



Proposed Governance Restructuring

30 January 2015

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Introduction

Background

In 2012, TESOL International Association began a mid-level governance review. A task force established by the Board set out to examine the systems, structures, processes, and culture of the Association. The goal was to help create a governing system that would foster a culture of knowledge, trust, nimbleness, and transparency with efficient, effective, and strategic decision-making that would be responsive to the evolving needs of the members and the profession. In so doing, members would have input in the governing process and member groups would add value to the organization.

Over the course of two years, the Governance Review Task Force (GRTF) collected and analyzed data from the Association's governing documents, member group reports, a survey of leaders (including chairs of interest sections and standing committees), and focus groups of Board members and staff. Task force members also conducted research on the governance structures of other educational associations. The GRTF presented its report (Appendix A) at several venues during the March 2014 TESOL Convention. It was posted on the TESOL website as well and feedback was solicited.

The report's findings showed that the Association is spread thin and fragmented, and its structures and processes have become complex and bureaucratic. Like many associations, TESOL has tended to add to its structure (see Figure 1) rather than redefine the work to be accomplished, or sunset a group once a task has been completed. Overall, the governance culture has been focused more on structures and processes rather than strategies and outcomes. Instead of having the strategic direction drive the work of the Association, the work has often been dictated by the governance and bureaucracy. The mandates of many entities have been vaguely or poorly defined and not strategically aligned. Various entities within the Association have been formed and defined their own tasks within a very broad charge. Much of the valuable time of the volunteers has been spent performing administrative tasks, getting organized, orienting new members, and writing reports. Members, who are eager to volunteer, be accountable, and to contribute meaningfully to the work of the Association, do not always feel recognized for their efforts. The Association lacks both a comprehensive volunteer management process and a coherent leadership pipeline. Information flow among the member groups, Board, and staff has often been problematic, interfering with the Association's ability to learn about and respond to significant shifts in the international field of English language education.

The GRTF report offered some options and alternatives for addressing these issues, and the membership was asked to weigh in with comments and recommendations. Understanding that any re-alignment of governance should be focused on a clear articulation of the strategic direction of the Association, and given the complexity of the current organization, the Board engaged an expert consultant to facilitate dialogue and deliberation about governance and also a new strategic plan (Appendix B) at their October 2014 meeting. The alternatives proposed by the GRTF and member feedback were reviewed and discussed with the aim of revising the governance model to align with and support the strategic direction of the Association.

Overview

This document presents a broad outline of the proposed new governance model (see Figure 2). The new model reflects the principles of modern association management in which the membership, leadership, and staff collaborate as partners. It remains heavily dependent on members to help the Association achieve its goals, but is driven by the strategic direction articulated in the strategic plan. The model was designed to offer volunteer opportunities to members, facilitate input and other communication, and support the strategic plan.

Guided by the *Vision and Principle of Effective Governance* developed by the GRTF (Appendix C), the new model attempts to provide clearer lines of accountability, distinct roles, and responsibilities. Within broad definitions, there is consistency of purpose, tenure, and membership involvement among Standing Committees, Advisory Councils, Task Forces, and Interest Sections. This strategic alignment should allow maximum flexibility to meet the demands and challenges facing international voluntary organizations like TESOL International Association.

The new model attempts to address some of the key GRTF findings as follows:

1. *The Association is spread thin and fragmented, and its structure and processes have become complex and bureaucratic without clarity of purpose or function.*

The creation of many of the entities within the Association was intended to build connections, provide opportunities for engagement, and to give more of a voice to members. However this proliferation of entities has led to the fragmentation of the Association, and in many cases, has resulted in creating greater distance between members, leaders, and groups. Moreover, the finite resources of the Association are stretched in order to support a broad array of entities, each with its own activities and goals.

The new model aims to reduce the bureaucracy that has proliferated over the years by streamlining the number of entities within the Association. The overall goal is to close the distance—and thereby strengthen—the connection among the leadership, members, and staff. In addition, current processes and procedures (e.g. the Standing Rules) will be reviewed and streamlined in order to ensure clarity of purpose and reduce bureaucratic burden.

By streamlining the number of entities, the Association can achieve greater focus. Moreover, resources can be used strategically by those groups to support larger goals and projects, and help to facilitate more creativity and innovation.

2. *The mandates of many entities are vaguely or poorly defined and not strategically aligned. Instead of having the strategic direction drive the work of the Association, the work has often been dictated by the governance and bureaucracy.*

Many entities and leaders within the Association have been poorly served by a lack of clear roles, responsibilities, and functions. In the absence of a clear function, many entities have tended to focus primarily on activities related to the annual convention.

