
DATE: August 12, 2011

REPORT TITLE: **ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE WEEK IN PEEL REGION**

FROM: Janet Menard, Commissioner of Human Services

RECOMMENDATION

That the week of October 23rd to 29th, 2011, be proclaimed English as a Second Language Week in the Regional Municipality of Peel.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- The Week "English as a Second Language" (ESL) was established by the Association of Teachers of English as a Second Language (TESL) Ontario.
- For thirty-nine years, TESL has celebrated the ESL Week along with their Annual Conference.
- The week of October 23rd to 29th, 2011 is "English as a Second Language Week" in the province of Ontario.
- The Peel District School Board and Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board offer English as a second language/English literacy development classes.
- A Proclamation of Week of the English as a second language (ESL) in the Region of Peel is attached as Appendix 1.

DISCUSSION

1. Background

English as a Second Language (ESL) refers to the use or study of English by speakers with different native languages.

Teachers of English as a Second Language Association (TESL) Ontario, established in 1972, is a non-profit organization serving the needs of teachers of English as a Second Language and English Literacy Development. In its commitment to professional development and advocacy, TESL Ontario addresses the range of competencies, experiences and issues that influence the success of immigrants, refugees, visa students, and others who are learning English.

Peel Region is a destination of choice for many immigrants to Ontario. The Peel District School Board and Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board pride themselves on delivering English as a second language/English literacy development classes to help people learn English and/or upgrade their academic and English language skills.

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Teachers of English as a Second Language Association of Ontario (TESL) hopes that the Region of Peel will grant TESL's request and declare the week of October 23rd to 29th, 2011 as "English as a Second Language Week" in Peel Region.

2. English as a Second Language

When people migrate to Canada with limited understanding of English, they often feel isolated, which can have significant adverse effects on the individual as well as our society. TESL Ontario aims to help these new Canadians (immigrants, refugees and international students) to learn English so they can communicate confidently and be employable.

Research studies show that it takes on average five or more years for most English Language learners to become sufficiently proficient in using English for academic purposes. However, the rate of attainment of English language proficiency may vary across different groups and individuals based on their background and access to English language training. Despite this, most English language learners are able to function effectively and confidently in everyday language situations within a year or two.

The ESL program is guiding recent immigrants through the English language, as well as the Canadian culture. People in ESL programs will have an opportunity to know people from all over the world and to share with them experiences and knowledge.

ESL Week was designed to help Canadians understand the critical role of ESL education in our society, and it is also an opportunity to acknowledge the efforts of ESL instructors and teachers and how they positively impact the lives of new Canadians. An ESL instructor assists adult newcomers by teaching language skills, as well as providing support and counselling to ease their transition into Canadian society. Often ESL instructors take on the role of cultural interpreters.

For thirty-eight years, TESL Ontario has held its Annual Conference to provide professional development for educators, administrators, students and volunteers who work with immigrants, refugees, citizens and visitors wishing to improve their ability to communicate in English.

2. ESL in Peel

Citizenship and Immigration Canada reports that the knowledge of the English language is rising among new immigrants in Peel. In 2010, 73.4 per cent knew English, up from 72 per cent in 2009 and 68.6 per cent in 2000.

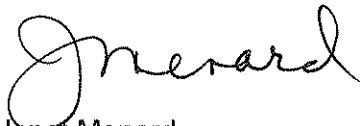
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CONCLUSION

This year the 39th Annual Conference "Language Learning: A Focus on Success" will be held October 27th to 29th, 2011 in Toronto. This will be a great opportunity for TESL to share experiences, expand skills, and reaffirm the positive contribution that the province makes to diversity.

Given the diversity of Peel's population, it is recommended that the Region of Peel declare the week of October 23rd to 29th, 2011 as "English as a Second Language Week" in the Regional Municipality of Peel.



Janet Menard
Commissioner of Human Services

Approved for Submission:



D. Szwarc, Chief Administrative Officer

For further information regarding this report, please contact Stella Danos-Papaconstantinou] at extension 4862 or via email at Stella.Danos-Papaconstantinou@peelregion.ca

Authored By: Louay Eskandar, Human Services

c. Legislative Services

APPENDIX I

Proclamation

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE WEEK

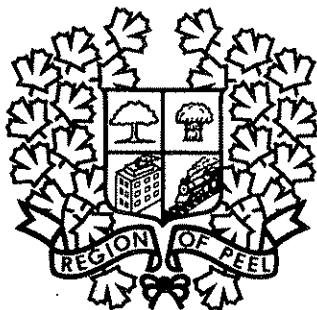
October 23 to 29, 2011

WHEREAS, 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;

AND WHEREAS, 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;

AND WHEREAS, 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;

THEREFORE IT BE RESOLVED, that October 23 to October 29, 2011, be proclaimed "ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE WEEK" in the Regional Municipality of Peel.



Emil Kolb
Regional Chair