



Information regarding the relationship between BC TEAL and TESL Canada

Background

BC TEAL was established in 1967 and is the oldest EAL professional association in Canada. BC TEAL has a provincial office and a regional representative program covering all regions of British Columbia. BC TEAL is governed by a volunteer board of directors and is engaged in a wide range of activities ranging from advocacy to professional development. BC TEAL is entirely member funded.

The TESL Canada Federation was established in 1984 by 5 founding provincial associations, including BC TEAL. TESL Canada has signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with some of the independent provincial associations. These MOAs have outlined the rights and responsibilities of each provincial association and of TESL Canada.

As a federation, TESL Canada holds or has held separate MOAs with the provincial associations. SPEAQ (Quebec) terminated its MOA a number of years ago. TESL Ontario is currently in the process of negotiating its MOA. BC TEAL, as a result of issues with the existing MOA, including legal concerns, gave notice to TESL Canada in December 2014 of its desire to negotiate a new MOA.

Under the terms of the Memorandum of Agreement, BC TEAL had full responsibility for collecting all membership fees for TESL Canada as well as maintaining and providing TESL Canada with member information. In 2014, BC TEAL remitted more than \$15,000 to TESL Canada in membership fees as well as administered all memberships on TESL Canada's behalf.

Legal Concerns

Following a review of the MOA, BC TEAL's legal counsel noted significant flaws in the wording and terms of the MOA. As well, BC TEAL was advised that it should not provide TESL Canada with personal information about members without

written consent, that the associations should have separate membership forms, and that membership fees for the two associations should be collected separately.

Financial Concerns

Under the MOA, BC TEAL had sole responsibility for all administrative costs related to collecting and remitting the TESL Canada membership fees and membership lists.

No Resolution

In December 2014, BC TEAL requested a meeting to negotiate a new MOA with TESL Canada. In March 2015, members of the BC TEAL board met with members of the TESL Canada board, and BC TEAL stated clearly that it would not renew the existing MOA, but was interested in finding a new way to work with TESL Canada.

Following consultation with members, BC TEAL shared a proposal for a new framework of cooperation with TESL Canada in July 2015. TESL Canada rejected the proposal (citing that they would not agree to anything other than joint membership) and TESL Canada did not share a counter proposal for the BC TEAL Board of Directors' consideration.

As a result, there has been no resolution between the respective associations. Therefore, effective September 17, 2015, there is no formal relationship between BC TEAL and TESL Canada.

In Conclusion

BC TEAL will continue to serve its members and support the English language teaching profession provincially and remains open to considering proposals for cooperation between the respective associations.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the relationship between BC TEAL and TESL Canada?

Effective September 17, 2015, there is no formal relationship between BC TEAL and TESL Canada. Prior to this date, BC TEAL had a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) which stipulated the rights and obligations of each organization. The most recently expired agreement was signed in 2012. Under this agreement, BC TEAL was responsible for administering a joint membership application process and for collecting TESL Canada fees from BC TEAL members.

2. Why did BC TEAL want to negotiate a new Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with TESL Canada?

Under the terms of the expired MOA, "either party must provide notice of at least three months of its interest in amending the Memorandum, including the proposed changes". In December 2014, BC TEAL, on advice of legal counsel, sent a letter to TESL Canada requesting a meeting to mutually negotiate a new MOA. Among its proposed changes, BC TEAL indicated it would no longer administer joint membership nor collect fees on behalf of TESL Canada. Many BC TEAL members have indicated in various ways that they were frustrated by the lack of choice in the mandatory joint membership process and wanted the option of membership in TESL Canada, not the requirement.

3. How is TESL Canada funded?

TESL Canada has been primarily funded by the membership fees collected by the provincial associations and remitted to TESL Canada.

4. Is TESL Canada part of the Canadian government?

No. It is not a part of the Canadian government. TESL Canada is a not-for-profit federation that was founded by five provincial associations.

5. Is BC TEAL part of the provincial or federal governments?

No. BC TEAL is an independent not-for-profit association. We receive no government funding.

6. Is TESL Canada part of Languages Canada?

No, it is a separate organization from Languages Canada.

7. Is BC TEAL part of Languages Canada?

No, it is a separate organization from Languages Canada.

8. How will my BC TEAL membership be affected after September 17, 2015?

There is absolutely no change to your BC TEAL membership. If you join or renew your BC TEAL membership after September 17, the fees will have been adjusted to reflect BC TEAL membership fees only (i.e., reduced by \$16 plus GST, which had been collected on behalf of TESL Canada).

9. How will my TESL Canada membership be affected after September 17th 2015?

If you joined or renewed your membership with BC TEAL prior to September 17, 2015, you have a one-year membership with TESL Canada. BC TEAL is working to ensure an orderly transition in terms of individual memberships with TESL Canada.

10. Will I be able to join TESL Canada?

Yes. If you wish to join or renew membership with TESL Canada upon expiry of your current membership, you will need to do so directly through TESL Canada.

11. How much money did BC TEAL remit to TESL Canada on behalf of members?

BC TEAL remitted \$16 (plus GST) annually per member to TESL Canada. In total, BC TEAL remitted approximately \$15,000 to TESL Canada in 2014.

12. How is my certification with TESL Canada affected by the termination of the MOA?

Certification is an issue separate from the MOA. Members who have TESL Canada certification will need to enquire with TESL Canada.

13. What is BC TEAL's relationship with TESOL International?

BC TEAL is an affiliate of TESOL International. BC TEAL pays an annual affiliate fee of \$350 US.

14. What does BC TEAL provides for its members?

BC TEAL benefits include, but are not limited to, the following:

Publications

- BC TEAL Newsletter
- BC TEAL Website www.bctéal.org
- BC TEAL Journal

Education, Professional Development & Networking

- BC TEAL Annual Conference
- BC TEAL Regional Conferences and Events
- BC TEAL Online Job Advertisements
- Networking opportunities through BC TEAL PD events, online communities, volunteering committees, and the BC TEAL Board

Professional Recognition Awards/Activities

- TEAL Charitable Foundation (TCF) Scholarships, Bursaries, and Awards
- BC TEAL Lifetime Contributor Award
- BC TEAL Service Award
- Province-wide EAL Week celebrations & activities

With thanks to TESL Ontario for allowing us to use and adapt a similar document created for their members.

If you have any further questions, please email us at admin@bctéal.org.