In the new model, the work of the Association will be driven by the strategic direction as outlined in the strategic plan. Each entity will have a clearly defined purpose and mandate, and its activities should connect to and support the strategic plan. The main goals are to empower groups and volunteers by providing clear guidelines as to their roles and functions, and to clarify how their work advances the Association and the field. In order to ensure that the Association's resources are used wisely and efficiently, a strategic assessment process will be implemented to review programs and initiatives to avoid redundancies and to make sure they continue to meet the needs of members and the field.

Contributing to the current situation is the fact that new entities within the Association usually take one of two forms—either a Committee or an Interest Section. In order to provide for greater clarity and ability to respond to issues, Task Forces are likely to be used more frequently, and Advisory Councils will be created to contribute to the knowledge of the Association. In addition, new types of groups can be developed as needed to respond to the needs of members and the field.

- 3. Much of the valuable time of volunteers is spent on administrative tasks. Members are eager to volunteer, be accountable, and to contribute meaningfully to the work of the Association, but do not always feel recognized for their efforts. The Association lacks both a comprehensive volunteer management process and a coherent leadership pipeline.*

The desire among members to contribute to the Association and field is strong. However, the Association has often not clearly defined what it needs or wants from volunteers and leaders beyond administrative duties (e.g., writing reports, running meetings).

In the new model, roles and responsibilities will be clearly defined, along with the necessary skills needed for each type of volunteer role. A more coherent volunteer management process will be developed in order to better match volunteer skills and abilities to the work that needs to be done. To empower and engage volunteers, more opportunities for orientation and training will be developed so that they have a better understanding of how their work contributes to advancing the Association and the field.

While it can be said that a leadership pipeline does exist within the Association, it is often ad hoc in nature. The Association does not have an effective process in place to connect members to leadership opportunities or to identify future leaders. Some steps are now being taken to address this through the creation of a task force to identify ways to improve the Board of Directors nomination process.

- 4. Information flow among the member groups, Board, and staff is problematic, and is interfering with the Association's ability to learn about and respond to significant shifts in the international field of English language education.*

Due in part to the proliferation of entities and the resulting complexities, sharing knowledge and information vertically and horizontally across the Association is often difficult. Effective processes to communicate have not been developed, resulting in many of the entities acting in silos.

The structural changes proposed in the new model – such as the closer relationship between Interest Sections and the Board of Directors – will require new processes and procedures. Going forward, this will be necessary to not only close the communication gap that has developed, but also help foster a greater culture of knowledge sharing in the Association.

Outline of New Model

The changes in the new model are outlined below. What follows is a general description of the entities in the new model and their structures. New processes and procedures will be developed with input from members and leaders to fit the roles and responsibilities of each entity.

- *Interest Sections* serve an important role as knowledge-based member communities, and will remain as a key entity within the Association. A task force will be appointed to conduct research on contemporary forms and functions of knowledge-based member communities, and to recommend correlating strategies to foster strong communication between the Interest Sections and the Board. All Interest Sections will be expected to connect to and support the strategic plan with planned activities throughout the year, not just at the convention.
- *Standing Committees* will be reduced in number, and each committee will have a clear function to serve the Association and to execute specific tasks on a regular basis. Committee activities will be expected to connect to the strategic plan. Each committee may have different criteria for membership to better serve the needs of the Association.
- *Connection with Affiliates* is a placeholder for an entity that may serve the mutual partnership between TESOL International Association and independent affiliated associations. A task force will be charged to research possible alternatives to further strengthen the mutual partnership between TESOL International Association and its affiliates.
- *Task Forces* will be constituted on an as-needed basis for short-term tasks that the Association needs accomplished.
- *Advisory Councils* will serve in an advisory capacity to support regular Association functions. Some of the areas currently addressed by Standing Committees may be addressed by Advisory Councils. Depending upon their scope, some will be short-term in nature, such as the 50th Anniversary Advisory Group, while others will be long-term, such as the Publications Advisory Council. Appointment to the Advisory Councils may be fluid to respond to evolving needs of the Association. The Conference Program Chair will no longer serve as an ex-officio member of the Board, but will chair the Convention Advisory Council.

