

PATH TO
| **GREATNESS**

ANNUAL REPORT
April 2017 - March 2018



Mission

- To provide flexible and accessible services that enable newcomers to succeed and reach their full potential.
- To provide a comprehensive online environment that brings resources, people and technology together to address newcomers' unique needs for settlement and integration into the workplace and community.



Live & Learn is newcomers' online resource for reliable settlement information and flexible language learning options in Manitoba.

Join us today to access:

- Information on living in Manitoba, employment, education and more
- One-on-one career and settlement guidance
- Flexible language instruction from ESL experts
- Open resources on language learning

livelearn.ca



Message from the Chair

I would like to begin by acknowledging that English Online Inc. is located on Treaty 1 territory, and that the land on which we serve new settlers and meet for this AGM is the traditional territory of Anishinaabeg, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, and Dene Peoples, and the homeland of the Métis Nation. I want to express my eternal gratitude for the opportunity to live and learn on their territory.

Powered by a passionate and devoted team, English Online Inc. has now been serving new settlers in Canada for 9 years. Our learners have been pre-arrivals trying to learn as much as they could about their future home and landed immigrants trying to establish new pathways on this land. It's been an incredible, inspiring, and rewarding job to build relationships and assist them and their families in discovering their new homeland. This is a job that makes a difference in someone's life every day!

A cornerstone for the past 9 years has been Jo-Anne Schick who, in her roles as project officer and Chair of the Board, has stood by English Online through ebbs and flows and highs and lows of sector and organizational changes. She has supported the organization tirelessly and with an unshaken belief in its importance for the newcomer community of Manitoba. This year, although Jo-Anne stepped down from her role as Chair, she will continue her service as a member of the Board. We look forward to her continued mentorship and involvement on the Board for many years to come.

This year, the Board of Directors welcomed Cathy Dowd and Stephanie Olson who volunteered to provide direction and guidance to the organization. Both bring a wealth of knowledge and experience in working with new settlers in Manitoba. I extend my appreciation for their time and willingness to help guide English Online into the future.

English Online is small but mighty, and we will continue our mission to create opportunities to connect newcomers, to help them learn new language skills, and to help them build pathways to live a life of respect and fulfillment in Canada.

Iwona Gniadek
Chair, Board of Directors



Message from the Executive Director

Fiscal year, April 2017 to March 2018, we at English Online continued our purposeful journey 'in providing flexible and accessible services that enable newcomers to succeed and reach their full potential in Manitoba.' This approach enabled and supported our newcomer clients in meeting their personal goals and aspirations; resulting in a 16% increase in new clients over the previous year. Our Outreach team was instrumental in this achievement which displayed a true reflection of English Online's responsiveness and effectiveness in providing personalized services for our clients, ultimately increasing their chances for success. Also last year we continued to work closely and partner up with other service providing organizations. These synergies increased the awareness of our programs we offer with newcomers to Manitoba.



During the year we focused on "Good to Great" (Jim Collins, 2001) to understand and develop a strategy that will allow us to be: the best in the world at what we do, understanding what drives our economic engine and what we are passionate about. These three dimensions made us realize our journey requires consistent efforts, careful use of technology and careful use of decision making necessary to be consistent, focused and patient to obtain positive results. Steady success needs dedicated, motivated, skilled and consistent team members. This describes the English Online team as we continue to work seriously towards our targets.

Live and Learn continues to 'provide a comprehensive online environment that brings resources, people and technology together to address newcomers' unique needs for settlement and integration into the workplace and community.' It is through our activities, events and articles that support these successes when meaningful dialogue is exchanged in an online environment. The next series of pages showcase some of our team's highlights and successes in these areas.

Each year brings with it some aspects of change. It's through these changes that we must assist clients to address and overcome any obstacles in their way. The support shown by our major funder, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, has provided us with the opportunity to embrace those challenges. I personally want to thank our funder, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, our board, our volunteers, and our dedicated team members who continually display their professionalism, commitment, enthusiasm and caring for the organization and our clients. I am immensely proud of the work they perform on a daily basis. I am also confident, that together, we will continue to grow and develop to better serve our newcomer clients, both immigrants and refugees as we continue on the 'Path to Greatness'!

