

## In this Issue...

- 1 ESL PSA Conference
- 1 Newsletter Deadline
- 2 President's Message
- 3 Anyway Poem
- 4 Your ESL PSA Executive
- 5 Talking Tables
- 6 Improving Oral Language Skills
- 8 Songs for ESL
- 9 Thanks to outgoing Executive
- 9 Catherine Logan Eddy Bursary
- 10 Chris Friesen: Power Point Excerpts
- 13 Guidelines for ESL PSA Grants
- 14 ESL PSA Grant Application Form
- 16 Join the ESL PSA

### Keep the Date!

Friday, October 17, 2008

### **The New Reality: English Language Learners in Every Classroom**

18<sup>th</sup> Annual ESL PSA Conference

Location: TBA

### 2007 Conference Comments

- ★ The Keynote speaker was excellent!
- ★ Interesting topics
- ★ Amazing presenters
- ★ Students in the volunteer club were excellent
- ★ First time here, but I'll be back!
- ★ Great practical advice from presenters
- ★ Send out conference information to schools earlier, please
- ★ Online registration – please!
- ★ Appreciated the passion & knowledge of the presenters
- ★ Friendly, low-key and low stress
- ★ Shorten lunch time; increase workshop time
- ★ Ask people to bring their own cups so there is less garbage
- ★ Chris Friesen's sobering speech about the current reality about our ESL population was amazing
- ★ Student volunteers were incredibly helpful and polite.
- ★ The venue was magnificent
- ★ Great displays – we like browsing through the publisher booths

*Many thanks to Ann Hunter, Magee Site Coordinator for the conference, and her wonderful team of student volunteers.*

# Presidents' Message

Sydney Dean, President

**Do** you feel like the wheel is speeding up and your hamster legs just aren't able to keep up? This past two and a half months have whizzed by without a moment to stop and acknowledge the successes that have come with the hard work and long hours everyone is committing to students and their families.

**But** I want to take the time to look back.

**We** have just completed a fabulous conference to which over 230 members committed their finances and their time. Our membership numbers are starting to climb once more. We are back up to 300 members. I got the feeling from the conference that more and more teachers are looking for an ESL network to support them in the classroom. The buzz at lunch after Chris Friesen's inspiring talk was passionate.

**The** people elected to the new executive will carry on the hard work that Jo-Anne Preston (Vice President), Sylvia Helmer (Treasurer), and Randy Henderson (Member-at-Large) have done through many years. Although they have big shoes to fill, we welcome the energy and experience of **Karen Beatty** (Vice President), **Analisa Feuz** (Treasurer), **Dale Shea** (Member-at-Large), **Kristi Clifton** (Member-at-Large), and **Susan Little** (Member-at-Large).

**ESL** is back in the news. Dr. Lee Gunderson's shocking publication

helped to create the interest. Sylvia Helmer and Joy Wild gave Bill Good's audience the straight goods on the situation of immigrants and refugees in the classroom. Many of us on the executive participated in the BCSTA's ESL Forum in February which highlighted the education of refugees in BC. The Consortium of Lower Mainland School Districts which has for many years tried to get the ears of the federal government was finally successful. This resulted in the transfer of money to the Attorney General's office to fund the creation of the Settlement Workers in Schools programs in 11 Lower Mainland School Districts this September, 2007.

**Issues** that have been smouldering are being fuelled by the growing awareness by the public that the education landscape of the country is changing.

**The** ESL PSA has continued its dialogue with **Emilie Hillier**, the Ministry of Education's representative for ESL. The funding cap on ESL service for five years, the definition of a year of service, delivery of service for ESD students, credits for ESL (BAA) courses, and programs for later to literacy students are some of the topics that are part of the continuing conversation.

**The** ESL PSA is the political voice of the teachers of English Language Learners. It is through this medium that we have the opportunity to speak for the ESL students and their families throughout the province. ESL is not

just a Lower Mainland or Metro Vancouver phenomenon; it is a trend in Comox, Fort St. John, Grand Forks, Kelowna Prince Rupert and Surrey. The education of ESL students affects whole families and the economy of the province in the long run. Through the ESL PSA we can be heard. Standing alone we cannot.