Interest Sections

Per the Standing Rules, the primary role of Interest Sections is to stay abreast of the issues and concerns of their areas of interest/expertise and to disseminate that information to the entire membership. The functions of these knowledge-based member communities include adjudicating proposals for the annual convention, communicating with members, mentoring, advising and

training members on professional development and publications, and representing the membership in the governance of TESOL. Although Interest Sections serve a key function in providing academic knowledge and content to the Association, Interest Section leaders have reported an overabundance of administrative tasks and a heavy focus on activities around the convention. Interest Section leaders have also reported feeling disconnected from the Board and other entities within the Association, with much of their work unseen or distilled into a few sentences in an annual report by the Interest Section Leadership Council (ISLC).

Interest Sections will continue to be an important part of the new governance model. In order to streamline communication, Interest Section leaders will report directly to the Board, and the ISLC will be sunset. Retiring the ISLC is part of a larger plan to streamline the governance structure of TESOL and is intended to give Interest Section leaders more direct access to the organization's leadership. Bringing Interest Sections closer to the Board allows for more effective communication and thus helps the Association to be more nimble and transparent. A task force will be appointed to conduct research on contemporary forms and functions of knowledge-based member communities, and to recommend correlating strategies to foster strong communication between Interest Sections and the Board.

There is an expectation that Interest Section activities in the new model will closely align with and support TESOL's strategic goals, and will take place year-round and not solely at the annual convention. To realize this new vision, an Interest Section Task Force will be appointed to research the roles and functions of knowledge-based member communities in contemporary associations, and to make possible recommendations to the Board on adjustments to the composition and functions of Interest Sections within TESOL.

Standing Committees

Standing Committees are work groups of volunteers responsible for an essential function of the Association, and report directly to the Board. Standing Committee work is task-driven and ongoing. The GRTF report noted that the 17 standing committees currently within TESOL operate in different ways, and not all are providing an ongoing, essential function to the Association. In the new model, the number of Standing Committees is reduced to five: Executive, Finance, Nominating, Awards, and Research. Most of the functions and processes of these Standing Committees will remain unchanged. Some of the work previously performed by committees may transfer to a different entity in the new model, such as a Task Force or an Advisory Council.

In the new model, the selection criteria for participation on these standing committees will suit the overall objective of each committee and the tasks it undertakes.

- The Executive Committee is comprised of the President, President-elect, and Past President, who are elected by the membership. The Executive Committee represents the Board of Directors in between its meetings, and will focus on issues of governance for the Association.

- The Finance Committee consists of TESOL Board members selected by the President to support the TESOL Board’s legally mandated fiduciary duty. The Finance Committee is responsible for reviewing financial reports, audit reports, and the annual budget, for communicating regularly with the Executive Director and Director of Finance, and for reporting to the Board as a whole.
- The Nominating Committee is elected by the membership. The role of the Nominating Committee is to identify candidates for election to the TESOL Board of Directors that will best position the Association to meet its strategic goals and that reflect the Association’s diverse membership.
- Awards Committee members are selected and appointed by the Board in consultation with TESOL’s staff liaison, based on an application process. The Awards Committee is responsible for reviewing nominations for TESOL awards and making recommendations to the Board, staying within budgetary and other requirements for each award.
- Still under consideration is a Research Committee. It would be similarly selected and appointed by the Board in consultation with the Executive Director, based on an application process. The assignment of the Research Committee is under discussion, but it will likely be focused on oversight of the TESOL research agenda, including possible supervision of research grant awards.

Advisory Councils

Advisory Councils may operate on a short-term or long-term basis depending on their function. These Councils are groups of volunteers appointed to provide their expertise on a topic of importance to the Association. Their primary function is practical, namely to advise staff in order to supplement or complement the work of the Association. Examples are the 50th Anniversary Group and the proposed Advisory Councils for Standards, Publications, and Professional Development. Additional councils may be named in the future. Those serving on Advisory Councils may or may not be members of TESOL, and are appointed by the Executive Director in consultation with the Board. Advisory Councils report to the Executive Director who regularly apprise the Board of recommendations that are a result of council deliberations.

Task Forces

Task Forces are present within the current governance structure, but are expected to take a more prominent role in the new model. Task Forces report directly to the Board, and are formed to focus on a specific assignment that is needed by the Association within a finite period of time. When the assignment is completed, the Task Force is dissolved. Members are invited by the Board in consultation with the Executive Director, and a chair is selected by the Board.

Connection with Affiliates

The Board recognizes that maintaining effective connections with its affiliates is vital for TESOL as an international association. With more than 100 affiliates, the Association seeks to build stronger connections to these independent organizations to help further its strategic goals and serve the

needs of the field. To help achieve this, a task force will be appointed to review different models for affiliation programs for associations, including what forms that may take in relation to governance.

