

# **English Language Learner (ELL) Preparation for Indiana School Educators: A White Paper**

**Prepared by  
Indiana Teachers of English to  
Speakers of Other Languages (INTESOL),  
English Language Learner Collaboratives**

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## INTRODUCTION

The Indiana Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Language (INTESOL) ELL Collaboratives is a collective group of educators, community leaders and researchers invested in the needs and rights of Indiana’s English Language Learners (ELLs). We represent all nine regions of the state from school districts, universities and educational services centers. We collectively contributed to this White paper to identify the growing needs of Indiana schools to drastically improve education for Indiana’s ELLs.



## INDIANA ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER CONTEXT

Indiana is the nation's second fastest growing English language learner (ELL)<sup>1</sup> population (Migrant Policy Institute, 2010, 2015); Indiana’s ELL students represent 276 distinct languages (IDOE, 2016) and has grown by over 500% in the last 15 years. Much like the USA, most of Indiana’s ELLs are born in the US already speaking two or more languages (Gándara & Contreras, 2010). Despite exponential growth of the state's K-12 student ELL community, Indiana remains one of 15 states that does not require specific courses preparing teacher candidates and school leaders to teach ELLs in mainstream classrooms (Tanenbaum et al., 2012).

Despite the rapidly growing need, there is a grave shortage in Indiana of licensed ESL teachers *and* classroom and content area teachers with expertise in teaching ELL students. Indiana currently has only 625 certified ESL teachers teaching in public, charter, and private schools (a possible ratio of 85 students per ESL certified teacher). However, since the IDOE does not track the person providing direct ELD instruction to students, there is no way to know if these teachers are actually serving ELL students. As a consequence of the teacher shortage, many Indiana schools are providing ESL services through literacy coaches, special education teachers, content area teachers, or paraprofessionals who have little or no training in teaching ELLs. According to our discussion with IDOE representatives (2/3/2016), “Indiana does not have enough ESL teachers in order to provide federally mandated English language development services”. Many ELLs are being served by bilingual paraprofessionals under the supervision of an ELL teacher for ELD (English language development) services. Many of these paraprofessionals have 1-3 days of ESL training that ranges in content and quality. Currently, under Indiana law, teachers who earned Indiana licenses before 2002 (under Bulletin 400 and Rules 46-47) may teach ESL

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<sup>1</sup> Note: Many terms and acronyms are used by practitioners to refer to English language learners (ELLs) and to programs that are related to ELLs. In this white paper, we are attempting to limit the range of these terms to avoid potential confusion. English as a Second Language, or ESL, will be used in conjunction with teacher licensure and with specific teaching roles (e.g. ESL teacher or ESL Director). English Language Development (ELD) will be used to describe course content, curriculum, and contexts in which ESL teachers provide instruction focused on English acquisition. ELLs will always refer to students who are English language learners.

without any ESL coursework. Furthermore, for practicing teachers, professional development for improving instruction is inconsistently provided, and in most cases, professional development is delivered using approaches and content **not** supported by research on high quality professional development (Adams, 2013; Morita-Mullaney, 2016; Teemant, 2014). This lack of access to appropriate teacher preparation and professional learning leads not only to a gross violation of each ELL's individual educational rights, it has a significant impact on Indiana's collective progress toward meeting the goals of the Indiana College and Career Readiness Standards across the state.

As of November 1, 2017, ELLs' academic achievement in English language arts (ELA) is 28.8% passing and in Math, 26.1% are passing. In contrast, non-ELLs are achieving at a 66.8% pass rate in ELA and a 60% rate in Math. These significant achievement disparities ranging from 33.9 – 38 % between ELLs and non-ELLs demonstrate the need for all Indiana educators to be knowledgeable about the research that addresses these achievement gaps.

The number of ELLs assigned to ESL teachers varies widely across districts, with high incidence districts tending to have smaller teacher-student ratios than low incidence districts which may employ one ESL teacher to provide services and monitoring to all ELLs across all grade levels and buildings in the district. This is a practice that is clearly as inefficient and ineffective as it is inequitable. In some schools, there are more than 250 ELLs per ESL teacher. As stated in the *US Department of Justice and Education* correspondence of January 2015,

School districts have an obligation to provide the personnel and resources necessary to effectively implement their chosen EL programs. This obligation includes having highly qualified teachers to provide language assistance services, trained administrators who can evaluate these teachers, and adequate and appropriate materials for the EL programs (p. 14).