**Please** make your voices heard. Write articles for this newsletter; contact your executive with your ideas, issues and solutions; or write letters on those topics mentioned above on behalf of the PSA. The BCTF has communications professionals to help. Often the BCTF is asked to provide specialists to the Ministry on many topics. Let us know your passion.

**Yes**, it is a hectic world, but sometimes we can be more efficient by refocusing our efforts in a synergistic manner. None of us alone is as strong as all of us together.

## Opportunity for Leadership

Take on the role of Conference Chair – or team up with a colleague to co-chair the 2008 ESL PSA Conference

### More Info?

Sydney Dean  
604.517.6220  
[sdean@sd40.bc.ca](mailto:sdean@sd40.bc.ca)

*Before the Keynote Speech at the ESL PSA Conference, Musqueam Elder **Rose Point** delivered a blessing which included an adaptation of this poem by Mother Teresa.*

*There were several requests for the*

## Mother Teresa's "Anyway" Poem

People are often unreasonable, illogical and self-centered;  
**Forgive them anyway.**

If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives;  
**Be kind anyway.**

If you are successful, you will win some false friends and some true enemies;  
**Succeed anyway.**

If you are honest and frank, people may cheat you;  
**Be honest and frank anyway.**

What you spend years building, someone could destroy overnight;  
**Build anyway.**

If you find serenity and happiness, they may be jealous;  
**Be happy anyway.**

The good you do today, people will often forget tomorrow;  
**Do good anyway.**

Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough;  
**Give the world the best you've got anyway.**

# Your PSA Execu

## President

### Sydney Dean

SD#40, New Westminster

Tel: 604.517.6220

[sdean@sd40.bc.ca](mailto:sdean@sd40.bc.ca)

## Vice-President

### Karen Beatty

SD#35, Langley School Board

Tel: 604.532.1181

[kbeatty@sd35.bc.ca](mailto:kbeatty@sd35.bc.ca)

## Secretary

### Betty Kosel

SD#29, Vancouver School Board

Tel: 604.713.8171

[bkosel@gmail.com](mailto:bkosel@gmail.com)

## Treasurer

### Analisa Feuz

SD#36, Surrey School Board

Tel: 604.596.9325

[Feuz\\_a@sd36.bc.ca](mailto:Feuz_a@sd36.bc.ca)

## Newsletter Editor

### Verena Foxx

DS#39, Vancouver School Board

Tel: 604.713.5233

[vfoxx@vsb.bc.ca](mailto:vfoxx@vsb.bc.ca)

## BCTF Liaison

### Anita Chapman

[achapman@bctf.ca](mailto:achapman@bctf.ca)

## Members – at – Large

### Kristi Clifton

SD#52, Prince Rupert

Tel: 250.624.0942

[kclifton@sd52.bc.ca](mailto:kclifton@sd52.bc.ca)

### Marlene Eccles

SD#27, Williams Lake

Tel: 250.398.7192

[marlene.eccles@sd27.bc.ca](mailto:marlene.eccles@sd27.bc.ca)

### Kristin Housez

SD#39, Vancouver School Board

Tel: 604.713.5878

[eslpsa-khousez@shaw.ca](mailto:eslpsa-khousez@shaw.ca)

### Charlotte Roderman

SD#36, Surrey School Board

[lottaroderman@hotmail.com](mailto:lottaroderman@hotmail.com)

### Dale Shea

SD#43, Coquitlam

[dshea@sd43.bc.ca](mailto:dshea@sd43.bc.ca)

## Past President

Joy Wild

SD#39, Vancouver School Board

Tel: 604.713.4666

[joywild@hotmail.com](mailto:joywild@hotmail.com)



# Talking Tables – A Kinder Language Development

By Kristi Clifton, Prince Rupert

**The *Talking Tables Kindergarten Program*** is rooted in the recognition that talk is central to learning and that through talking and listening, the capacity to gain literacy skills is enhanced.

