

# Winter 2021

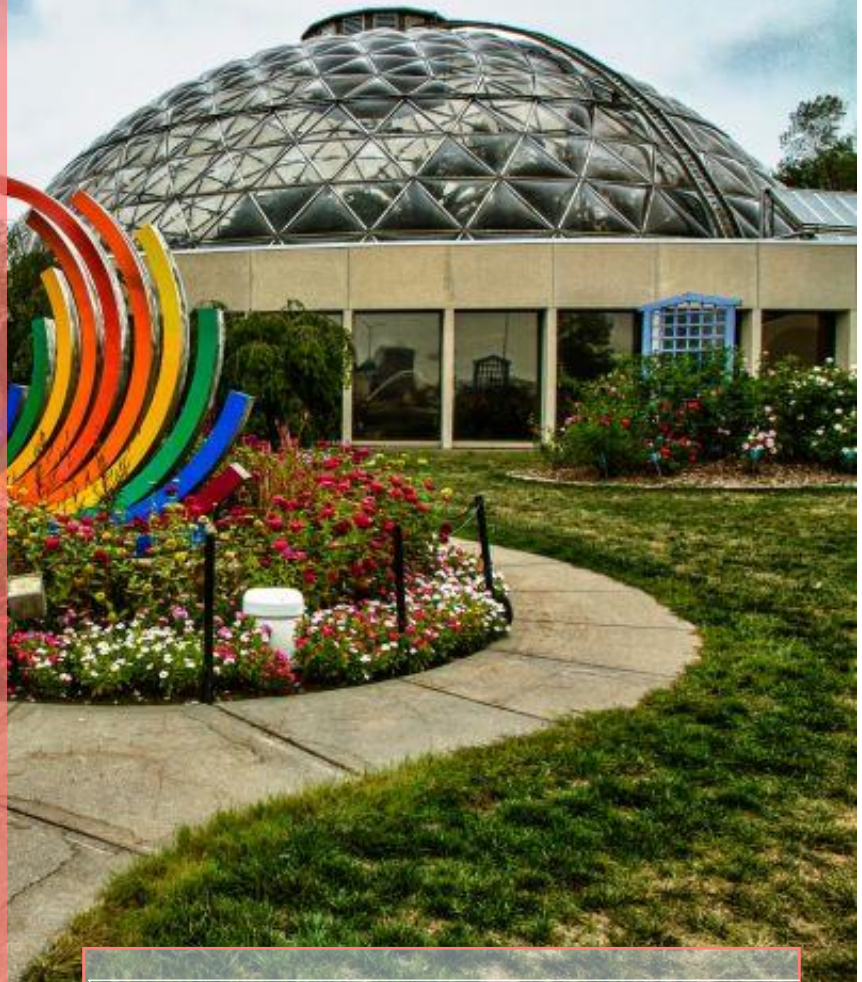
# MIDTESOL

# Matters

*The Mid-America  
TESOL Affiliate Newsletter*



*Greater Des Moines Botanical Center  
Des Moines, Iowa*



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## **Message from the President Featured on page 3**

As your president this year, one of my main goals is to help us blaze a trail towards a more integrated regional annual conference – a hybrid approach that includes in-person as well as virtual attendance options. It is a daunting task to undertake, but we will do our best to see it through, with hope that it will be encouraging and useful to all who attend, in whichever form.

**Kaylene Sasse  
MIDTESOL President**

Bellevue University  
Assistant Professor of ESL/English  
Bellevue, Nebraska

# MIDTESOL Matters

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### Follow Us!



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## A Message from the President

**Kaylene Sasse**  
**MIDTESOL President**  
Bellevue University  
Assistant Professor of  
ESL/English  
Bellevue, Nebraska



Greetings, MIDTESOL Colleagues!

My name is Kaylene Sasse (pronounced “sassy”), and I currently serve students at Bellevue University, just south of Omaha, Nebraska.