This upcoming year is English Online's 10th anniversary which brings with it additional opportunities and challenges that we must embrace as we move forward. It is through these initiatives that will gain us the needed momentum to deliver client solutions and successes in the coming years!

Dan Sylvester
Executive Director

LIVE Statistics

- 78 Settlement articles
- 6 Newcomer stories
- 10 Language Tips of the week videos
- 42 Articles for CLB 3-4



Len Loza
writer/curator

In the past year, Live articles moved beyond basic information for newcomers to encompass “next-level needs”. More articles were written on topics like gender diversity, Canadian social norms, and the journey to Citizenship. Since career-related articles continued to be popular, we also began to feature interviews with professionals who successfully underwent professional qualifications recognition in our employment theme. We also introduced Everyday Conversations which is an additional resource at the end of selected articles to help our learners practise their conversational skills. We continued to partner with Manitoban agencies and Immigrant-serving organizations such as the Winnipeg Transit, Rainbow Resource Centre, Neighbourhood Immigrant Settlement Workers (NISWs), Immigrant Centre’s PAC and others for article development and the dissemination of programs, services, job postings and events on social media. We worked on building our social media presence by promoting our articles, sharing news and events, developing video promotions and ads primarily on Facebook and Twitter.



Blaine Roberts
e-facilitator

My weekly activities include developing and delivering workshops based on settlement themes, moderating conversational classes and developing and delivering grammar classes called “Lunch and Learn”. I also have 16 LINC Home Students, which I assist using the LINC Home Study website, various English Online resources, as well as various other internet resources. Some of my most pleasing successes over the past year have been to help several students graduate to higher CLB levels. I have also seen regular attendance in the workshops and have heard many comments indicating that the information presented was very helpful to them in their daily lives. The greatest success, though, that I have witnessed, is the friendships formed among our learners. Learners are often ready and excited to share experiences with newer learners at English Online. This interaction is so

pleasing to me because often the learner sharing information was, just a short time ago, a new learner with us, unsure about this thing called “English Online.”

Qualifications Recognition interviews:

1. **Filipino Engineers and Geoscientists in Manitoba** – Interview with Ray Sator, PEng.
2. **Nursing is a long term investment** – Interview with Linda Olson, RN
3. **It will take sacrifice but it is worth it!** – Interview with Herbert Herrera, CPA, CGA
4. **Teaching is about inspiring and encouraging people** – Interview with Tarek Aziz, Educator
5. **A medlab’s journey to certification** – Interview with Rhea Bugarin, MLT



The fiscal year of 2017/2018 is marked by introduction of 2 new types of classes at English Online – Language Circles and Lunch & Learns, which are reported under community connections. These classes offer an informal language training on a wide range of topics from grammar reviews to pronunciation practice. It was a very rewarding experience of developing and teaching these lessons. We challenged different listening and speaking, and reading and writing activities with our learners in an online environment. Many of them came to love the new format as a valuable addition to their group learning options along with existing coffee chats and drop-in workshops on settlement themes.

Yuliana Bagan
e-facilitator



Pei Jean Toews
Learner Registration Assistant

There were two major changes in the registration process in the last fiscal year. One is the introduction of the online registration system. The transition to this system was successful and we also saw a significant increase in registration numbers. There were also changes in the WELARC database. Now we receive referrals, update clients’ registration stats, and communicate with other organizations via the database. It made the process of organizing and following-up of referrals clearer. These new databases will lessen turn-around time and increase efficiency in the process of servicing and supporting our clients. Another highlight last fiscal year was the increase of LINC Home Study (LHS) seats from 30 to 50. This was due to the spike in applications. Waitlisted clients, especially in the regions (as well as stay-at home moms with their young children) were given an opportunity to enroll in the program.

