

## CHANGING TERMINOLOGY FROM ESL TO EAL

Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth is implementing a change from the term English as a Second Language (ESL) programming to **English as an Additional Language** (EAL) programming.

The change in terminology is appropriate as EAL is a more inclusive and encompassing term that suggests that learners of English may already speak a number of languages and dialects, of which English may be but one more. Ignoring the range of languages and dialects a person may already speak suggests that the other languages are not important.

In addition, the change in term reflects an orientation to language learning that values linguistic diversity and encourages bilingualism and multilingualism. The learning of English should be an additive process that expands a student's linguistic repertoire.

This more inclusive position is being adopted in an increasing number of contexts in Canada and abroad. It is more common to see the term EAL used in the professional literature and by various programs or agencies. In Manitoba, the Adult Language Training Branch (the provincial governmental department responsible for EAL/ESL in the adult and post-secondary system) has adopted the term EAL. Elsewhere in Canada, EAL has been the term of choice in BC (BC TEAL) for a number of years.

Within Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, both terms (ESL and EAL) may be used interchangeably for a period of time. It will require time to update print and online documents and publications, and explain the terminology change to all stakeholders. Using the term EAL encourages a more additive approach to teaching English to speakers of other languages and respects the range of experience, knowledge and skill that immigrants bring to the Province.