



THE ASSOCIATION OF B.C. TEACHERS OF ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**BC TEAL requests English as an Additional Language Programs funding restoration**

November 19, 2015

**Vancouver** – The BC Teachers of English of an Additional Language (BC TEAL) is asking the BC government to restore funding to English as an Additional Language (EAL) programs in post-secondary institutions.

"We are proud that the BC government and the City of Vancouver has proclaimed the week of November 15 – 21, 2015 as 'EAL Week,' but we are reminded that a significant funding challenge exists in BC and a funding commitment would make this much more meaningful," said Shawna Williams, President of BC TEAL. "Immigrants and refugees are a vital part of our economy, yet without adequate language proficiency they cannot contribute fully to BC and Canadian society. Access to affordable English language training is lacking."

"Just a few months ago, the BC government posted a \$1.68 billion dollar surplus, and investing in EAL education is a prudent investment on the part of government," said Joe Dobson, BC TEAL 1st Vice-President. It was in 2014 that the BC government cut \$22 million in funding from EAL programs in post-secondary institutions across the province, after losing that amount in program-specific transfer payments from the federal government. "We ask that Premier Clark and Minister Wilkinson invest in BC and new British Columbians by restoring EAL program funding."

BC TEAL celebrates EAL week with events throughout the province this week from the BC Interior to the Lower Mainland. It is timely, sustained, and affordable access to EAL programs that enables immigrants and newcomers to Canada to best contribute to their new home.

BC TEAL notes that a number of organizations, representing both students and educators in the province, called for restoration of funding to the Legislature's all-party Select Standing Committee this fall. The Select Standing Committee published its recommendations on Friday, November 13, 2015, and a first recommendation in that report is to "restore full and sustained funding to the Adult Basic Education (ABE) and English as a Second Language (ESL) programs."

These all-party recommendations note the importance of EAL programs and their impact. BC TEAL is pleased that the committee recognizes the critical importance of these programs. "We know that this is in the interest of British Columbians and our economy," said Williams. "We hope that the Premier and her cabinet reflect on these recommendations and make the decision to implement them."

BC TEAL: BC TEAL is the largest professional association of EAL instructors in British Columbia serving approximately 1,000 members spanning the public sector, the not-for-profit sector, and the private sector.

---

Contact: Shawna Williams, President, BC TEAL  
Cell: 604-315-6908  
Email: [president@bctéal.org](mailto:president@bctéal.org)

Joe Dobson, 1st Vice President, BC TEAL  
Cell: 778-220-0875  
Email: [jdobson@tru.ca](mailto:jdobson@tru.ca)

206-640 West Broadway, Vancouver BC V5Z 1G4  
604-736-6330 | [www.bctéal.org](http://www.bctéal.org) | [admin@bctéal.org](mailto:admin@bctéal.org)