provide, encourage, and support high-quality professional development and advancement of the profession. This is certainly encapsulated in the Mission Statement, and is reflected in the voices of members as well: in a membership survey in early 2014, respondents overwhelmingly indicated that the most important benefit of BC TEAL membership was professional development. "I think professional development is the most important single contribution that TEAL provides and does it really, really well." During the AGM held at the 2014 annual conference, BC TEAL presented a position statement, which passed unanimously, on the importance and need for professional development. The summary of the statement is that "BC TEAL's position is that all employers need to support and encourage all instructors—full-time, part-time, contract and contingent faculty—in continued professional development. Financial support to attend and participate in professional development activities is crucial to one's professional growth. Similarly, it is BC TEAL's position that all TEAL instructors need to partake in regular professional development opportunities" (BC TEAL, 2014).



BCTEAL participants at Tri-TESOL 2015 in Seattle WA

To that end, BC TEAL—and in particular the Conference and PD Committees—work continuously to meet the PD needs of the members. With the transition of LISTN to BC TEAL, we will ensure that PD offerings are inclusive of the needs of LINC instructors, in addition to those who work in public, private, and other contexts. Indeed, BC TEAL aims to meet the needs of all EAL instructors regardless of context. However, as a volunteer organization, it relies on the active involvement and engagement of members from across the sector to ensure fair representation.

BC TEAL aims to foster a strong LINC community, and welcomes LINC instructors and administrators to become involved in the professional association, ensuring a strong voice for BC's settlement language sector.

Upcoming PD opportunities include the following:

- February 20, 2016 - BC TEAL Vancouver Island Regional Conference hosted by ICA Victoria
- April 28-30, 2016 - BC TEAL's 48th Annual Conference held at SFU's Surrey Campus

For more information on these events, and other initiatives, visit www.bcteal.org.

References:

BC TEAL. (2014). *BC TEAL position statement on the importance and need for professional development*. Vancouver, BC: BC TEAL. Retrieved from <https://www.bcteal.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/AGM-PAAC-PD-resolution-2014-passed.pdf>

From Our Community

Become a Member of BC TEAL



As LISTN looks toward to big changes in spring 2016, including its transition into BC TEAL, LISTN encourages its members (SPOs) to become **BC TEAL Supporting Institutions** and for LINC instructors, coordinators, and managers to become **Individual BC TEAL Members**.

BC TEAL was the first organization in Canada created to represent the needs of English as an Additional Language (EAL) instructors. Since 1967, BC TEAL offers exceptional networking and PD opportunities for EAL professionals in the public, private, and not-for-profit spheres of English language education in British Columbia. BC TEAL is entirely member-driven and member-funded.

Supporting Institution Membership - \$348 + GST per year

BC TEAL's Supporting Institutions are educational institutions, associations and schools who are concerned with teaching English as an additional language. These institutions help BC TEAL support professionalism in EAL instruction, provide advocacy on behalf of EAL teachers and students, and enhance the profile of EAL in BC. Some benefits for Institutional Members include: one free individual membership with BC TEAL for an employee of the institution, a 10% discount on BC TEAL conference rates for all employees of the institution, and three free email postings to the BC TEAL membership (e.g., employment, program, general announcements). employees of the institution, and three free email postings to the BC TEAL membership (e.g., employment, program, general announcements).

For more information, visit

www.bctéal.org/membership/supporting-institutions/

Individual Membership - Regular Member \$46 + GST per year & LINC Member \$27 + GST per year

N.B., the LINC membership category will be discontinued Dec. 31, 2015. Take advantage of this lower rate, and join or renew prior to Dec. 31, 2015.

Why join BC TEAL? Maybe you fit one of the following categories of EAL professionals:

- Experienced teachers interested in furthering their career through collaborative research initiatives and sharing;
- New teachers looking for opportunities to network with and learn from others;
- Administrators wanting to find PD opportunities for their staff, as well as a supportive community of their own.

No matter where you are in your career, BC TEAL has something to offer.

Some benefits of Individual Membership include: discounted rates on the annual conference, regional conferences, and PD sessions; access to the TEAL Charitable Foundation (TCF) Scholarships, Bursaries and Awards; and opportunities to network with other EAL professionals from around BC in person and via the online Community Area.

