

# **Vancouver Island Regional Meeting**

## **October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2016 - Background Documents**

## SETTLEMENT LANGUAGE SUPPORT AT AMSSA

AMSSA supports settlement language providers in three different ways:

1. Services
2. Representation
3. Resources

### SERVICES

AMSSA supports LINC providers at the administrative level by providing email and phone support for operational issues, connects administrators with appropriate resources, and compiles contact information for LINC providers across the province.

AMSSA organizes webinars with a specific language focus. The upcoming November webinar will be about employment language training for lower levels.

AMSSA also co-organizes integrated online events, which address both settlement and language related topics under one theme. These events include the Virtual Learning Exchange, which is a series of webinars aimed at a variety of settlement and language topics, and E-symposia, a 2-hour, interactive, online learning events on key sector issues with a panel of expert speakers.

AMSSA organizes in-person events such as the language regional meetings that are being held the day after each settlement regional meeting. These meetings are an opportunity for LINC providers to meet and discuss operational issues and the needs of the programs in each region. AMSSA also convenes the Settlement Language Working Group (SLWG), which is made up of ten members who represent a variety of stakeholder interests in the language sector, including BC TEAL, school districts, colleges, the assessment centres, and four representatives for the IRCC regions.

AMSSA communicates with other key language stakeholders such as the province, IRCC (Immigration, Refugees & Citizenship Canada), CMAS (Childminding, Monitoring, Advisory & Support), Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks (CCLB), LINC Home Study, and other programs that are associated with LINC programming to keep updated on current issues and trends in the sector.

### REPRESENTATION

AMSSA represents settlement language interests at municipal, regional, provincial, and national levels. Municipally, AMSSA maintains membership in the Vancouver Immigration Partnership as both settlement and language representatives. Regionally, AMSSA chairs the Settlement Language Working Group (SLWG) and convenes meetings four times a year to discuss overarching priorities and issues in the IRCC regions and across the province. Nationally, AMSSA sits on the National Language Advisory Body (NLAB), a pan-Canadian group of language representatives who meet to discuss priorities and issues that concern federally funded language programming across the country. Finally, AMSSA works closely with both the provincial and federal governments as a conduit of information between the BC language providers and their funders.

## RESOURCES

AMSSA houses resources to better support settlement language administrators, staff, and instructors in delivering their programs. Online resources for settlement language providers include:

- **LINC Exit & Progress Tests:** AMSSA houses the LINC Exit and Progress Tests on our Moodle site. This site is secure and users need to request permission to access this resource. If you are a LINC provider and need access to the tests, please contact Saeedeh Foghani at [sfoghani@amssa.org](mailto:sfoghani@amssa.org).
- **Settlement Net Resources:** AMSSA provides language specific resources in the weekly Set Net updates. These resources include newsletters, program updates, instructional resources, research, and relevant news articles to help settlement language providers keep up to date with the sector.
- **Language Resource Page:** AMSSA has developed a Language Resource Page available on the AMSSA website: <http://www.amssa.org/language/>. This page includes resources on a broad range of language specific topics aimed at administrators, staff, and instructors in the settlement language field. The resource page is divided into two sections, one section is for administrators and staff, and the other section is for language instructors. In the Administrators and Staff section, LINC program providers can find resources for waitlist management, operational guidelines, and program development. There is also a section for childminding, with links to helpful resources for both managers and staff. In the Instructors section, LINC instructors can find background information, best practices, and pre-made lessons on specific topics related to settlement language. These resources are curated especially to help with special issues that come up in the LINC classroom.

If you have any language-related questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact us!

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## Settlement Language Working Group – Planning Consultations

The Settlement Language Working Group is made up of ten members that represent key stakeholders in settlement language programming for the province. The three main purposes of the group are to represent the interests of language providers in BC, inform AMSSA about current issues in the settlement language sector, and to take on initiatives that support language providers in the administration of LINC programming. AMSSA uses the group as an important communication channel between language providers, government, and key stakeholders both provincially and federally.

The Settlement Language Working Group will be holding a strategic planning session on November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2016 to discuss its function and purpose in representing the settlement language sector in BC over the next three years. To aide this session, it is important that input is received from language providers in every region to ensure that the strategic plan is aligned with the needs of the sector.

The questions below are to be used as a guide to stimulate discussion. AMSSA staff or group volunteers will take notes on your discussions, and the notes will be used to inform the Settlement Language Working Group in terms of strategic planning for the next three years.

### Guiding Questions

- 1) **Function:** How can the Settlement Language Working Group best represent interests of language providers? What are some key actions that the group can take to provide representation and support both provincially and nationally over the next three years?  
*For example: policy initiatives, position papers, committees, consultations*
  
- 2) **Representation:** The Settlement Language Working Group is made up of ten members who represent key stakeholders in the settlement language sector of BC. Looking at the areas of representation below, do you feel these areas adequately reflect the key aspects of the sector? Are there any other areas that are in need of representation?

Representatives for each of the following:

BCTEAL      PBLA      Colleges      School Districts      Assessment Centres

Four regional representatives from:

Interior/North      Vancouver Island      Metro Vancouver      Fraser Valley

3) **Membership:** How should membership of the Settlement Language Working Group be determined to ensure that representation is equitable and reflective of the sector?  
For example, should membership be determined by:

- a) Expressions of Interests from potential members and a selection committee?
- b) Nominations and Elections?
- c) Other processes? (please explain)

4) **Communication:** The members of the Settlement Language Working Group represent the interests of language providers in BC. What would be the preferred method of communication between:

- a. Regional representatives and the language providers they represent
- b. Settlement Language Working Group and language providers in BC

How often should communication be expected from regional representatives?  
*For example, monthly, quarterly, once a year? On a need-to-need basis?*

5) **Expectations:** As members of the Settlement Language Working Group represent your interests, what are your expectations of the members of the group in terms of:

- a) Time commitment
- b) Communication
- c) Consultation

## **PBLA – Extended Conversation**

### **CCLB Update:**

With funding from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (MCI) Ontario, CCLB is providing support to administrators and instructors as Portfolio Based Language Assessment (PBLA) continues to expand across Canada.

The second and third IRCC cohorts of certified PBLA Lead Instructors with approximately 145 Lead Instructors from British Columbia, Ontario and Manitoba are working closely with classroom instructors supporting the use of task-based planning focused PBLA. Cohort four with approximately 100 participants from Ontario, the West Coast and a few representatives from the Atlantic region, finalized their portfolio submissions and received certification over the summer months.

Face-to-face PBLA planning implementation meetings for the new PBLA Lead Instructors from IRCC will be held in September in Ontario, BC and online.

The six-week online course “Introduction to PBLA for new Classroom Teachers” will be offered from October 3 to November 13 and from October 24 to December 4, 2016.

### **Guiding Questions**

With the implementation of PBLA underway across the province, a number of challenges have been identified that need to be addressed. The guiding questions below have been provided to stimulate discussion on the key challenges for LINC providers on Vancouver Island.

- 1) **Multi-Level Classes:** What is the make-up of the multi-level classes? How does this present challenges in implementing PBLA?
- 2) **Induction of new teachers:** What strategies have you implemented with introducing new teachers to PBLA?
- 3) **Full Implementation of PBLA:** What challenges do you see with the full implementation of PBLA?
- 4) **Additional Challenges:** Are there any other challenges that come to mind that you'd like to discuss?
- 5) **Successes:** What has been working so far at your organization? Do you have any success stories you'd like to share?