It brings me happiness to be writing to you as your current MIDTESOL Board President, to have this opportunity to represent you and help our organization learn how to support you more meaningfully in current and changing circumstances. Certainly, we have had to exercise flexibility, adaptability, and gratitude in our professional and personal lives over the past nearly-two years, and we continue to see interesting and sometimes very challenging trends emerge among the populations we work with in the communities where we serve.

Yes, we serve. *You* serve a variety of learners from different ages and backgrounds and different colleagues from a variety of specialties. And *we*, as your MIDTESOL Board, are here to serve *you*, to take your concerns and needs to heart, and to provide you with a community where you can present information, connect with other professionals, and renew your desire to serve those who speak English as an additional language.

As your president this year, one of my main goals is to help us blaze a trail towards a more integrated regional annual conference – a hybrid approach that includes in-person as well as virtual attendance options. It is a daunting task to undertake, but we will do our best to see it through, with hope that it will be encouraging and useful to all who attend, in whichever form.

Please encourage your own colleagues to consider joining MIDTESOL and reach out if you have thoughts, questions, or concerns you would like to share! My email is [kaylenesasse@midtesol.org](mailto:kaylenesasse@midtesol.org).

Finally, a safe and happy holiday season to everyone in the days ahead!

Kaylene Sasse  
#MIDTESOL2022 President

Connect with MIDTESOL on social media



## Join the MIDTESOL Team!

### Open Positions for 2022

Are you looking for a way to make an impact while gaining experience, serving the profession, building your C.V., and expanding your network by collaborating with a diverse group of English language teaching professionals? MIDTESOL has several open board positions to be filled yet this year. Please reach out to Kelly McClendon to indicate your interest or with any questions.

#### Exhibitor Coordinator (3-year term)

Executive Board Appointment; voting member

##### **Unique Responsibilities**

- Contact publishers to exhibit at the annual conference
- Coordinate payment of monies for exhibits in a timely fashion via CVENT
- Coordinate with Conference Co-chairs and Treasurer
- Check in with exhibitors during the conference to ensure setup and other needs are met
- Provide information regarding publishers at the request of the Members-at-Large to assist them in planning MIDTESOL events in their geographic areas

##### **General Responsibilities**

- Attend Board meetings 3 times a year
- Attend 1-2 officer meetings via Zoom each year
- Submit board member report prior to each board meeting via the MIDTESOL Google Workspace Drive
- Attend Fall conference
- Attend one spring IS meeting, when held
- Represent the Association at events and with other organizations at the request of the President

#### Journal Editor (3-year term)

Communications Director appointment with board approval; non-voting member

##### **Unique Responsibilities**

- Prepare submission information for fall conference presenters and disseminate that information in presenters' conference packets
- Make submission information available on the Affiliate website
- Solicit readers for the peer review panel based on interest section area
- Receive submissions from presenters
- Prepare submissions and reviewer information for the review panel and disseminate to that panel
- Interact with reviewers and authors during the editing process for articles that need revision
- Prepare the final copy of the proceedings for digital publication
- Disseminate the proceedings to the membership

##### **General Responsibilities**

- Attend board meetings 3 times a year to plan and implement vision
- Attend 1-2 officer meetings via Zoom each year
- Attend TESOL when possible and go to the Editor's workshop
- Attend fall conference
- Represent Association at events and with other organizations at request of president
- needs a description written
- Collaborate with other MIDTESOL Editors as needed and requested by the Communications Chair

## Newsletter Editor (3-year term)

Communications Director appointment with board approval; non-voting member

### **Unique Responsibilities**

- Solicit articles from board & membership (in person & via email)
- Produce and publish 3 newsletters per year
- Set 3 deadlines for newsletter submissions (15-20 days prior to publication)
- Coordinate with marketing co-editors, awards chair, and exhibitors coordinator in marketing fall conference in the newsletter
- Receive newsletters from and communicate with other affiliates
- Make the newsletter available to the Website Editor for placement on the site
- Send a dedicated link for the website to the Co-Editor for membership for distribution through CVENT or other membership software