For more information, visit www.bctéal.org/membership/

ELT Event Calendar

All European Asian Online only Oceania South American North American African 4C in ELT event

◀ Dec 2015 ▶ Today December 2015 Month Week

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
29 Online ESL Resources: What's worth your time?	30	1	2 TEASIG Tony Green - 'Teaching for exams - a learning opportunity for teachers and examiners'	3 TESOL International Association Regional Conference 22nd Biennial Convention Torture Second Language Acquisition Workshop	4	5 ELT Connect Symposium Adaptive learning in practice EFL Magazine Online Teaching Summit The Image Conference

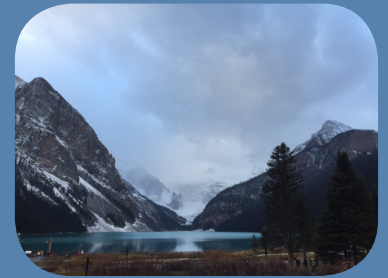
Tyson Seburn (@seburnt) curates a calendar of ELT events from around the world which he publishes on his website 4C in [ELT](#).

Content is colour coded according to geographic regions and type of event. Click on titles in the calendar for a short description and a link to the event website.

From Our Community

Settlement Language National Network Survey: A Report from Lake Louise

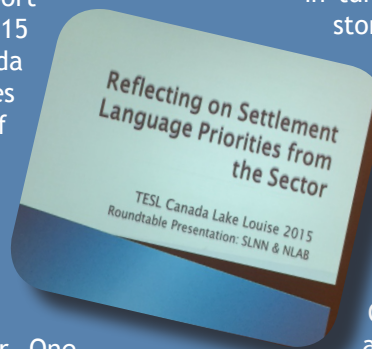
by *Brenda Lohrenz, LISTN ED*



All of you who were in Lake Louise for the TESL Canada 2015 Conference will likely recall a silvery wonderland encased in a vision of falling snow on the deep emerald green of a serene glacial lake. This was the memorable backdrop for a conference of over 800 EAL professionals held during October's Halloween weekend. Although I have now stepped down from my role as TESL Board Chair of the SLNN, I wanted to report back from sessions related to a May 2015 settlement language survey. TESL Canada received approximately 600 responses from members across Canada, 107 of which were from BC.

Highlights of the survey were brought to the conference, with session interactions that focused on priority issues, a changing client profile and engagement of the sector. One interesting discussion led to the questioning of "return on investment," which is funder-speak for using a cost-analysis lens to evaluate the outcomes of LINC. More importantly for us, how can we educate others about the lived experience of language learners? By placing emphasis on less tangible but more telling qualitative outcomes, return on dollars spent extends well beyond the quantitative eye of iCARE. Settlement content

delivered in the context of an EAL classroom is a significant contribution, and the LINC program couples this with high standards offered by increasingly specialized professionals. Settlement language programs deliver training to over 100,000 learners nationally. Time and again, we are reminded of the underlying necessity of language relating to socio-cultural competence, which in turn is equated to greater newcomer success. The story is undoubtedly there, so how do we tell it?



Engagement is a powerful mechanism. National strategies broaden our voice; additionally, practices valued in our local contexts may provide exponential benefit across other jurisdictions. BC is now a part of a national program in a new Ministry with renewed emphasis: Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). Moving forward, I encourage us as LINC providers not just to act locally, but to be more proactive nationally. Ultimately, it is our learners who will reap the benefits of a strong national settlement language voice.

More information on the SLNN/NLAB Lake Louise sessions and TESL Canada survey results is soon to be posted on Tutela - please join the National Network Advisory Committee, a TESL Canada SLNN public group.



BC LINC community at TESL 2015



From Our Community

Tutela for PD



by Diane Ramanathan, Tutela Community Coordinator

Tutela webinars are a great way to get PD when you want, where you want. Registered users will find them under the blue “Professional Development” tab on Tutela.

Click on “Join a Live Webinar” from the drop-down menu to attend a live session. Just click on the webinar title and you will see the blue “Join Conference” icon once the room has been opened.

To watch a recording, click on “Past Webinars” from the drop-down menu. Scroll down to find a webinar that interests you and click on the title. Tutela webinars will have the recording right there on the page. If another organization hosted the session, you will see a third party link to access the recording.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Diane via email at diane@tutela.ca.


Step 1:

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Step 2:

JOIN LIVE WEBINAR

Step 3:

 Tutela Webinar: Task Based Teaching Part 1
Presenter : Jeanne Spearman

Essential Skills Upcoming PD Opportunities at Douglas College

Introduction to Essential Skills

Online course offered by Douglas College
January 18 - February 5, 2016

Essential Skills Methodology & Task Analysis

Online course offered by Douglas College
February 9 - March 1, 2016

Essential Skills Assessments, Interpretation & Application

Online course offered by Douglas College
April 4 - April 29, 2016

For complete course outlines, please visit the Essential Skills page on the Douglas College website.

