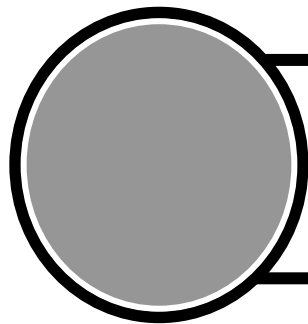


Renewing Toronto's ESL Programs

*...charting a course towards more
effective ESL program delivery*



A Report from the
Community Social Planning Council
of Toronto
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The Community Social Planning Council of Toronto is a not-for-profit community organization, committed to independent social planning at the local and city-wide levels, in order to improve the quality of life for all people in Toronto.

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Renewing Toronto's ESL Programs

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Introduction

One of the key tasks facing most immigrants to Toronto is the acquisition of English as a Second Language (ESL). But while there is broad agreement at all levels of government that this task must be met with appropriate educational support from government, the implementation processes for that support have been fraught with complexity and ambiguity (Burnaby and James, 2000 and Donkor, 2004).

Immigrants to Toronto arrive in one of the most diverse cities in the world. Learning English is one of the keys to successful settlement. With the increase in immigration to our city comes the increased demand for ESL programs. But has Toronto kept pace? Are our ESL programs meeting the needs of these new immigrants, or the needs of the larger society? Evidence indicates we are not making the grade. Hetty Roessingh, a University of Calgary professor, states, "Canada has successfully structured its immigration system to draw the best and brightest from other countries, yet it seems willing to squander both their talent and that of their children" (Duffy, 2004f). Our ESL programs are in critical need of renewal.

In the report that follows, we present how ESL programs are currently delivered to children and adults in Toronto, and discuss the responsibilities and responses of different levels of government. We highlight service and funding gaps and through this discussion, identify core principles on which to create a better framework for effective ESL programs. We make thirty-nine recommendations that will help Toronto chart a new course to move from our current situation into better integration of immigrants through more effective ESL program delivery.

The Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this report is to:

- *First, examine* the difficult realities currently faced in delivering ESL programming in Toronto.
 - *Second, identify* core principles and proven ideals which create an effective framework for successful ESL program delivery.
 - *Third, recommend* actions that will narrow the gap between current realities and that ideal effective framework.
-

Preliminary Notes

For the purpose of this report, the majority of the statistics, observations, and recommendations regarding elementary and secondary education focus on the public school board. References therefore are made to the Toronto District School Board (TDSB), which was amalgamated in 1998 from the former boards of education in the Greater Toronto Area. These boards include the former Conseil des Ecoles Francaises de la communaute urbaine de Toronto (the French-language board), East York, Etobicoke, North York, Scarborough, Toronto, and York Boards of Education.

While we were able to utilize data from an extensive literature review and sources such as People for Education and the Campaign for Stable Funding of Adult ESL Classes, we also included information obtained from direct discussions with parents, students, teachers, school administrators, and community workers.

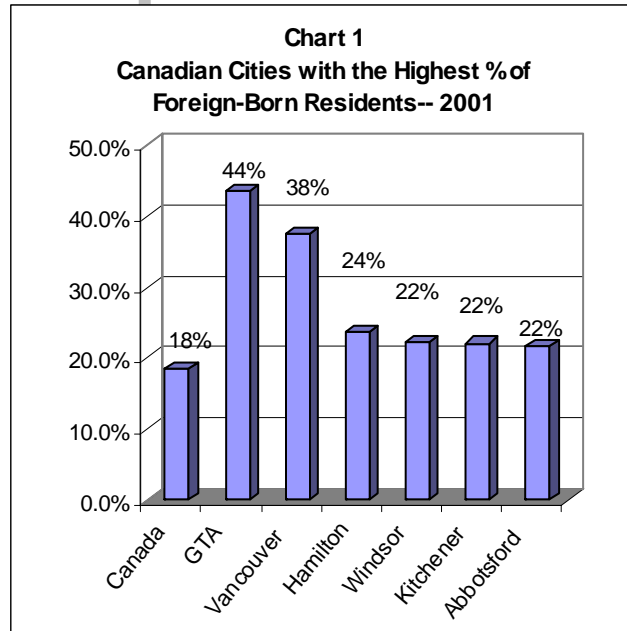
Throughout this report, we will be using the term ‘immigrants’ to refer to recently arrived residents of Canada and their immediate offspring (Burnaby and James, 2003). We will therefore refer collectively to refugees as immigrants, while not intending to minimize the differences between these two groups.