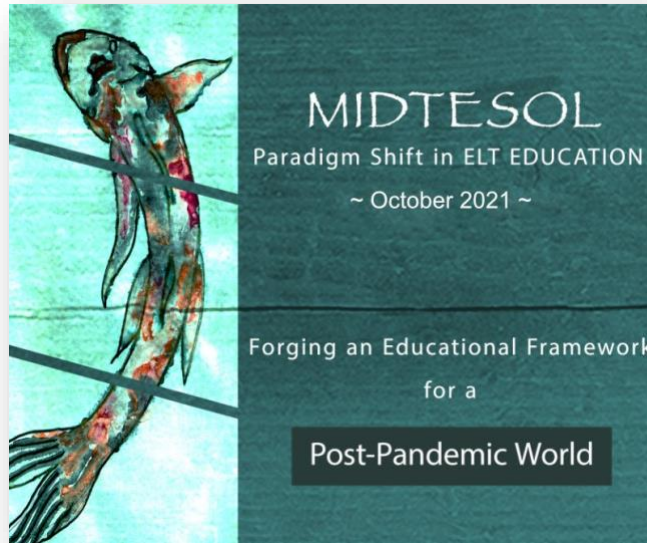
### **General Responsibilities**

- Attend board meetings 3 times a year
- If possible, attend TESOL and attend the Editor's workshop
- Attend MIDTESOL fall conference
- Attend 1 spring IS meeting, if held
- Represent Association at events and with other organizations at request of the president
- Collaborate with other MIDTESOL Editors as needed and requested by the Communications Director





## Celebrating MIDTESOL 2021



### **MIDTESOL 2021: Paradigm Shift in ELT Education: Forging an Educational Framework for a Post-Pandemic World**

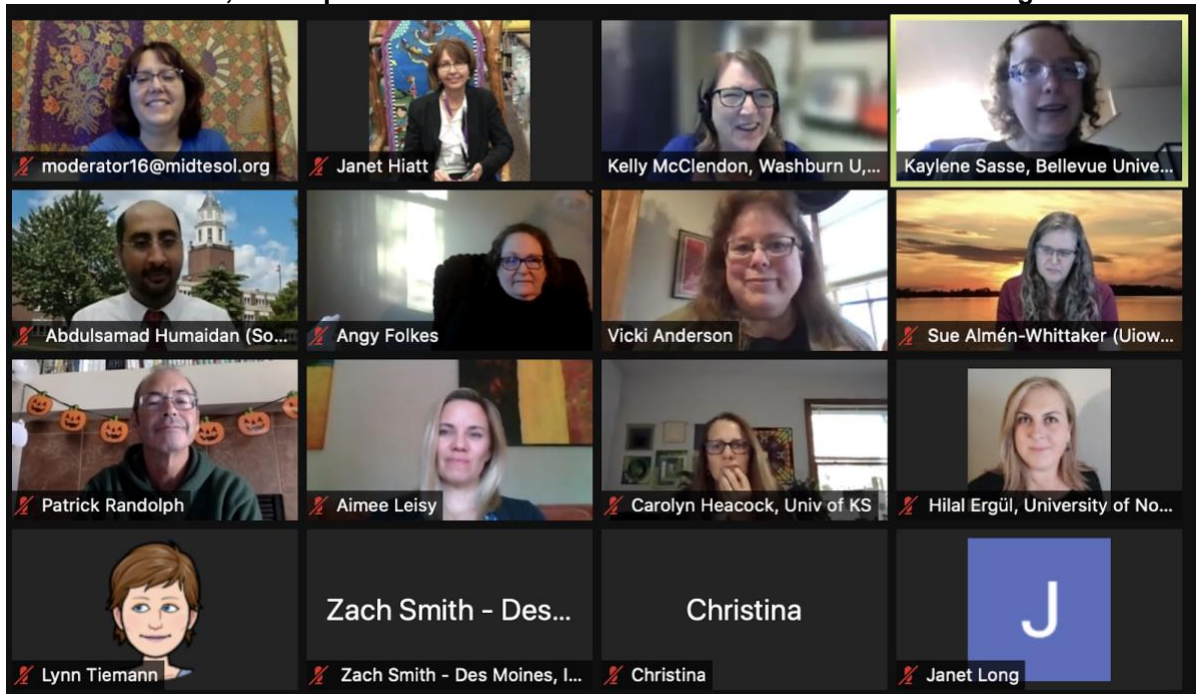
The pandemic continues to shape our lives and teaching, but it can't squelch our inspiration! MIDTESOL 2021, MIDTESOL's **second** virtual conference, took place on October 22-23 with a wide range of quality conference activities, despite the constraints of being online. This conference featured conference artwork specially prepared for MIDTESOL by artist Tiffany Hovendick, a welcome video, 60 pre-recorded and live presentations, Interest Section coffee chats, exhibitor showcases, prizes, the MIDTESOL annual Business Meeting, and a Happy Hour with craft mocktails for each state custom-designed in consultation with a professional mixologist. Keynote speakers Yangsook Choi (children's book author and illustrator, an ELL herself) and Latrice Lyle (anti-racism consultant) pushed the boundaries of our understanding the experiences of our diverse students. Featured speakers Sharon Tjaden-Glass and Sara Stevick (instructional media designers) and Terrell Hawkins of the US Department of State English Language Fellows Program helped us explore various means of using our English teaching skills in alternative professional settings. Long-time MIDTESOL friend Roger Rosenthal of the Migrant Legal Action Program brought us up-to-date on the latest immigration law reforms that are likely to impact our students. Various exhibitors provided workshops. And MOST IMPORTANTLY, members of MIDTESOL from across the organization's interest sections (K-12, IEP, Adult Ed/Community College, Teacher Training, Program Administrators, Ed Tech) helped enrich our perspectives and our teaching ideas with their own presentations. Thank you to all who participated or presented! And a special thanks to the Conference Committee and especially to the Conference Tech Team for handling the Crowd Compass conference app support, proposal and scheduling technology, presentation video management, and day-of-the conference attendee and presenter tech support.