For more information, send at Email to essentialskills@douglascollege.ca.



From Our Community

Hold the Date & Call for Proposals: Adult Basic Education Association of BC 2016 Conference: April 20 - 23

Call for Proposals: Opens November 1, 2015 and closes January 30, 2016

Conference Theme: Building Bridges - Creating Structures for Success

In a time of reduced resources and more demands, we all need each other more than ever.

When we cooperate as bridge builders, we can build many productive connections through our communities, collectively helping our students far better than we could individually.

- Professional Development opportunities to present best practices and research in practice workshops.
- By educators, for educators, and with educators.

ABEABC focuses on excellence in professional development. Each year our conference brings together ABE and ESL teachers (sessional and full-time), teaching assistants/tutors, graduate students, educational developers, directors, administration and office/support staff from secondary, post-secondary, community, and First Nations programs from across the province.

Please plan to join us for two days of speakers, workshop presentations, informal discussions, and networking with colleagues who share an interest in ABE/ESL teaching and learning.

Location: Harrison Hot Springs Resort & Spa, Harrison Hot Springs, BC

Need more information? Contact:

Leonne Beebe leonne.beebe@ufv.ca
ABEABC Conference Co-ordinator

Yvonne Chard ychard@deltasc.bc.ca
LINC/ELSA Program Co-ordinator, Delta School District

Conference Information: www.abeabc.ca

Conference Registration will open February 1, 2016.

Professional Development through the Decoda Literacy Library

Are you looking for:

- Reading materials for adult ESL learners?
- Teaching strategies to use with ESL/ELL learners?
- Workbooks for reading, writing, grammar, vocabulary, spelling or math?
- Ideas for working with adult ESL learners at the literacy level?
- Adult ESL curriculum for workforce literacy, health literacy, financial literacy and family literacy?
- Games and other activities to use one-to-one or in classes?
- Canadian Language Benchmark materials?

Decoda
LITERACY SOLUTIONS

The **Decoda Literacy Library** can help you connect to these resources and more. And the service is free.

New and experienced ESL/ELL practitioners in BC are invited to use the Decoda Library's services. Books, games and audiovisual resources may be borrowed for six weeks. The items are mailed to you with a prepaid return label.

To find materials, use [our online catalogue](#), scan our [English Language Learning resource list](#) or email library@decoda.ca. Requests can be placed directly through the catalogue or by email. If you can't find exactly what you're looking for, don't hesitate to contact us. In addition to referring you to books and other physical resources, we can help you source free online materials.

For more information on what the library can do for you and to register with the library, visit our [website](#) at <http://decoda.ca> or send us an email at library@decoda.ca. We look forward to helping you.

From Our Community

Child Care

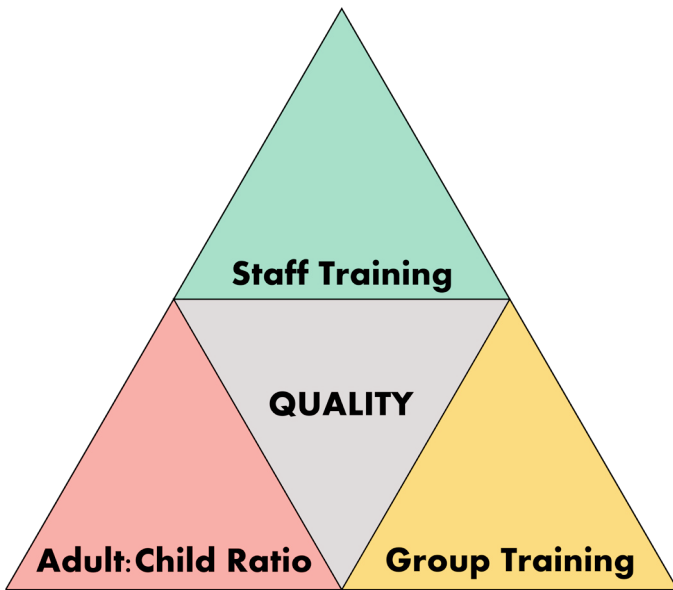
Professional Development is Key!

Research on caring for children consistently shows that staff training is key to ensuring program quality and reducing risks.