In addition to these structural elements outlined above, the Board will move ahead with a number of changes in how it conducts its business in order to make the Association more agile and knowledge driven. For example, the functions of the Executive Committee may be revised, and the Board will look at ways to develop a more knowledge-based approach for its meetings.

Implementation

At this stage, feedback is being solicited from TESOL members on the new governance model. After consideration of the comments, the Board intends to take action at its March 2015 meeting to move forward with the new model. In addition, at the March 2015 meeting, the Board will approve the new strategic plan, and take steps to form the Interest Section and Affiliate task forces. Updates will be provided to leaders and members at key meetings throughout the 2015 TESOL International Convention.

Phase 1

Following the March 2015 Board of Directors meeting and the 2015 convention, a transition plan to the new model will be developed and communicated to members, including relevant dates and milestones. Over the next twelve months, appropriate changes to the Association bylaws and Standing Rules will be implemented, along with the development of new processes. Changes to any entities—including those that may be discharged or transitioned to a new form—are likely to occur in late 2015 or in 2016, depending upon the needs of the Association.

Phase 2

The task forces appointed to research and develop recommendations regarding Interest Sections and Affiliates will conduct their work and report back to the Board by October 2015. Based on the task force reports, some changes may take place with Interest Sections and Affiliates, however these will not likely be implemented until later in 2016.

As outlined here, this is a work in progress and much more needs to be accomplished. In many ways, this document is intended to be the start of a dialogue with leadership and members on how the Association can move forward and adapt to the challenges and demands of the field today. However, significant change can't come about without your help. Your input and participation are critical in making sure that TESOL International Association remains vibrant, relevant, and responsive to the needs of members and the field.

