

## BC TEAL Statement on Recent Events – February 2, 2017



Dear BC TEAL members,

The BC TEAL board is both saddened and shocked by two incidents which happened recently. Our thoughts are with the families and friends of those who lost their lives while praying at a Quebec City mosque on Sunday evening. The intolerance and hatred which led to this terrible event are incompatible with the inclusive values of BC TEAL and of Canada.

The uncertainty and chaos caused by the United States executive order to ban travelers and refugees to the US from seven Muslim-majority countries has affected many individuals around the world and in Canada. In spring 2016, the membership approved the BC TEAL Position Statement on the Needs and Rights of Refugees. <https://www.bctéal.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Position-Statement-on-the-Needs-and-Rights-of-Refugees.pdf>

This position statement reads in part: “Canada resettles about one out of every 10 of the approximately 100,000 refugees resettled every year around the globe. We have a long history of compassion, fairness, and acceptance for refugees from all parts of the world escaping persecution, risk to their lives, or cruel and unusual treatment. Admitting such people to our country comes with great responsibility.”

The values of diversity, inclusion, tolerance, compassion and respect are central to BC TEAL and our profession. As language educators, we work with students from diverse backgrounds, many of whom are from war-torn countries and who come to Canada hoping to rebuild their lives.

We also play a critical role in fostering dialogue on important social issues. Our classrooms and institutions are full of individuals from diverse backgrounds and perspectives, and we are all enriched by the exchange of ideas and sharing. As educators, we have the responsibility of ensuring that our classrooms are inclusive, tolerant, compassionate and respectful. This is our role in creating a safe and welcoming society.

We welcome the diverse people, talents and cultures brought together in our classrooms.

Sincerely,

BC TEAL Board of Directors