Staff qualifications and training, adult to child ratios, and group size are the three elements that directly affect quality care. Drawing on the conclusions of research, experts have developed the Iron Triangle of Quality Care for Children.



Iron Triangle of Quality Care for Children



In the Care for Newcomer Children (CNC) model, the issues of ratios and group size are addressed through provincial legislation and national requirements, but a simple way to improve your CNC program is through staff training.

What does research tell us about the importance of training for child care staff? Studies show that:

- It is essential to have knowledge of the stages of child development.
- It is important to understand that the early years are the most crucial period of a person's life.

- Higher education contributes to better quality of care for children.
- Staff training reduces the number of accidental injuries in child care settings.
- Children score higher on measures of intellectual ability when their caregivers have more years of education.
- A lack of adequate training results in higher staff turnover.
- Financial assistance is needed to offset the high cost of continuing education for childminders with low wages.

Overall, professional development and training improves the quality of care provided to newcomer children, reduces the risks, and improves the skills of the childminders.

What you can do to improve the quality of your program through CNC staff training:

- Share research and let your team know that PD is important.
- Encourage your CNC staff to pursue additional training.
- Identify and share PD ideas with each other.

Resources and training ideas:

Online courses are available anytime on the [CMAS website](#) in the [Learning Centre](#). Our courses have been developed by experts in the field on topics such as Language Rich Environments, Child Abuse Prevention and Intervention, Responsive Curriculum, Separation Anxiety and Culture Shock, and Working with Newcomer Families.

For additional training opportunities, links to online organizations that have free and low-cost training options, and a list of events and training for each province, please visit the [CMAS website](#).

Final Thoughts

Mindfulness as PD in Teaching English as an Additional Language

by Karen Rauser

As EAL teachers, we tend to give until we drop. While this exercise in self-sacrifice is certainly wonderful for our karma points, it doesn't necessarily promote a consistent sense of well-being. Sometimes we need to take a step back to recalibrate so that we can be present with our students in a more balanced way.

Mindfulness—the art of paying attention, being present, and cultivating non-judgment—has received some excellent press in the last few years, with research in neuroscience giving evidence to the beneficial effects of mindfulness practices on reducing stress and increasing energy and resilience (Hölzel et al., 2010; Roeser et al., 2013). While it is tempting to imagine how wonderful it would be to offer it to our students (notice how we tend to go there first?), we will see more benefits in the classroom context by beginning with ourselves (Jennings, 2015).

When we make mindfulness part of our professional development plans, it helps us create more space in our day, focus on what is really important, and respond rather than react to stressful situations. Whether we cultivate a personal meditation practice, attend mindfulness courses or retreats, or read about mindfulness in books or research articles, learning to practice mindfulness can have immediate and long-term effects on our well-being. Ideally, we should do this before we drop.

Practice Mindfulness Now: Find your Breath

Take a moment to find your breath (pause here to find it...). Notice that the breath has been here all along, even before you turned your attention to it. Check in with the state of your breathing: the length, the pace, any areas of constriction. Release any judgment that comes up about why your breath might be a certain way. Just notice. Notice the way that breath moves in your body, where it enters, where it exits. Feel the rise and fall of the chest, the expansion of the ribcage, the flow of air at the nostrils or the mouth.



Invite the breath to lengthen on the inhale, and notice how that changes the exhale. Do this three more times. Notice the impact this has on your body, your thoughts, your emotions. As you release your focus from the breath, give yourself credit for taking this time just for you.

References:

- Hölzel, B. K., Carmody, J., Evans, K. C., Hoge, E. A., Dusek, J. A., Morgan, L., Pitman, R. K., & Lazar, S. W. (2010). Stress reduction correlates with structural changes in the amygdala. *Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience*, 5(1), 11-17. doi:10.1093/scan/nsp034
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- Roeser, R.W., Schonert-Reichl, K. A., Jha, A., Cullen, M., Wallace, L., Wilensky, R., Oberle, E., Thomson, K., Taylor, C., & Harrison, J. (2013). Mindfulness Training and Reductions in Teacher Stress and Burnout: Results from Two Randomized, Waitlist-Control Field Trials. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 105(3), 787-804. doi:10.1037/a0032093

Karen Rauser has been teaching EAL in various contexts for almost 20 years (currently at UBC Okanagan's English Foundation program) and is a trained Mindfulness Facilitator with the Stress Management and Relaxation Techniques program (SMART) at UBC Okanagan (www.smartUBC.ca).