Figure 1 Current Governance Model

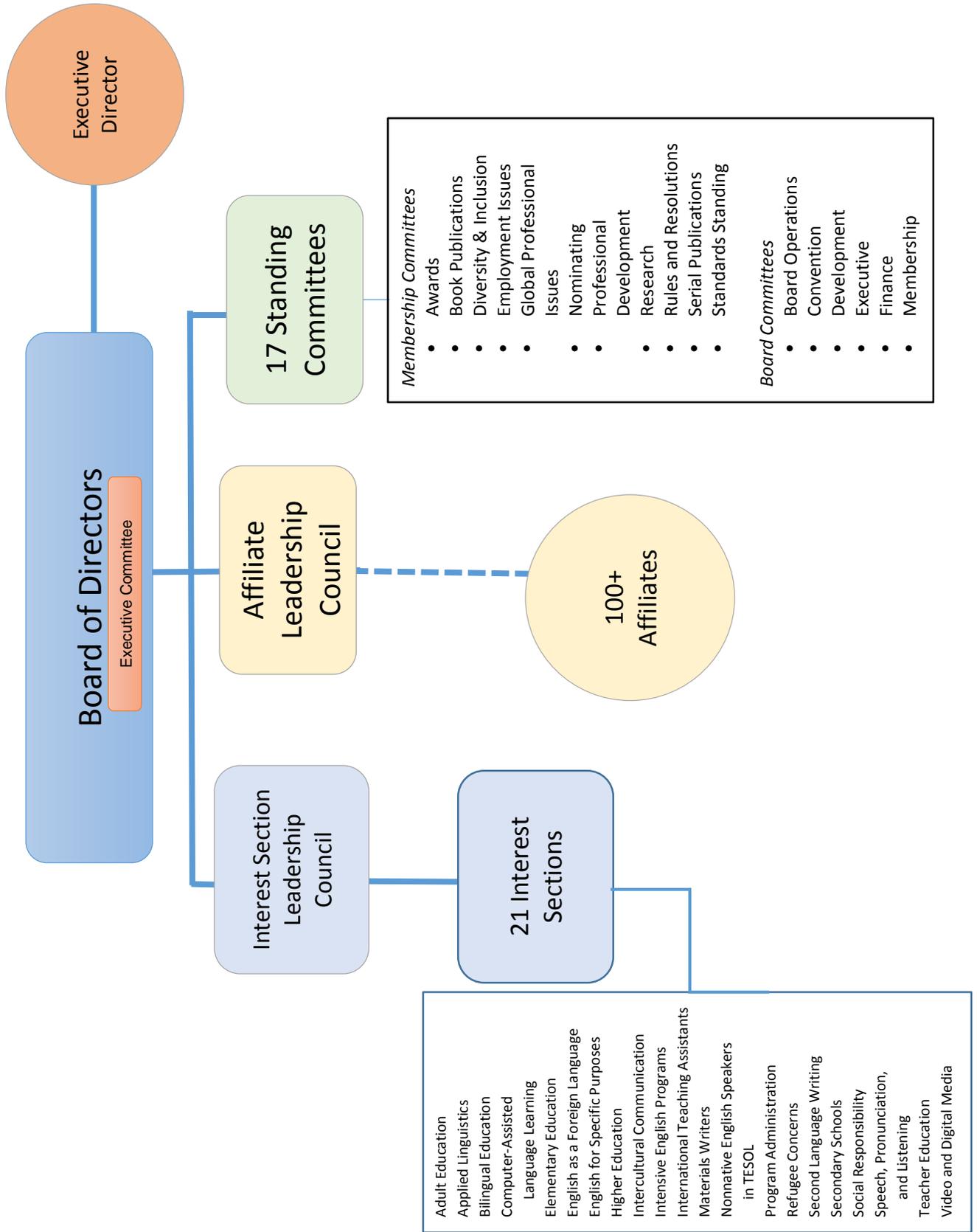
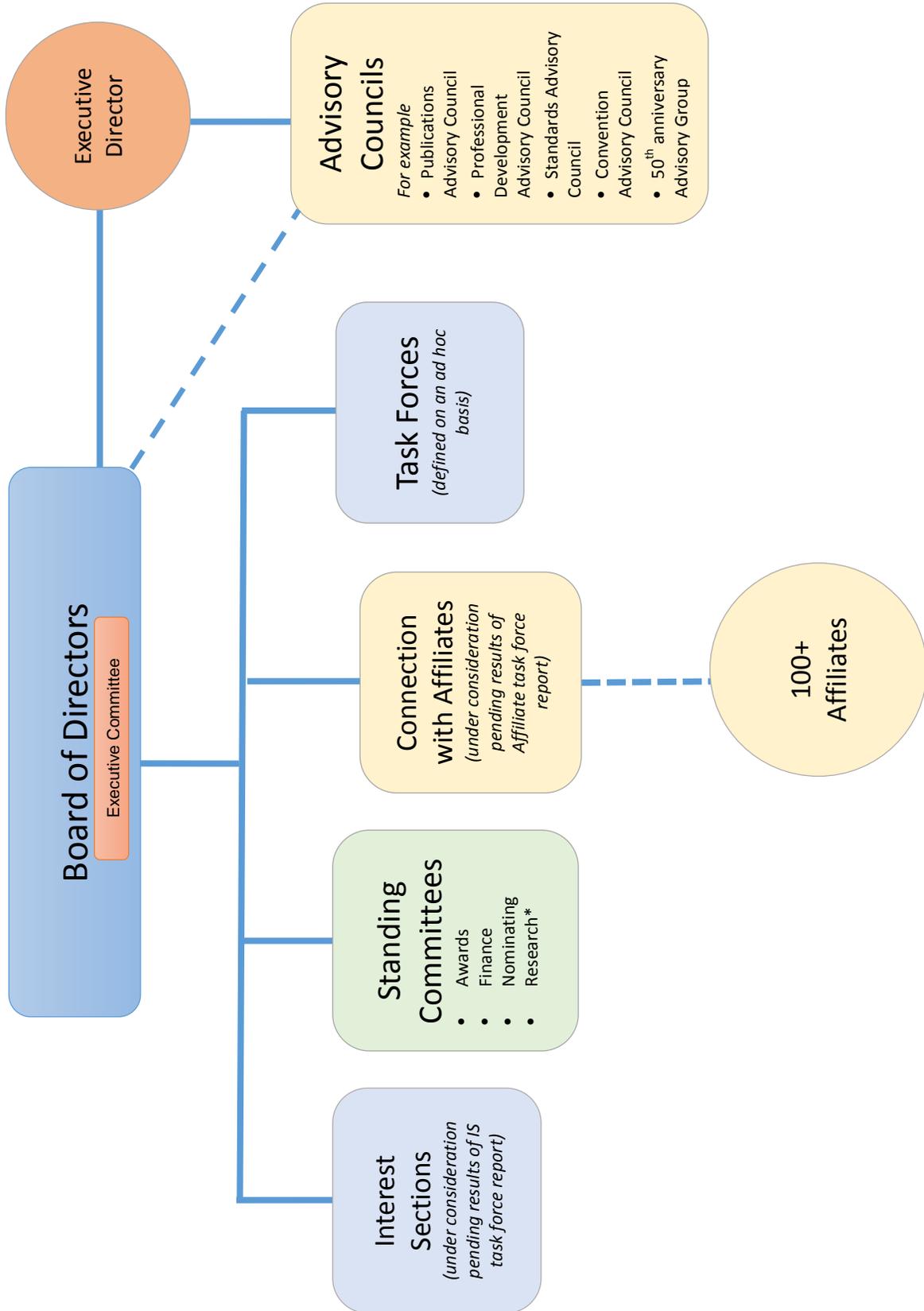