This obligation is more extensively defined in the English Learner Toolkit for State and Local Education Agencies (2016), Chapter Three: Tools and Resources for Staffing and Supporting an English Learner Program. The Toolkit goes on to specify that administrators must also have training to be able to effectively evaluate program effectiveness and teacher effectiveness. Leithwood et al. (2004) found that the effects of leadership are seen the most in areas where there is the most need. The changing demographic makeup of this state indicates that educating ELLs is a growing area of high need. With an understanding of the importance of effective leadership in schools, and with a review of the data regarding ELL students in Indiana, it is clear that strong leadership of ESL programs is vital. In a study conducted to review qualifications and needs of ESL program directors in Indiana, the most powerful factors affecting leaders of ESL programs were 1) certification for teaching English learners; and 2) experience working with ELLs. These two factors had implications on other characteristics of leaders including

knowledge of second language acquisition and ESL program administration, attitudes towards ELLs, and efficacy for leadership of ESL programs (Albrecht, 2014). This study has practical implications beyond research, into areas of training, licensure, leadership development and ultimately, successful ESL program implementation.

By insisting on qualified ESL educators and administrators, by limiting the number of students each ESL teacher serves to those parameters established by research-based ELD models, we take the first essential steps to eliminate these grave access and outcome inequities for Indiana's ELLs.

The Indiana Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Language (INTESOL), a state affiliate of the international TESOL, has a membership of over 600 educators, most of whom teach ELD courses and/or administer ELD programs in Indiana's K-12 schools and universities. INTESOL's membership is committed to identifying and eliminating the instructional inequalities which currently exist in each of the nine geographic regions of Indiana (Table 1 and 2). Educators, administrators, and teacher educators from each of these Indiana regions contributed to the creation and publication of this ELL White paper.

### **INTESOL White Paper** **Prepared by the Indiana ELL Collaboratives**

On November 11, 2016, 51 ESL teachers, ESL directors, Education Service Center Professional Development Directors and ESL teacher education university faculty gathered in Indianapolis to identify the unique needs of the linguistically diverse ELLs in their respective regions. On November 10, 2017, a similar group of ESL teachers, ESL Directors, and ESL education faculty gathered in Indianapolis to refine the focus of the White paper following three meetings with ESL stakeholders in Indianapolis, Northern Indiana and West Central Indiana during the 2016-2017 school year. Following this process and analysis, the representative group identified the following five recommendations.

1. **ELL Knowledge:** Creation of a knowledge base of ESL expertise and best practices based on current ESL research;
2. **Pre-service education (future educators):** Completion requirement of basic research-based ESL methods courses for all K-12 Indiana teaching licensure candidates;
3. **In-service teacher education and leadership (current educators):** Completion requirement of advanced research-based ESL methods and policy courses offered by universities and/or approved professional development content by vetted professional development providers for all licensed K-12 ESL teachers, ESL program administrators, ESL directors and practicing general education teachers;
4. **Educational Administration:** Completion requirement of basic research-based ESL

methods and policy courses for all K-12 administrator preparation (principal, assistant principal, central office coordinators, Superintendents) within Indiana educational leadership programs at universities; and

5. **ELL Teacher/Student Ratios:** Establishment and maintenance of appropriate caps on ESL teacher-ELL student ratios.

In light of these recommendations, we, the representative membership of INTESOL, urge the following:

## **PRE-SERVICE K-12 EDUCATION**

### **Adequate Preparation for Teacher Licensure Candidates**

Elementary, secondary, and K-12 teacher candidates are future educators seeking initial teacher licensure through an approved university teacher licensure program. Indiana is one of 15 states with no requirement of ESL methods, policy, or pedagogy courses in state-approved licensure programs (Tanenbaum et al., 2012). INTESOL recommends the following requirements for all initial licensure teacher candidates at the elementary, secondary, and/or K-12 licensure levels and their respective university of preparation:

1. Completion of one specific, IDOE approved ESL course taught by a licensed ESL specialist;
2. Revision of K-12 licensure courses in *all* K-12 licensure programs to include ESL content and methods as required components of all other teacher preparation courses through consultation with, and advising by, a licensed ESL specialist; and
3. Identification of ESL-qualified person to serve as a point of contact to schools: Each teacher education program with an approved ESL licensure program must identify at least one qualified, preferably ESL licensed, faculty member to serve as the ESL point of contact.