LEARN Statistics

1,066 Learners serviced

e-Volunteers:

665 Hours of settlement & language support

84 Unique learners supported

7

Multi-week sessions delivered

289

Drop-in sessions facilitated

20

Canadian idioms activities developed

11

Settlement Workshops developed

74

LINC Home Study students serviced

12

Monthly Learning Plans shared

Live

5,651

total page visits to settlement topics by logged-in users

Most Popular Articles

1. 5 Steps to an engaging presentation (Language Training)
2. Canadian Citizenship (About Canada)
3. 5 Best reasons to learn English online (Language Training)
4. Self-Assessment: your first step to success (Employment)
5. Your communication skills and the CLB (Language Training)

1,054

total quiz attempts by logged-in users

Learn

15,699

total page visits to activities by logged-in users

Most Popular Activities

1. Canadian Idioms (Improving English)
2. Beginner Exercises (Employment)
3. iEnglish (Learning Strategies)
4. Intermediate Exercises (Employment)
5. Language Explorer (Language Training)

Most Popular Content (across Canada)

Activities

1. Canadian Idioms (Improving English)
2. iEnglish (Learning Strategies)
3. Language Explorer (Improving English)

Articles

1. Canadian cultural values and beliefs (About Canada)
2. Canada's three levels of government (About Canada)
3. Top 10 Manitoba facts (Living in Manitoba)



Natalia Aleko
Lead, Settlement and Teacher Services

The past fiscal year was very busy for us, as we worked hard to ensure our programs and services meet the needs of newcomers to Manitoba. We added new classes, developed new workshops and self-study content, updated the Getting Started Course, created 78 new settlement articles and adapted 42 articles for learners with lower language skills. We also interviewed internationally trained professionals who have successfully undergone Qualification recognition process and secured a job in their field to pursue their career in Manitoba. The purpose of the interviews was to encourage other newcomers who are aspiring to practice their regulated professions in Manitoba.

Our successful outreach efforts in spring and summer of 2017 brought many new learners to English Online, keeping EO staff very busy. By the end of August, we had surpassed the anticipated number of clients per year, servicing 583 clients. Taking into consideration higher than expected number of clients, IRCC allowed us to extend 2 EO staff positions to full-time, secure 50 spots in LHS program and recruit 3 new part-time LHS instructors.

In March 2018, EO organized an in-house training session for the staff members on "Sexuality, Diversity and Inclusion for Service Providers" delivered by SERC MB. The goals of the training were to raise awareness of the complexities of sexuality and how it is connected to our work with diverse clients, as well as highlight local community resources to support appropriate referrals.



Tatiana Frederickson
e-Volunteer Coordinator

The e-Volunteer Program kept on growing in the past year. We paid more attention to volunteer retention and client satisfaction of the program. And the deliverables were high, exceeding the expected numbers.

The e-Volunteer community made many efforts to promote the program within their organizations, groups and classrooms. Some of the volunteers had 2 and even 3 learners at the same time. Some volunteers mentored two family members, supporting them with English language training and settlement resources. One of the successes for this past year was our clients' constant interest to continue the program beyond the 10 hour limit. In many cases we did help our clients and matched them multiple times. Another important thing to mention is our volunteers' desire for professional development and for joining our team as permanent employees. Two of our e-Tutors became English Online's instructors.

They have contributed to our presentations, materials development, mentoring less experienced volunteers and providing ongoing support to our learners. Some volunteers brought their friends and family members onboard. So we are proud to be a successful online e-Volunteer Family now.

Teaching with Technology Webinars:

- TWT Webinar: Basic Digital Skills for Employment: Tools and Tips
- TWT Webinar: Preparing Your Learners for Language Proficiency Tests
- TWT Webinar: Using Online Learning Games

Learners' Feedback



"I like the Coffee Chats because everything I learned there is useful. I also practice my speaking and listening skills, learn grammar, and hear about the experiences of other newcomers in Manitoba. I was able to speak with other newcomer Manitobans for the first time." *Narynbek T.*

"EO is helping me improve my grammar, reading, and practicing my writing. I am learning where I'm supposed to put a comma, the subject-verb agreement, plural form, all these things. Now I'm good," *Rediat M.*

"Even if I'm speaking English every day at my workplace, I only use professional language. I want to learn diverse expressions. When I joined the Coffee Chats, I was able to practice conversational English." *Grace Y.*



"I think learning with English Online is helping me. I would recommend it for people who can't go outside and can't find the time to study. It's perfect for people who have self-discipline who want to sit and learn." *Jenny H.*



