

January 8th, 2018

Dear Provincial Affiliates

Happy New Year. We had the great pleasure of holding our first ever Provincial affiliate presidents- TESL Canada board meeting on January 4th. It was very uplifting to have participation from all provinces who are currently members of TESL Canada. In the next meeting we will also invite presidents from the two provincial organizations who withdrew from TESL Canada. In this meeting we discussed many current and pertinent matters and three main questions/topics stood out as needing to be addressed with members of provincial organizations. In the spirit of transparency (and I have included past letters that I have sent to TESL Canada members with that same idea in mind), I offer the three questions and my best responses at present:

1. *Why did TESL Canada have to close its head office? Why did we have financial problems?*

- I. Large numbers of members withdrew their support for TESL Canada and felt better able to deal with all/most matters on a provincial level (Ontario and BC)
- II. Teacher Certification and Teacher Training Program Recognition was under resourced and the amount of human resources required to maintain the process (human resources required for multiple back-and-forth communication with applicants; amount needed to pay adjudicator for multiple assessments of the same files; office costs-e.g., printing certificates, physical mailing)
- III. Successful conference from a quality point of view (great sessions, travel awards and bursaries for a member from each province, innovation awards, well organized, central location), but attendance numbers were much lower than hoped and therefore revenue was much lower than needed (many provinces and settlement language institutions did not have PD money to send members to conference).
- IV. Unsuccessful attempts to garner external funding sources

2. *What can TESL Canada in its current financial and human resource state do for and with its members and how much does that currently cost?*

- I. **Communicating with members** and anyone who contacts TESL Canada (cost-maintaining our Email account- \$55/month + human resource cost (currently all communication handled by TESL NB/TESL Canada volunteers)
- II. **Maintaining website** (cost- domain host- \$4000 annually and webmaster time for updates (currently handled by TESL NB volunteer who is an IT professional)
- III. **Physical storage/rent**- \$100/month
- IV. **Banking costs** (credit card, bank account fees, PayPal costs -\$3500/year (all financial matters related to banking currently handled by our volunteer treasurer)
- V. **Accounting fees** -\$750/month (approximately)
- VI. **Annual audited financial statements** -\$5500 annually

- VII. **Insurance** - \$2000 annually (approximately)
- VIII. **Cloud storage** (all files, docs, etc. related to TESL Canada stored here) and **virtual desktop** (Symmcom)- \$225/month
- IX. **Teacher Certification** – currently inactive, but volunteers handling communications, inquiries, and outstanding issues related to unresolved files.
- X. **Teacher Training Program Recognition**- being maintained by volunteers but not sustainable. In communication/negotiation with external accreditation services (proposal pending)
- XI. **TESL Canada Journal** (communicating with authors, maintaining OJS, copyediting, etc))- currently funded by a \$16, 725 per year SSHRC grant (grant expires March 2019- will have to reapply); \$20,000 (approximately) from TESL Canada also some in-kind contributions from Editors and TESL Canada board.
- XII. **Total current monthly costs at present: \$2379**

3. What might we be able to do in the next six months if we can stabilize our financial situation?

I. Reactivate Certification

- i. Pay part time person to handle communications and processing of Certification- \$25/hour- 40hours per month=\$1000/month
- ii. Pay part time person to maintain website \$25/hour- 10 hours per month \$250
- iii. Pay adjudicator services- \$45/hour (complete and straight forward files take 1 hour, but these are not the norm)

II. Maintain better, more transparent and regular communication with and between members

- i. Cost of part-time person and webmaster (see above)

III. Possibly reorganize and reactivate Teacher Training Program Recognition

- i. If externally processed through Orion (costs for TESL Canada will be minimal- just volunteer costs to maintain standards and communication with Orion)
- ii. If not externally processed a new process will need to be considered and costs associated with administration and adjudication will apply.

IV. Continue TESL Canada Journal

- i. Apply for “Aid to Scholarly Journals” SSHRC
- ii. Continue with ongoing in-kind costs

V. Plan June AGM (and consider future possibilities)

- i. Cost of part-time person and webmaster (see above)

Hopefully, this information is helpful and addresses some concerns and questions. We are determined to make TESL Canada a stable national professional association this year. Your support is vital in this regard. We are open to new ways of configuring the targets and new ways of working together. If TESL Canada federation remains the national voice and the national network of EAL professionals, it is because we are working together and sharing

common goals. Once the association stabilizes along with its key services, we can then think about **ideas for the future** (e.g., **collaborative face-to-face or online professional development opportunities**). For now, we are asking that you consider a 6-month commitment (please refer to interim MoU) and are open to reconsidering the fee/member amount paid by the provincials. We ask if you would discuss the MoU and ways that TESL Canada can be a national organization that represents and connects us all. We will be meeting again with Presidents and provincial reps and your insights and contributions would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you and feel free to contact me at any time.

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