If you registered for the conference, remember that you have access through the Crowd Compass app to recordings of most of the sessions (both pre-recorded and recorded on the day of the conference); simply open the conference schedule from the "Schedule" link in the left-hand menu of Crowd Compass and you will see Youtube videos of each recorded presentation above the description of the session. You can still also access the recipes for the four state mocktails featured during Happy Hour through the "Happy Hour" link in the left-hand menu. If you have any questions or concerns—or ideas for next year's conference—please e-mail me as the Past Conference Chair at [vickianderson@midtesol.org](mailto:vickianderson@midtesol.org).

## From the Secretary

I have had the honor of serving as Secretary of MIDTESOL from 2019-2021. To conclude my tenure as MIDTESOL Secretary, I would like to share some of the highlights from the 2021 Annual Business Meeting that took place on the first day of the MIDTESOL Conference on October 22, 2021.

First, take a peek at some of the members who attended the meeting:



**Second**, if you were unable to attend, here are some key highlights from the meeting. The beginning of the meeting was facilitated by 2020-21 President Kelly McClendon who shared the following information:

- **MIDTESOL Mission Statement Currently Being Revised:** An ad hoc committee is currently revising the MIDTESOL Mission Statement and key values with input from MIDTESOL members through a series Coffee Chats. The proposed revisions are still pending final approval. Key values proposed by the committee were related to advocacy, lifelong learning, professionalism, and respect. Please watch for future notices about the revised mission statement and key values.
- **MIDTESOL's Commitment to Excellence:** Attendees were reminded of MIDTESOL's commitment to excellence in providing high quality professional development; advocacy at the local, national, and global levels; and the importance of incentivizing membership through member benefits.
- **2021 MIDTESOL Highlights:** Some key 2021 key highlights included publication of the MIDTESOL Journal (4th Volume), coffee hours, MIDTESOL representation at the TESOL Advocacy Summit, the first online MIDTESOL social gathering during the TESOL Conference, and committee work to revise the mission statement, key values, and MIDTESOL logo.
- **Social Media and Membership Data:** Attendees reviewed MIDTESOL Social Media data over the past four years as well as trends in membership numbers by type and location. Membership included a mix of people from the four MIDTESOL states as well as others outside of the four MIDTESOL states. It was noted that membership numbers have decreased during the pandemic.
- **Operating Budget:** MIDTESOL is currently in good financial standing!