**With** this in mind, the program attempts to take the best from 'home-style' language learning – that which might occur around the kitchen table – and blend it with the best of Kindergarten language learning. This type of bridging is necessary for many students as they shift from the casual, conversational style of home communication into the more formal and abstract communication that characterizes school. A focus on oral language is also beneficial for students who come to Kindergarten speaking a language other than Standard English, or for students who have not had the amount of exposure to literature that schools anticipate. The *Talking Tables Program* has been widely used in many school districts around the province and was one of the session topics at the recent ESL conference *The World in our Classrooms*.

**The** Program blends together ideas gathered from second language methodology, early language interventions, research on the importance of phonological awareness, and practical knowledge of what interests and engages children. This blending helps create lessons that build upon the natural curiosity children have about language and also upon the ability children have to learn through play.

The lessons are organized for small groups. Four to six students with one teacher ensures that everyone gets a lot of turns to talk and keeps the level of engagement high. Essentially, the *Talking Tables Program* is about having fun with language and helping children explore the power of sounds, words, and ideas.

**During** the Conference workshop presentation, participants experienced first-hand the activity sequence that is at the core of the program. The five strands of activities are:

- Chant
- Auditory Activities
- Vocabulary Activities
- Phonological Awareness
- Oral fluency

**All** of the strands employ a game-format. Working in groups of five, participants learned several of the main games of each section and discussed the rationale for use of the activity in relation to oral language and literacy development. Each *Talking Tables* lesson moves through the five strands in a session lasting approximately 20 minutes. At least three sessions per week are recommended. Activities range from exploring objects hidden in Magic Bags to fishing for phonemes in paper bag ponds. A spirit of playfulness should permeate each session.

**Teachers** have found the *Talking Tables Program* especially effective with ESL and ESD students - with K and

## Improving Oral Language Skills ESL Student

By Karen Beatty, ESL Coordinator, Langley

**I**n 2006, I had the opportunity to work with a committee to align the learning outcomes on our AIPs and our ESL report cards to the new Language Arts IRP. I was able to consider the impact of the increased focus on oral language skills for our ESL students in the classroom and in their ESL programs. Subsequently, I designed a workshop for our Langley teachers to provide a variety of different activities that can promote oral language acquisition and to provide them with ideas to support classroom teachers with ESL students.

**A** goal of education is to teach students to be strategic. This means that language is not only the basis of all communication, it is also the primary instrument of thought. Oral language in schools goes beyond teaching children to speak. It provides the foundation for critical thinking and processing information. The Language Arts IRP moves from learning to speak to speaking to learn. Talk becomes not only a medium for thinking, it is also an important means by which students learn how to think.

**This** new focus on oral language development in schools is research driven. There is a strong correlation between developing oral language fluency to later successes in acquiring print. In the Language Arts IRP the Ministry recommends that 40% to 60% of the K to 3 curriculum be devoted to speaking and listening activities. The reality is that this can be achieved

across the day in multiple curriculum areas. However, research on teacher talk patterns has shown that teachers do the majority of the talking in the classroom. In fact, they control more than two-thirds of all the discussion and generally they speak more than all the students combined.

**If** we want students to communicate more, we need to change what we do. One suggestion I heard was that we need to become, “THE GUIDE ON THE SIDE.” If teachers become facilitators of student learning they can still model the effective use of language for thinking, learning and communicating. Oral language development for ESL students requires two essential elements to be maximally realized: comprehensible input and opportunities for social interaction. Peregoy & Boyle (2005)

**There** are many effective ways to build oral language for ESL students. These can include: songs and chants, focused small group instruction, independent group talk, vocabulary development, and extensive reading. The benefits of using songs, chants and even readers theatre are well documented. They help ESL students with the sounds and structures of English while building oral language and developing print concepts. Songs and chants enhance phonemic awareness and phonics while supporting fluency and phrasing. All this and the students are engaged and their affective filter is lowered which reduces anxiety. Throw in some actions and students will learn even more effectively.