"I found the right combination in studying LINC with Blaine and attending Coffee Chats with Yuliana. With Blaine, it is one-on-one learning. It really amazes me that he understands every newcomer's accent. He always manages to encourage each student

by recognizing their efforts, motivating us to work harder and increase participation. I also attend group chats. I always ask Yuliana about grammar rules. She is an expert at that. She also tells us about other resources and programs, like Lunch & Learn, that could improve our grammar. She is so helpful." *Firouzeh A.*

"My eFacilitator was Blaine. Blaine is a extraordinary teacher, patient, helpful, always smiling, intelligent person with sense of humor. He has excellent communication skills. From my point of view he is very good teacher. I recommend you should have lessons with him. I spent a wonderful time with him. After his classes i feel really more confident. Blaine's classes were a great help in my preparation for live in Canada.

Another great thing about the virtual cofee chats is Blaine's positive and encouraging influence. He really cares about his students and gets to know them not as clients, but as people. His classes were both interesting and extremely helpful for me" *Natalia D.*

e-Volunteer Program Learners' Feedback:

"We really liked the classes. We greatly expanded our vocabulary, learned new grammatical rules, learned a lot of new and interesting things about English, about life in Canada. She is not only a wonderful and knowledgeable teacher, but she is able to interest and competently teach the material. Ali has all the qualities of an excellent teacher- a perfect knowledge of the subject, the ability to find the right approach to the students, a lot of patience and finally- she's just a wonderful person. If you want the truth of a good teacher then, believe us, it's ALI!" *Vitalii P. and Iryna P.*

I just done my first summer session online with Olga(my teacher).It was awesome and very helpful for me.I learned so much on that .I've not only increased my knowledge from the books or grammars this session but also it's from the different cultures that we all shared in every lessons.I enjoyed every single time study with Olga.She is very kind,friendly and especially really on time.I'm so sorry for giving you very late feedback because of my late summer vacation I've just gone to. Thank you so much for your time and I hope to have more online classes this September." *Kim N.*

"My teacher Pam always was friendly, tried to understand and help me. I asked a lot of questions and she answered, if it needed Pam used simple words for help me to understand topic or words. I recommend Pam as a nice, professional and considerate teacher. " *Olena K.*

"I have studied English with Pam since November 2016 via Skype. Pam was my tutor. I would like to write some words about Pam. Her lessons improved my English skills. I wasn't afraid of making mistakes because she didn't criticize me for them. I think I am very lucky to had her as my teacher of English. I have learnt new words, idioms and sentences use in Canada. I have known lots of about life style in Canada and education. Pam usually says that English is very important to study because it is key to success I also think it is necessary to learn, that's why I work hard and do my best. I would recommend everybody who want learn English call to Pam." *Natalia D.*

Open House and EAL Group Tours

English Online opened its doors to meet interested learners and educators on November 21, 2017, 12 noon to 2 pm at Suite 610-294 Portage Ave. Visitors were free to observe, ask questions and participate in a 30-minute workshop on Digital Footprint Management Do's and Don't's as well as a raffle draw at the end of the day. EAL Open House Tours were also arranged for EAL Teachers/Settlement workers and their students.



Dan Sylvester awards the e-Learning package to the winner of the Open House raffle draw.



Yuliana is giving an overview of livelearn.ca website and explaining learning options to new learners.

Celebrating a decade of innovation and connection

Right from the start, English Online was the little organization that could. Starting with a staff of one, it has grown into an online community, one that is nurtured by a small group of passionate individuals. Ours is a story of riding change to create opportunities and facing challenges with creative innovation. But mostly, it is about building human connection – leveraging technology to help make real and tangible impact on newcomers' lives.

English Online (EO) was created out of a need for more flexible EAL/ESL learning options. With immigration rising in 2006, Manitoba's Labour and Immigration saw online education as the means to address learning challenges for rural Manitobans, as well as for those who could not take advantage of existing programs due to access barriers. Overseen by a volunteer Board of Directors and with Executive Director Briar Jamieson at the helm, EO started with a few e-learning modules for self-directed learning in 2008 and began developing its Online Learning Platform and receiving learners in 2009.