### **Preparation Programs for Future School Administrators**

School administrators oversee all components of instruction, service and evaluation for all students and therefore must understand legal compliance, policy implications, funding streams and ESL research-based instruction and must be able to identify, hire, and evaluate high quality ESL personnel to staff their ELD programs (US Department of Justice & US Department of Education, 2015) and observe high-quality instruction for ELLs in general education classrooms. INTESOL recommends requiring a specific, approved 3-hour ESL methods course for all completers of state-approved K-12 administrator licensure preparation programs:

1. Provision of a 3-hour ESL methods course that is taught by a qualified, licensed, ESL specialist; and

2. Inclusion of program curriculum that features ESL content (policy, methods, assessment, parent involvement, etc.) explicitly threaded throughout the other courses through consultation with a licensed ESL specialist.

## **IN-SERVICE K-12 EDUCATION**

### **Practicing K-12 educators**

Practicing K-12 educators are teachers already serving ELLs in their ESL, general education or mainstream classroom settings. While it is true that some practicing educators are in schools and districts with a low density of ELLs, and other educators are in districts with a high density, regardless of enrollment density, *Lau v. Nichols* (1974), *Castañeda v. Pickard* (1986), US Department of Justice and US Department of Education (2015), the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (2015), and Indiana's *Non English Speaking Program* (2011, 2014), all mandate that ELLs receive ELD instruction from highly qualified and effective ESL teachers who are prepared and licensed in approved university teacher licensure programs taught by ESL specialist teacher educators.

INTESOL recommends the Indiana K-12 ELL license be required of all educators serving in the following roles:

1. Teachers of English language development (ELD) classes (whether preschool, primary, intermediate, middle, or high school);
2. District-level ESL coordinators and directors
3. ESL instructional coaches

INTESOL recommends the following for general education and/or mainstream teachers in these context-specific conditions:

1. **High Population ELL schools/districts:** When the percentage of ELLs in any classroom or course section exceeds 20%, teachers assigned to those sections should demonstrate their readiness to teach ELLs by successful completion of a minimum of 6.0 hours of approved ESL methods courses at a university with a state-approved ESL licensure program or vetted professional development content with a 6.0 credit equivalent.
2. **Low Population EL schools/districts:** When the percentage of ELLs in the total school or district enrollment is less than 20%, the school/district may choose to designate one licensed ESL teacher to serve as Teacher of Record (TOR) and to provide required ELD instruction for every 100 ELLs enrolled in the school/district.

## ADMINISTRATIVE K-12 LEADERSHIP

Practicing K-12 administrators oversee all elements of ESL program implementation. While it is true that some practicing educators are in schools and districts with a low density of ELLs, and other educators are in districts with a high density, regardless of enrollment density, federal and state laws require effective oversight of the ELL student community.

INTESOL recommends the following for principals, assistant principals and central office administrators responsible for oversight of these individuals align with these context-specific conditions:

1. **High Population ELL schools:** When the percentage of ELLs in any school setting exceeds 20%, all administrators assigned to lead those schools in any administrative capacity should demonstrate their readiness to hire, supervise, support, and evaluate the ELL staff, ELD programs and related professional development by successful completion of a minimum of 6.0 hours of approved ELL methods courses at a university with a state-approved ELL licensure program or through an approved and vetted ESL professional development venue of a 6.0 hour equivalent.
2. **Low population ELL schools/districts:** When the percentage of ELLs in the total school and/or district enrollment is less than 20%, the school/district may choose to designate an administrator who is a licensed ESL teacher to serve as the designated school ESL administrator and/or district Director or Coordinator.

### How Indiana Can Realize these ELL Recommendations

The process of improving conditions for Indiana's ELLs will require four key actions:

1. Creation of adequate, but consequential, timelines and deadlines in which current mainstream and unlicensed ESL educators must meet the new criteria;
2. Funding that is ample and earmarked for tuition for educators to support completion of required courses toward new criteria;
3. Funding that is ample and earmarked for tuition to encourage practicing teachers and teacher licensure candidates to pursue ESL licensure through state-approved university teacher education programs; and
4. Commitment to do all that is necessary to ensure Hoosier ELLs are receiving full access to the K-12 curriculum and the supports required by state and federal policy and guidelines.

We, the membership of INTESOL, understand these actions as only beginning steps toward meeting a minimum quality threshold, but also as a worthy investment in our collective future,

one in which the development of multilingualism and multiliteracy is highly valued for all of Indiana's children. Hoosier ELLs, who comprise the fastest growing demographic in our state deserve high-quality, research-based ESL education designed for their specific needs and rights.