**Independent** group talk can take the form of literature circles, book clubs, reciprocal teaching or focused pair reading. These interactive activities can help students to negotiate meaning and give them practice speaking. As well, they bring content based language to a level where it can be more easily understood. I particularly like reciprocal teaching because teachers are able to become the “guide on the side.” With teacher modeling, the students eventually learn to take over the lesson. They become more strategic readers as well as learning how to discuss their use of strategies and their thinking.

**It** is best to build vocabulary in the classroom by using a variety of different activities. These can include: read-alouds, extensive reading, direct instruction of important individual words, teaching independent word learning strategies, fostering “word consciousness,” and last but not possibly best, games and activities built around words. Stahl & Fairbanks (1986) found that directly teaching children dictionary definitions for words did not enhance their comprehension of a passage. Instead introduce new words to students each week using kid friendly definitions and provide games and activities that give students frequent encounters with new words. Non-linguistic representations, including pictures, can be highly effective for ESL learners because they also stimulate and increase activity in the brain.

So why does oral language matter?

- Oral language is the foundation for all other language learning.
- The development of oral language may play an important part in the child’s intellectual or cognitive development.
- Discussion engages students, broadens their perspectives and promotes meaning making.
- Research shows that students must possess a strong oral language foundation in order to achieve literacy success.

**Whether** you are a classroom teacher or an ESL teacher it is undeniable that this new Language Arts IRP will have its challenges. As language teachers, we need to consider that part of our role is to also help develop the skills that students need to think and reason effectively.

**Lang-O-Learn picture cards for oral language activities**

30 picture cards per box, labelled in 17 different languages.

Topics include animals, food, vehicles, everyday objects, clothing and more!

Order online:  
[www.stageslearning.com](http://www.stageslearning.com)

**Songs for ESL Teaching a**

By Joy Wild, Vancouver ESL Te

**Just** as children learning their first language try out new forms and develop new ways of formulating and linking ideas, so, too, do children learning a second language. ESL students need many opportunities to hear and use spoken English; thus, oral language activities in the classroom are of special importance.

**Games** and songs provide wonderful opportunities for children to learn (and practise) a wide variety of English. They are meaningful language activities that have built in support for children at all levels of English language learning. Both games and songs allow children to use English together without being singled out. They are enjoyable and they bring people together.

**Barrier Games:** The "barrier" in these games may be physical, such as a sheet of cardboard between the 2 children, but children may simply sit back to back. Child A has information which Child B needs in order to complete his/her task. Child A gives the information to Child B orally. Child B has information that Child A needs to complete his/her task and also gives it orally.

- Describe and Draw
- Describe and Arrange
- Find the Difference
- Map Game
- Collaborative Crossword puzzle

## Guessing Games

- Find My Partner
- Guess the Animal (enquiry and elimination group game)
- Twenty Questions

## Classification Games

### Card Games (with playing cards)

- the math version of *Box Cars and One-Eyed Jacks*)
- Numbers War
- Go Fish, Hearts, etc

## Songs

Choose a song because you like it and think your students would enjoy singing it, or look for a song that contains a particular language structure or vocabulary you want to teach, or because of concepts it contains. In either case analyze the song, "pull out" and pre-teach the language you have targeted and the vocabulary necessary for understanding the meaning of the song, then teach the song and enjoy .

*Joy Wild's workshop focused on exploring a variety of different types of games and songs for their language teaching potential. She was delighted to have 24 teachers attend her session on a Friday afternoon at the ESL PSA Conference.*

## Our thanks to

### outgoing ESL PSA Executive

#### **Sylvia Helmer, Vancouver**

This dynamo has been championing the cause of ESL students and their families since she arrived on the ESL scene. Her roots in ESL go very deep. Arriving in Canada as an ESL student herself at a young age, she has used this lens through which to create empathy for immigrant and refugee families. Sylvia was a founding member of the ESL PSA and has held all positions save president. Her voice has been loud and clear through the years as part of the executive of TEAL, as a representative on the Lower Mainland School District Consortium and the Metro ESL committee. She was on the committee that brought TESOL 2000 to Vancouver and now is moving on to a new position of advocacy. Sylvia has been a voice that the Ministry of Education listens to; it is a voice of impassioned reason. As an advocate, an author, a workshop presenter, a mentor, Sylvia has always been a master teacher. She has brought focus to those who waver, knowledge to those who question, voice to those who are silent, and fellowship to those who have felt left out. We will miss her at the PSA, but know that she will always be there when needed.