With the market ripe for online learning, EO reached a landmark with 1,928 registered learners serviced by only four staff members in 2011. The following year, EO had an average of 350 registered learners a month. Within seven years, it grew from a one-person organization to a staff of nine full-time employees, two part-time ESL instructors and more than 100 volunteers. Today, EO has an average of 1000 learners per year referred by centres in Winnipeg, Brandon, Steinbach and pre-arrival services.

Pioneering online learning in MB

As the province's first and only online learning option for newcomers, EO pioneered many firsts. From the very start, it advocated self-directed learning where learners take charge of their own learning needs, goals and learning strategies. In this way, newcomers progress on their own pace supported by EO's online learning resources. Early on, the organization also strove to build a learning community. Motivated by a shared passion for newcomer success, EO brought together EAL/ESL instructors, integration experts, and settlement professionals on various platforms to share information and expertise. Part of this was pushing for Open Educational Resources (OER) which made resources freely available to the community for use, reuse and remix. This nurtured community connection, enriched resources available for learners, and pushed the continuous improvement of settlement services in the province.

2010-2014 were banner years for the organization. EO developed the Electronic Collaborative Language

Portfolio Assessment (e-CLPA, the first of its kind in Canada) which provided learners, instructors and service organizations a means to access and deliver courses. EO also customized an Online Learning Platform for English for Specific Purposes learners of other service provider organizations including the Manitoba Nurses Union and the University of Winnipeg. It spearheaded the Teacher Exchange Network (TEN), connecting EAL professionals through the shared knowledge in personal learning networks and environments. Together with Iwona Gniadek (Lead of Learner Services) and Natalia Aleko (Lead of Teacher Services), Briar Jamieson developed innovative learning curricula that enhanced language learning and teaching through practical, real-world applications. A shining example of this was its Summer EAL Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) which received recognition from the British Council in 2013. The following year, EO launched REALIZE! Forum, the first national EAL/ESL online conference. This allowed the EAL/ESL community as well as settlement and integration professionals to discuss current trends, issues, and best practices to improve and modernize settlement language training.

In 2012, EO launched its e-Volunteer Program which provided more learning options to newcomers as well as volunteers. It offered a one-on-one learning opportunity with qualified Canadian mentors to address newcomers' specific concerns regarding EAL, career and settlement. In turn, volunteers acquire online teaching experience and training through regular Teaching with Technology webinars to continually improve their proficiency in digital literacy, educational technology and data management. Today, the e-Volunteer program services 50+ Manitoba-based learners yearly with an active volunteer base of 50+ professionals from all over Canada per year.

Transitioning and expanding

The years 2014 to 2016 marked many transitions for EO. As it bid goodbye to its old Online Learning Platform, EO developed and launched its new website Live & Learn on March, 2015. As the centralized hub for its services, Live & Learn was designed as an online

community for new Manitobans. Aside from English language learning options and resources, the site featured settlement articles touching on newcomers' most pressing settlement concerns. This expanded the organization's operations to include settlement themes as a base for language learning activities and programs.

Leadership also changed in 2015. Briar Jamieson relinquished her post as Executive Director and handed the reins to Dan Sylvester, a leadership management expert. Dan continued building upon the foundation that Briar worked upon to establish EO as the province's foremost online learning network.

In 2016, EO introduced its Online Registration System on Live & Learn. This was a boon especially to regional learners as they can now complete their registration online. "This development is a big step from our old registration process where we needed to manually register learners. The system now lets them easily fill out the form and upload the necessary documents to register for EO services or LINC Home Study," said Pei-Jean Toews EO's Registration Assistant. "Today, the number of our active learners in the system has grown to almost 3,000," Pei-Jean added.

Your trusted resource in the EAL community

On its 10th year, EO takes the opportunity to look back on its achievements as well as challenges to inspire the organization to move forward. As our former Chair of the Board (and current member of the Board) Jo-Anne Schick shared:

"While reviewing some e-mails that I had saved from the earliest days of EO, this note from then Executive Director, Briar Jamieson, caught my eye: "My New Year's wish is to position English Online as a trusted resource in the EAL community."

