

Availability of Settlement Language Classes for Stage 1 (Literacy-CLB 4) Canadian Citizens and Temporary Residents

Whereas: Manitoba has an established tradition of welcoming and supporting newcomers in the process of settling and integrating into local communities and labour markets. Newcomers bring a variety of skills and experiences that benefit our economy, enrich our communities, and make Manitoba a stronger and more vibrant place to live. Currently, immigration status-based federal funding and unevenly distributed provincial funding mean that many of Manitoba's newcomers at Stage 1 (Literacy-CLB 4) are unable to access much needed language services.

Whereas: Current EAL funding supports Permanent Residents (IRCC) and some Stage 2 (CLB 5-8) labour market-related EAL (MB). This leaves a significant service gap for Stage 1 (Literacy-CLB 4) Temporary Residents on a pathway to permanent residency, naturalized Canadians, returning Canadians, and Refugee Claimants.

Whereas: Employers recruiting internationally through MPNP frequently bring internationally skilled workers to Manitoba on a Temporary Work Permit, an immigration status which is typically sustained for 1-3 years until Permanent Residency is acquired. During this time, Stage 1 Temporary Workers whether primary applicants or spouses on an open permit, are ineligible for existing funded language programs.

Whereas: Returning Canadians, for example, Low German Mennonites, arrive in Manitoba ineligible for existing language programs although they may present similar EAL learning needs to Permanent Residents. Non-Canadian family members of returning Canadians often arrive with visitor visas and are similarly ineligible for funded EAL programs. This negatively impacts the ability of Returning Canadians to fully integrate into Canadian society and attach to the labour market.

Be it resolved that: MANSO urges the Province of Manitoba to provide comprehensive and sustainable funding for Stage 1 language training for non-IRCC clients based solely on client needs and not on immigration status.

Be it resolved that: MANSO urges IRCC and the Province of Manitoba to continue efforts toward productive collaboration of language programming, including co-funding existing programs and classes to provide needs-based language services that support all Manitobans, regardless of immigration status.

Contact Steve Reynolds, (ED, Regional Connections) if you have questions or suggestions regarding this resolution: steve@regionalconnections.ca