#### **Randy Henderson, Prince George**

For many years, Randy's President's Message was a call to arms for the membership. His words voiced the experiences of the ESL and ESD students around the province so that those in power could hear. Randy's passion around rural aboriginal youth and their language education was spirited. His concern for the poorest among us hit a nerve. Although Randy is no longer on the executive, he continues to speak up for the communities of the north. We wish you well, dear friend.

#### **Joanne Preston, Campbell River**

Many of us are aware of the issues of ESL in the urban centers of the Lower Mainland. It took someone like Jo-Anne Preston to shine a light on the status of rural ESL and ESD education through the development of a survey as part of a task force on rural itinerant teachers. Jo-Anne has held several positions on the executive of the ESL PSA. During the year of the strike, Jo-Anne took the initiative to single-handedly hold a mini-conference in Campbell River. She is repeating the event in April 2008. Jo-Anne has kept the voice of rural teachers and aboriginal education on the radar of the Ministry of Education. Now that she has taken a break from the PSA, we wish her well, but hope that she will continue to advocate as she has done.

### Catherine Logan Eddy Scholarship

In recognition of **Catherine Eddy's** long career of supporting and advocating for immigrant youth in Vancouver specifically, and in BC in general, the ESL PSA created a scholarship for young immigrants and refugees graduating from BC schools.

In June, 2007, **Kelly Kang** of New Westminster Secondary School was the inaugural recipient.

**Kelly** arrived in New Westminster from Korea in September of 2003. She was immediately recognized as a student who was determined to make her mark on the school and in the hearts of her friends and teachers alike. She developed a network of friends from all over the world that continues until today. When a family tragedy occurred, Kelly looked to her support group to help maintain her focus through to graduation. Kelly's self assuredness and her inner strength have enabled her to achieve her goal. In September, Kelly applied her scholarship funds to UBC Okanagan where she is presently studying business.

# You asked for ...

excerpts of the Keynote Speech by  
Chris Friesen, Immigrant Services Society, Vancouver

## At a Glance – 2005 / 2006

- 2005 - 44,734 / 2006 – 42,208 immigrants including children/youth settled in BC – the largest number in almost a decade – similar number of temporary foreign workers
- 31,438 or 36% were immigrant children/youth
- 26% increase in children & youth from 2004



## At a Glance – 2005/ 2006 cont'd

- 79% immigrants came from five Asian countries - China, India, Taiwan, Korea and Philippines
- 91% settled in Metro Vancouver



## Lower Mainland Public Schools 2005/06 school year – ESL populations

### Vancouver

- 60% kindergarten kids
- 52% elementary school students
- 56% secondary school students

### Surrey

- 30% elementary school students
- 10% secondary school students



## Lower Mainland Public School 2005/06 school year cont'd

### Burnaby

- 25% of elementary school students
- 10% secondary – 8% increase from 2004/05

### Richmond

- 60% of total student population deemed ESL



## Current Context

- Five year maximum ESL funding cap – discriminatory practise?
- Accountability / audit process for ESL funding - questionable



## Lower Mainland Public School 2005/06 school year cont'd

- Coquitlam School District #43 – 580% increase in student enrollment in ESL during the 1990's
- Today, 11% of the entire student population is non English speaking



## Current Context

- ESL students constitute majority in some districts
- Will a time come that we introduce "ESF" – an English speaking framework?
- The concept/framework of learning English in an English only environment is no longer possible