- **Awards:** MIDTESOL offers a variety of awards including travel awards to the annual MIDTESOL Conference, TESOL Advocacy Summit, and the TESOL Convention. They are also essay awards for adults and K-12 students.
- **Immeasurable Thanks Extended to the 2021 Conference Committee:** Special thanks were extended to the 2021 MIDTESOL Conference Committee including Vicki Anderson (Conference Chair), Program Chair (Aimee Leisy), Zachary Smith (Exhibitor Coordinator) and other contributing members (Sue Almén-Whittaker, Liza Armstrong, Lynn Tiemann, Terry Barakat, Shaeley Santiago, Lindsey Simanowitz). With the support of the committee, the MIDTESOL 2021 was a huge success. In addition, thanks was extended to conference sponsors and exhibitors.

**The second half of the meeting** began by inducting the new 2021-22 MIDTESOL President Kaylene Sasse. Following the induction, Kaylene facilitated the remainder of the meeting.

- **Induction of the New President for 2021-2022:** Kayleen Sasse was inducted and introduced herself. Kaylene shared two key goals for this year: To increase membership, and to help transition to MIDTESOL's next stage (e.g., hybrid or in-person conference). Kaylene also shared how important it was to "embrace ambiguity", a guiding statement she has carried with her from a mentor in Mainland China. In other words, Kaylene believes we have to be flexible and embrace what lies ahead. Kelly added: "I think if anything....our field is full of flexible professionals and brave students."
- **2021-22 Election Results Announced:**
  - Vice President: Zachary Smith, Des Moines Public Schools
  - Secretary: Hilal Ergül, University of Northern Iowa
  - Kansas At Large: Cara Codney, Emporia State University
- **2021-22 Board Officers, Board Members, Interest Sections Leaders, and 2022 and 2023 Future Conference Committee Chairs** were also shared. Members are encouraged to reach out to Members-at Large with state-level issues. Also, a Missouri Member-At-Large will be voted in soon.
- **Thanks for Officers Who Have Finished Their Terms:** Thanks also extended to Shaeley Santiago, Thu Tran, and Janet Hiatt who have finished their terms as MIDTESOL Officers.
- **Giveaways:** Sue Almén-Whittaker was the lucky conference winner of keynote speaker Yangsook Choi's art work!
- **Save the Date for TESOL 2022 in Pittsburg, PA from March 22-25, 2022:** Watch for details about the MIDTESOL gathering at the conference. It will be hosted by Zachary Smith, 2021-22 MIDTESOL Vice President.
- **2022 MIDTESOL Conference:** Stay tuned for more details about the 2022 MIDTESOL Conference at the Intercontinental in Kansas City. The conference committee is tentatively planning both in-person and virtual components for next fall's conference.

It has been an honor to serve as MIDTESOL Secretary to both document meetings and provide a voice of advocacy for multilingual learners and families, as well as educators in MIDTESOL states. I will continue as a MIDTESOL member and wish the best to 2021-22 MIDTESOL leaders and members.

Janet Hiatt  
MIDTESOL Secretary, 2019-2021



# **MIDTESOL 2022**

## **Emerging Stronger: Leading Positive Change in ELT Education**

Planning is already in the works for MIDTESOL's first-ever hybrid conference!

The field of ELT Education has faced unparalleled challenges in the past several years due to factors such as the ongoing pandemic, political decisions related to immigration, race relations, and international crises. While these situations continue to present hardships, MIDTESOL 2022 will focus on ways we can emerge from these adversities stronger and lead toward positive change in the field of ELT.

The quality of the conference is greatly dependent on the quality of the presentations. To emerge stronger, it's crucial that we hear from many voices. To that end, please consider the lessons you have learned and are learning as you have worked to overcome the professional roadblocks you have faced in the past couple years. As many of us share how we are individually emerging stronger, we can lift up one another and lead toward positive, long-term change, for all.

