**TESL** Ontario

CONNECTION • COMMUNITY • EMPOWERMENT

TEACHERS OF ENGLISH
AS A SECOND LANGUAGE
ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO

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May 1, 2015

His Worship Chairman and CEO Bill Fisch
York Region
17250 Yonge Street
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Your Worship,

We thank you and your community for taking part in our Ontario-wide initiative to raise the awareness of the importance of English language learning opportunities for newcomers to Canada by declaring English as a Second Language (ESL) Week in the Fall of 2014 during the week in which our annual conference took place.

I am writing on behalf of TESL Ontario (Teachers of English as a Second Language) to invite you to again take part in our province-wide initiative to recognize Ontario's ESL community and declare the week of November 8 - 14, 2015 as "English as a Second Language Week". Given the ever growing diversity of the population of Ontario, we hope you will continue to support our efforts and grant us this request. In 2014, 55 municipalities declared ESL Week and we anticipate that this number will continue to grow, helping the ESL community to celebrate and expand its development.

For 42 years, TESL Ontario has held its Annual Conference to provide professional development for educators, administrators, students and volunteers who make it possible for immigrants, refugees, citizens, and visitors to learn the English language. This year, our conference "Expanding Horizons - Drawing on Experience and Knowledge" will be held November 12 & 13, 2015 and we would be honoured if representatives of your Council could participate. If you are interested in participating please contact Kevin Gamble, Office Coordinator, at administration@teslontario.org for further details.

Last year's TESL Ontario Conference attracted more than 800 attendees. Our members travel from across the province and beyond to attend workshops, research symposia, a technology fair and publishers' displays. For many of us, this annual journey to Toronto marks a time when we can share our experiences, expand our skills, and reaffirm the positive contribution that our province makes to diversity.

Through a set of criteria developed to ensure measurable qualifications among ESL professionals, TESL Ontario demands the best of qualifications from our members, as well as the best of training from the TESL training programs accredited by TESL Ontario. As a result, we offer the finest in second language education to our students, who are capable of contributing a wealth of knowledge and experience to Ontario communities.

Attached, please find our suggested wording of the proclamation. If you have any suggestions or comments as to the content of this document, please contact our Executive Director, Renate Tilson, at 416-593-4243 ext. 203.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely,

Sheila Nicholas,
Chair

## SUGGESTED WORDING OF PROCLAMATION

Ontario has been the destination of choice for many immigrants who have added to the diversity of the province by bringing their culture, customs and language, even as they endeavour to acquire the ability to communicate in English.

The community of English as a Second Language learners are represented in all aspects of society. They are students in elementary and secondary schools, universities, colleges, public and private schools, adult education students pursuing literacy and basic skills, participants in workplace-training programs, researchers and subjects, volunteers and workers, employees and business owners, labourers and professionals, neighbours and friends.

The professional organization Teachers of English as a Second Language (TESL) Ontario hosts a conference in Toronto each year consisting of workshops, research symposia and a technology fair to maintain and expand the skills and abilities of its members.

NOW THEREFORE, I, _____ on behalf of _____ of _____ Council, do hereby proclaim November 8th to 14th, 2015 as "English as a Second Language Week" in the _____ of _____.