Figure 2 Proposed New Governance Model



TESOL International Association – Proposed Governance Restructuring

Table 1 Definition of Entities within TESOL International Association – General Provisions

Name of entity	Definition	Selection process	Composition	Terms	Accountability	Ensuring communication
Standing Committee	A work group of TESOL volunteers responsible for an essential function for the Association (e.g., finance, nominating). Standing committee work is task-driven and ongoing.	Consistent with current practice, standing committees are either elected by TESOL members, or appointed by the Executive Committee in consultation with the Executive Director based on an application process.	TESOL members with demonstrated experience, expertise, skills, and competencies necessary for the responsibility of the standing committee. Chairs are appointed by the Executive Committee based on input from the committee.	Committee members serve a one-year term, may be renewable up to a maximum of three years.	Committees work with staff but report to the Board. The Board communicates back to the group on a regular basis.	Depending on the work of the entity, in some cases a Board Liaison is appointed. All committees have a Staff Liaison.
Task Force	A work group of TESOL volunteers responsible for executing a discrete task needed by the Association within a limited period of time (e.g., TF on strengthening the relationship between TESOL and its affiliates.)	Consistent with current practice, members are appointed by the Executive Committee in consultation with the Executive Director.	TESOL members with the demonstrated experience, expertise, skills, and competencies necessary for the responsibility of the Task Force. A chair is selected by the Executive Committee.	Members serve for the duration of the task force’s work. The task force is dissolved when the task has been completed.	Reports to the Board. Board communicates back to the group as indicated in the charge.	Depending on the work of the entity, in some cases a Board Liaison is appointed. All committees have a Staff Liaison.

TESOL International Association – Proposed Governance Restructuring

Table 1 Definition of Entities within TESOL International Association – General Provisions

Name of entity	Definition	Selection process	Composition	Terms	Accountability	Ensuring communications
Advisory Councils	A group of volunteers appointed to provide their expertise in a topic of importance to the Association. Their primary function is to advise in order to supplement or complement the practical work of the Association. Advisory Councils may either be short-term or long-term in nature.	A chair is appointed by the Executive Director in consultation with the Board based on an application process where relevant (e.g. Convention Advisory Council Chair). Members are appointed by the Executive Director in consultation with the Board and/or the chair.	Individuals with the demonstrated experience, expertise and knowledge necessary for the responsibility of the Advisory Council. Depending upon the function of the council, they may or may not be TESOL members.	For long-term Advisory Councils (e.g., Standards), members serve a one-year term, renewable up to a maximum of three years. For short-term Advisory Councils, members serve for the duration.	Advisory Councils report to the Executive Director who in turn regularly apprises the Board.	Depending on the work of the entity, in some cases a Board Liaison is appointed. All committees have a Staff Liaison.
Interest Section <i>(current configuration)</i>	A knowledge-based member community created to stay abreast of the issues and concerns of their areas of interest. Interest Sections disseminate knowledge through discussions and newsletters, and assist in planning for the annual convention.	Interest Sections are established by members and approved by the Board following a petition process.	Members are free to join as many Interest Sections as they wish. Leaders of Interest Sections are elected within their membership	Per the Standing Rules, Interest Sections maintain their status by fulfilling certain duties and requirements annually.	Interest Sections send delegates to the Interest Section Assembly at the annual convention, and submit annual reports to the Interest Section Leadership Council.	Per the Standing Rules, the Interest Section Leadership Council serves as the link between Interest Sections and the Board of Directors.

Please note: Affiliates of TESOL International Association are external, independent organizations, and thus are not included in this table.

Appendix A

Governance Review Task Force Final Report

March 2014

Executive Summary

In 2011 the Board of Directors began discussing a variety of issues around governance within TESOL International Association. As defined in authoritative literature in association management such as *The Will to Govern Well*, “governance for associations refers to the various components of the organization and their relative powers, authorities, responsibilities that each possesses, as well as to the composition of each unit and how individuals are selected to participate in each. Governance is about oversight, process, independence, and accountability” (p. 3). In other words, governance is comprehensive; it includes systems, structures, processes, and culture.