"As I look back over my ten years of involvement with this organization, from interviewing its first director to serving as Chair of the Board, it occurs to me that this wish has come true! EO has weathered changes in staff, alterations in its core vision, differences in funding, and has continued to grow and thrive because of this- EO has in fact become a key component in the delivery of trusted settlement and English language services for newcomers to the province of Manitoba.

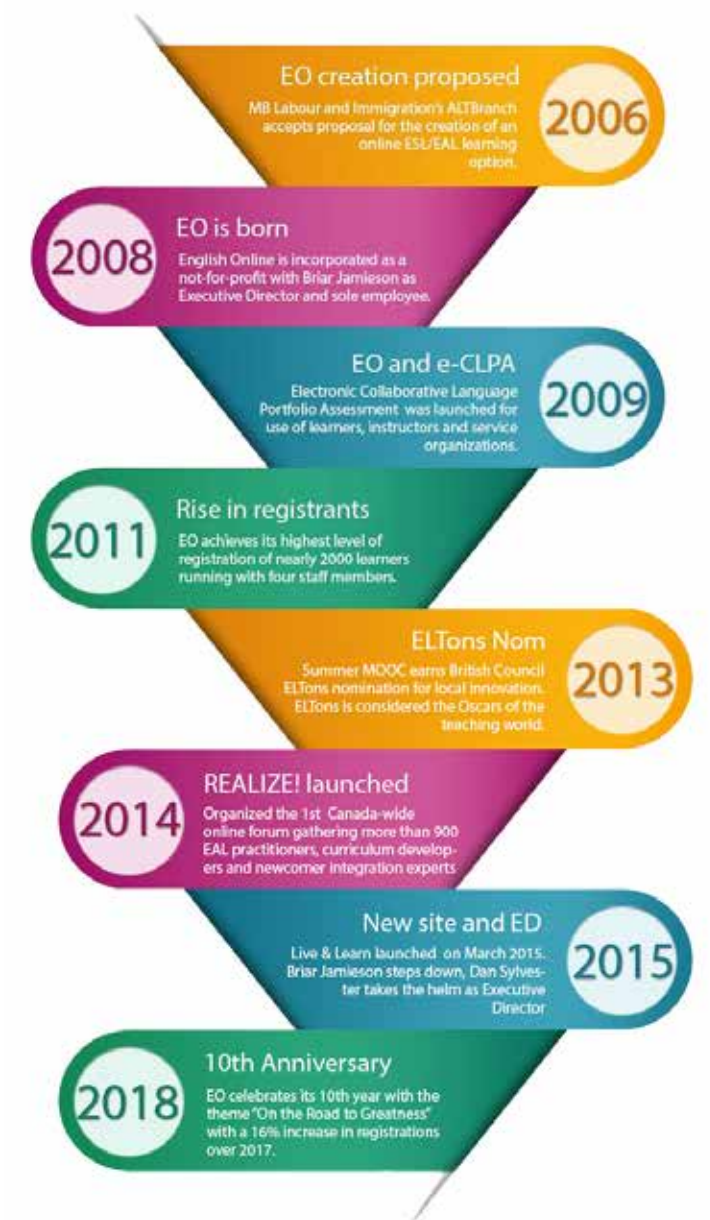
"My hope for the next ten years is that EO will continue to adapt to ongoing transformations in the areas of newcomer needs, technology and customer service so that the organization may always hold an esteemed place among the EAL service providers in Manitoba and beyond!"

And this is precisely the path that EO has envisioned to take in the coming years. With our pioneering spirit and a decade of experience

spurring us on, we will continue to be MB's trusted resource to help improve more lives and build lasting relationships. As EO's Executive Director puts it: "We look forward to 10 more exciting years in being part of the solution to our newcomers', immigrants' and refugees' successful transition into life in Manitoba."

Our most profound gratitude goes to our funders, partners, supporters, and most especially our learning community for trusting us and making us part of their settlement journey!

ENGLISH ONLINE MILESTONES



Thank You!

Volunteers

Board Members:

Iwona Gniadek
Mike Livingstone
Greg Reader
Cathy Dowd
Marcela Mangarelli
Stephanie Olson
Jo-Anne Schick

Volunteer e-Tutors:

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Jill Hart
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