## Current Context

- BC – bt 2nd and 3<sup>rd</sup> most popular destination for immigrants to Canada
- High School drop-out rate – 40% within one UBC study conducted among 5,000 ESL students in Vancouver School Board



## Current Context

- BC - Highest child poverty rate in Canada – 23.5%
- 49% of children in recent immigrant families are poor



## Refugees/Protected Persons

- Less than 6% of overall immigration landings to BC
- 800-900 government-assisted refugees (GARS) arrive in Vancouver annually
- 1,000 + refugee claimants annually



## Refugees / Protected Persons 2003-2006 cont'd

- 40 source countries –top three source countries – Afghanistan, Sudan, Iran
- Future shift to Asia – Myanmar, Bhutan



## Refugees/Protected Persons cont'd

- 50% of Government Assisted Refugees tend to arrive between Sept - Dec 15 -- after school boards have submitted their student numbers (1701's) to the Ministry of Education



## Refugees / Protected Persons 2003-2006 cont'd

- Settlement Patterns: 33% - Burnaby / 20% - Surrey / 18.5% - Vancouver / 11% - Coquitlam
- Emergence of "at risk" multi-barrier low income ethnic enclave



## Refugees / Protected Persons 2003-2006

- 3,219 government-assisted refugees
- 42% (1,346) children/youth under 18 years
  - largest age cohort 6-12 (38%) / 13-18 years (32%)
- 6% (204) children were from single parent families



## Refugee / Protected Persons cont'd

- 60% of clients self assessed their English language skills at "not at all" or "beginners" level



## Public Education Considerations

- 9. Teacher training programs which include core foundational course (s) on ESL learners
- 10. Formation of School District ESL strategic plans



## Future Directions - Trends cont'd

- Projections of over 28,000 children/youth arriving annually
- 2011 – more people will begin leaving the labour market than entering it



## Public Education Considerations

- 11. Recognition of ESL students – grade specific achievement awards
- 12. School district designated budget for Interpreters / translators



## Future Directions - Trends cont'd

- Citizenship and Immigration Canada beginning to recognize newcomer children and youth as a distinct population
- Discussions underway for Provincial Gov't to introduced new funding targeting imm/ref children/youth as part of settlement programming

## Future Directions - Trends

- Harper Gov't announced that 2007 would see the highest numbers of immigrants to Canada in 25 years
- Projected increase to BC as high as over 70,000 annually within the next 5 years



## Future Directions - Trends cont'd

- By 2017, 1 in 3 BC residents will be foreign born in Canada
- By 2030 all net gain in our population growth will come entirely from immigration



# Guidelines for ESL PSA

The ESL PSA is an association of professionals who promote the teaching

and learning of English as a Second Language in BC.

**Grants** of up to \$500 are available for initiatives that further the success of (K-12) ESL/ESD students in the public school system and that promote the professional development of teachers. Such initiatives require the support of your school, your principal, some form of a local representative committee or the district superintendent. Any consideration of grants larger than \$500 would need to be presented to the Annual General Meeting.

### **The Grant**

Applicants may apply for a grant to work on a project, or to attend a professional conference.

Projects may include a broad range of initiatives including, but not limited to:

- ✓ Assessment
- ✓ In-service education
- ✓ Learning resources specifically designed for ESL and ESD
- ✓ Pedagogy
- ✓ Provincial curriculum adaptations for ESL/ESD learners
- ✓ School culture

Considerations will be given only to ESL PSA members or associate members. In the selection process, consideration will be given to regional distribution and diversity of projects.

### **Grant Conditions**

Funding will be on a one-time basis. Unused funds will revert to the ESL PSA. Two letters of reference are required. Please submit these with your grant application.

### **Application Deadlines**

Applications must be submitted by the end of September or by the end of March.

### **Application Forms**

See next two pages (14 & 15).

### **Submit Applications to**

Joy Wild  
4719 Patterson Avenue  
Burnaby, BC V5G 3A5

### **Deadline**

March 30, 2008



### **Limitations**