Best practices in association management recommend a periodic review of governance to evaluate its efficiency and effectiveness in meeting the membership’s needs. In mid-2012, the Board of Directors decided to launch a governance review of TESOL International Association. Because the Board itself had undergone a reconfiguration in recent years, the scope of the review focused on elements outside of the Board. This mid-level governance review was to be comprehensive, examining all the related components of the association. The Governance Review Task Force (GRTF) was charged with conducting a review of the association’s governance and making recommendations to the Board of Directors on how TESOL International Association might create a governance system that

- fosters a culture of knowledge, trust, and nimbleness within TESOL International Association
- ensures that all entities within TESOL International Association are high impact and add value to the association
- supports efficient, effective, and strategic decision-making that is responsive to the needs of members and the TESOL profession
- increases the ability of members of the profession to identify and discuss issues and to have input into governing actions that impact them
- supports a leadership pipeline for members
- maximizes the benefits from time and financial investment of members in association governance.

After reviewing the authoritative literature on association governance, the GRTF developed a plan for conducting research and collecting data about the current state of the association’s governance, analyzing that data, and developing recommendations. The data collection and analysis would be guided by a framework of principles that was developed from feedback collected from leaders at the 2013

TESOL International Convention. The Framework of Governing Principles is comprised of two *Foundational Principles*, on which three *Instrumental Principles* of effective governance are built:

Foundational Principles

- Strategic Alignment
- Structure and Process

Instrumental Principles

- People, Roles, and Relationships
- Knowledge and Information
- Culture and Engagement

The data collection included a comprehensive review of association governing documents and reports from member groups, surveys of leaders, and the results of focus groups with the Board of Directors and with TESOL staff. The data analysis, based on the Framework of Governing Principles, found that

- The association is spread thin and fragmented.
- The governance system is not integrated; the elements in the system are not strategically aligned.
- The overall structure and accompanying processes have expanded to become complex and bureaucratic, without clarity of purpose or function.
- There is no coherent or readily obvious leadership pipeline, nor a coherent volunteer management process to find the best match between volunteer skills and opportunities.
- Leaders and members desire to contribute meaningfully to the work of the association, be accountable, and receive acknowledgement.
- The mandates of many member groups, and their roles in governance, are not clearly defined.
- Many member groups experience a lack of consistency in work and effort with the annual rotation of leaders.
- The governance system does not provide an efficient means to gather information about the paradigm shifts affecting teaching that would enable the association to meet the rapidly changing needs of members and the field.
- Information flow among Board, management, and member groups is problematic.
- The overall organizational culture is focused primarily on structure and process, not on strategy and outcome.
- The organizational culture is almost singularly focused on the annual convention, to the point that many member groups have little activity or function outside of it.
- The strong culture of inclusiveness and equality in the association and the field often serves as the primary criterion for governance decisions.

Based on these findings, the GRTF has recommended a number of options and alternatives to address these issues. These options and alternatives are plotted along a spectrum comprising four levels, ranging from *no change* to *significant restructuring*. These levels are incremental, each building on the former:

- *Level Zero* maintains the status quo.
- *Level One* recommends strategies to ensure effective and efficient processes, ones that provide for members' professional needs, and value and develop volunteer member leaders.
- *Level Two* includes these processes, but also streamlines committee structure and work so that work groups are designed to match the functions required to carry out TESOL's mission and strategic objectives, as well as ensuring effective use of resources.
- *Level Three* includes processes in Level One, streamlining of committee structures in Level Two, and a reconstitution of interest sections as communities of practice. Through this realignment, affinity groups have the opportunity for increased professional exchanges and growth, without the burden of administrative tasks.

As the Board of Directors deliberates on these recommended options and alternatives, it needs to consider the context in which TESOL International Association carries out its mission—the interconnected global environment of language education and TESOL's culture and values. In addition to considering the levels and the strategies within them, the GRTF recommends that the Board develop an implementation and communications strategy. The implementation strategy would include a timeline for a phased implementation of strategies, as well as a statement of principles, such as those that guided the GRTF's work:

- At all stages there will be requests for feedback.
- The Board commits to being open and transparent.
- The Board commits to involving volunteer leaders.
- Changes will not be made just for the sake of change.
- Implementation will improve the membership experience.

Appendix B

TESOL International Association’s Strategic Plan (2015-2018)

Draft – December 2014

Core Purpose

To advance professional expertise in English language teaching to speakers of other languages worldwide

Core Values

- Professionalism demonstrated by excellence in standards, research, and practice that improve learning outcomes
- Respect for diversity, multilingualism, multiculturalism, and individuals’ language rights
- Integrity guided by ethical and transparent action
- Commitment to life-long learning

Vision Statement

To become the trusted global authority for knowledge and expertise in English language teaching

Mission

TESOL is an international association of professionals advancing the quality of English language teaching through professional development, research, standards, and advocacy.