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**Table 1:**  
 Participating INTESOL  
 Collaborative Members by Region,  
 November 11, 2016



Name	Region	Affiliation
George Iber	1	University of Evansville
Tonya Scheppers	1	Southwest Dubois County School Corporation
DeAnne Taggart	1	Southern Indiana Education Center
Jane Wilhelmus	1	Warrick County School Corporation
Diane Altemeyer	2	Seymour Community School Corporation
Kelli Dehr	2	Greater Clark County Schools
Magdalena Herdoiz-Estevez	2	Indiana University Southeast
Quita Rose	2	New Albany Floyd County
N. Ann Rider	3	Indiana State University
Donna Albrecht	4	Anderson University
Esther Kant	4	Anderson Community Schools
Karen McKinney	4	Muncie Community Schools
Aija Pocock	4	IUPUC
Lynne Stallings	4	Ball State University
Pamela Storm	4	Anderson Community Schools
Natalia Ulloa	4	Shelbyville Central Schools
Amy Carrington	5	Crawfordsville Community schools
Tami Hicks	5	Wabash Valley Education Center
Mieke Lambrecht-Kendrick	5	Noblesville Schools
Jennifer Miller	5	Clinton Prairie Schools
Trish Morita-Mullaney	5	Purdue University
Kate Nearing	5	North Montgomery School Corporation
Jennifer Wheat Townsend	5	Noblesville Schools
Wayne Wright	5	Purdue University
Elizabeth DelMuro	6	School City of Hammond
Jen Hernandez	6	Portage Schools
Julie Remschneider	6	Northwest Indiana Education Service Center
Greg Ruiz	6	School City of Hammond
Anthony Salinas	6	School City of Hammond
Cristina Sanchez	6	School City of Hammond
Karen Blaha	7	Goshen Schools
Rebecca Ippel	7	Plymouth Community School Corporation
Kathryn Lichon	7	University of Notre Dame

Carmen Macharaschwili	7	Holy Cross College
Karolyn Osborn	7	Plymouth Community School Corporation
Shoshannah McKinney	8	Huntington University
Catherine Otto	8	Fort Wayne Community Schools
Becky Perkins	8	East Noble Schools
Susan R. Adams	9	Butler University
Robin Bigham	9	MSD Lawrence Township
Jessica Brenn	9	Indiana Connections Academy
Katie Brooks	9	Butler University
Jessica Feeser	9	Indianapolis Public Schools
Laurie Ferry	9	Central Indiana Educational Services Center
Dominique Franklin	9	Hoosier Academies
Haley Frischkorn	9	MSD Washington Township
Michelle Greene	9	IUPUI
Carlota Holder	9	Enlace Academy
Brynn Nightenhelser	9	IUPUI
Annela Teemant	9	IUPUI
Linda Watkins	9	MSD of Decatur Township

**Table 2:**

Participating INTESOL Collaborative Members by Region, November 10, 2017

<b>Name</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
George Iber	1	University of Evansville
Jacqueline Klue	1	Vincennes University
Marcia Mishler	1	South Gibson
Donna Albrecht	2	Indiana University Southeast
Quita Rose	2	New Albany Floyd Schools
John Skomp	2	New Albany Floyd Schools
Emily Suh	2	Indiana University Southeast
Robin Bigham	3	Independent Educational Consultant
Lynne Stallings	4	Ball State University
Pam Storm	4	Anderson Community Schools
Mieke Lambrecht-Kendrick	5	Noblesville Schools
Trish Morita-Mullaney	5	Purdue University
Jen Townsend	5	Noblesville Schools
Denise Frazier	6	Purdue University Northwest
Jen Hernandez	6	Portage Township Schools
Dolores Pfenning	7	Goshen Community Schools
Shoshannah Hernandez	8	Huntington University
Emily Keirns	8	Fort Wayne Community Schools
Susan Adams	9	Butler University
Jessica Brenn	9	Indiana Connections Academy
Katie Brooks	9	Butler University

Irina Carr	9	Tindley Accelerated Schools
Brooke Cisco-Kandel	9	Butler University
Jessica Feeser	9	Indianapolis Public Schools
Haley Frischkorn	9	MSD Washington Township
Michelle Greene	9	IUPUI
Carlota Holder	9	Enlace Academy
Erika Tran	9	MSD Lawrence Township