MIDTESOL 2022 will be in Kansas City in the fall and will include a virtual component. The dates are still to be determined.

We look forward to seeing you at #MIDTESOL22,

Carolyn Heacock, Conference Chair

Ben Vilkas, Program Chair



# MIDTESOL



## Members-At-Large State News

### State Update: Iowa by Cindra Porter

Innovation and adaptation have been guiding words for educators in the past two years. The world may imagine the challenges faced by educators during this time in history, but those of us living the experience know that each challenge often creates both new issues and opportunities to meet the needs of our students who are learning and acquiring the English language.

IOWA

It was disappointing to hear that no Iowa institutions of higher education were awarded funds this fall for the 2021 USDE National Professional Development grant. New opportunities to reinforce college and university ESL endorsement programs may come from a new form of collaboration, however, between institutions of higher education and state area education agencies.

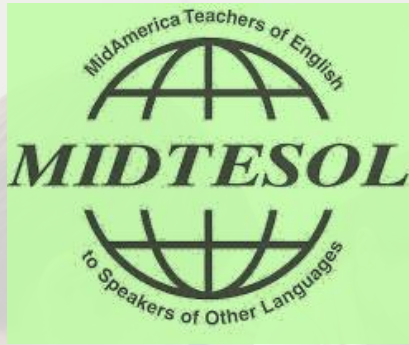
Iowa AEAs (Area Education Agencies) are exploring potential partnerships with institutions of higher education to encourage and support graduate level coursework around the area of English Language Education for educators in K-12 settings. Graduate coursework may be applied toward an ESL endorsement at the discretion of the student, but also may be a professional development option for content area teachers who want to learn more about supporting multilingual students in their schools.

These new partnerships may benefit college and university ESL programs by increasing program enrollment. K-12 schools who search for new or additional ESL teachers currently face a limited hiring pool. An approach to recruiting new ESL teachers from within a school's current faculty population offers one possible way to meet ESL faculty spaces in both urban and rural school districts.

The introduction of weighted funding for two categories of English Learners in Iowa has acknowledged the additional time and resources necessary to support language acquisition in our K-12 schools. [This Fiscal Note](#) from the Legislative Services Agency further describes weighted funding for English Learners which was applied for the first time in October of this year.

The Iowa Seal of Biliteracy continues to provide a reminder that multilingualism is valued in our state. The current report from 2020 may be found in [The Iowa Condition of Education Report](#). The Iowa Department of Education states that the most current report will be updated and published soon on the Iowa DE site.

As communication and collaboration grows between K-12 ESL programs and language programs in higher education, the state of Iowa will develop a better understanding of the needs of our newest residents who call Iowa their new home. Despite the challenges in teaching through a pandemic, filling teaching positions, and supporting our students studying English in the U.S., the collaboration among all fields of language education in the state of Iowa affirm that multilingualism is valued for our students and for our state's future.



## About our Organization

Contact us at  
[www.midtesol.org](http://www.midtesol.org)



**MIDTESOL** is a professional organization, an affiliate of TESOL International Association, whose goal is to support teachers and enhance the teaching of **English to Speakers of Other Languages**.

**MIDTESOL Matters** is a quarterly publication and is distributed to subscribers and dues-paying members of **MIDTESOL**. Articles, Teaching Tips, and Reviews are welcome from all members. The editor reserves the right to edit for space, clarity, or editorial balance. Materials published in **MIDTESOL Matters** become the property of MIDTESOL and could be shared with other TESOL affiliate organizations.

Expressed opinions do not necessarily reflect the views of MIDTESOL, TESOL, or the MIDTESOL Executive Board.

## Our Mission

The mission of **Mid-America Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages** is to foster excellence in English language learning in Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska to people whose native language is a language other than English while respecting their individual language rights.

**As a regional affiliate of TESOL and a professional organization, MIDTESOL:**

- *supports those involved with English language teaching, teacher education, administration and management, curriculum and materials design, and research*
- *provides leadership and direction through the dissemination and exchange of information and resources*
- *encourages access to the standards for English language instruction, professional preparation, and employment*