Goals

Advocacy - TESOL will promote sound education policy, professionalism, and excellence in English language education.

Objectives:

1. Increase the Association’s demonstrated expertise in, and resources for, language education policy.
2. Enhance the leadership and advocacy skills of TESOL professionals.
3. Increase advocacy for, and improve the professional status of, English language professionals worldwide.
4. Increase resources and tools for TESOL members to enable them to engage in advocacy.

Professional Learning and Engagement - TESOL will provide ELT professionals with the necessary body of knowledge, tools, and resources to enhance their expertise and practice.

Objectives:

1. Expand the variety and reach of professional learning opportunities.
2. Incorporate relevant research and development into TESOL professional learning.
3. Ensure a positive member experience at all TESOL professional learning offerings, including the annual Convention, Symposia, Academies, and online events.
4. Improve ease of access to TESOL's resources.
5. Expand TESOL's capacity for members to participate in professional learning opportunities.
6. Expand publication product offerings that support professional learning needs through traditional and new media.

Research - TESOL will advance the field of English language teaching through research.

Objectives:

1. Implement TESOL's research agenda.
2. Develop a research grant program.
3. Increase the awareness and reach of TESOL research across the field.
4. Make research findings readily accessible to practitioners.

Standards - TESOL will advance the field of English language teaching through quality standards.

Objectives:

1. Increase the awareness and reach of TESOL standards across the field.
2. Facilitate the translation of standards into practice.
3. Improve the quality and currency of TESOL's standards in a timely manner.
4. Increase the number of products and resources related to TESOL standards.

Appendix C

Vision and Principles of Effective Governance for TESOL International Association

Governance Review Task Force – June 2013

Vision

To ensure that TESOL International Association has a governance system that efficiently and effectively responds to the evolving needs of TESOL members and the profession; supports communities of practice; facilitates collaboration in a professional learning community; and is built on a culture of knowledge, trust, nimbleness, and transparency.

Principles

The following principles of effective governance for TESOL International Association provide a guiding framework for the further collection of data in the governance review process. The framework has been developed substantially from the data collected from the leadership activities conducted in Dallas 2013, but alongside discussions from the GRTF and their engagement with the literature around effective governance.

The framework is comprised of five principles: two Foundational Principles, upon which three Instrumental Principles of effective governance are built. The Principles incorporate the three core elements of association governance (structure, process, and culture), the desired attributes of effective governance (knowledge, trust, and nimbleness), with the following feedback provided by TESOL leaders:

- Organizations must respond to the changing contexts they operate within. The strength of any organization is not in its structure per se, but the extent to which its structure makes effective use of the strengths of its people.
- Governance structures enable effective knowledge sharing and communication between the components and members of TESOL International Association.
- Governance reflects the people in the organization and enables the voices of all the people in the organization to be heard

Foundational Principles

1. Strategic alignment

- Alignment - All parts of the association operate in concert with the agreed upon strategic direction of the association.
- Accountability - Governance components reflect, enable, and are accountable to the association's strategic direction
- People understand the association's strategic priorities clearly enough to be able to make and execute decisions in a timely manner.

2. Structure and Process

- Structure - Structures enable – rather than hinder – the ability to make decisions and take action most critical to success.
- Process - Processes are designed to produce effective and timely decisions and action.
- Accountability - Governance structures and processes must ensure that fiduciary and ethical responsibilities are met.

Instrumental Principles

3. People, Roles, and Relationships

- Roles – Individuals and components understand their roles, accountability, and authority in decision-making.
- Relationships – Individuals and components understand the relationships between parts of the association.
- Leadership – The association is able to engage the best and most qualified people to positions where they can have the most impact.
- Representation – All stakeholders are appropriately represented in the decision-making process.

4. Knowledge and Information

- Knowledge - Structures and processes enable the cultivation and dissemination of knowledge to members, components, and stakeholders.
- Information – People in decision-making roles have the appropriate information they need – when and how they need it – to make rational, data-driven decisions.
- Communication – Members and components have sufficient information to help them understand the work done on their behalf by the association.

5. Culture and Engagement

- Culture – Organizational culture reinforces prompt, effective decisions and action throughout the association.
- Behaviors - Leaders at all levels consistently demonstrate effective stewardship, collaboration, accountability, inspiration, and decision behaviors.
- Engagement - Members are engaged appropriately in the decision-making process.
- Innovation - Governance structures and processes enable innovation and creativity within the association.