All acronyms used in this paper can be found in Appendix 1 at the end of this report.

The Larger Social Context

...the challenge of increasing immigration

Each year, about 230,000 immigrants arrive in Canada and 55% of those newcomers choose Ontario, with over 75,000 settling in Toronto. Census data show that the Greater Toronto Area has

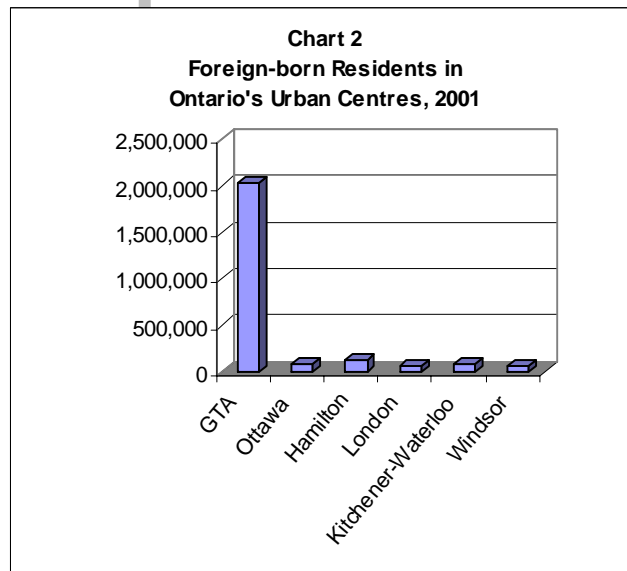


<http://www.statcan.ca/english/Pgdb/demo46b.htm>

“more foreign-born residents as a percentage of its population than any other city in the world” (People for Education, 2003b, pg. 11). In 2001, the GTA had the highest percentage of foreign-born residents in Canada (see Chart 1).

Immigrants in the city are from approximately 170 countries speaking more than 100 languages. In Toronto, 42% of the population are immigrants to Canada, more than four times the Ontario average.

Ontario’s urban centres have increased steadily over the past years and continue to increase. In 2001, the GTA had by far the highest number of foreign-born residents (see Chart 2). Seventy-eight

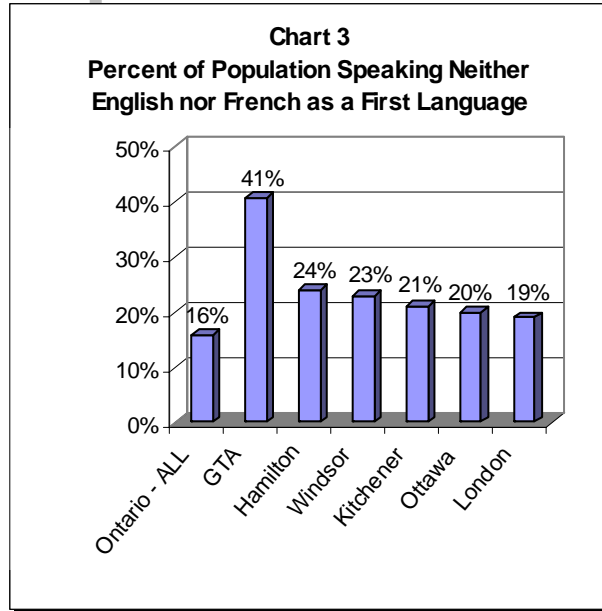


<http://www.statcan.ca/english/Pgdb/demo46b.htm>

Overall, the percentages of foreign-born immigrants in Ontario reside in Toronto, with refugees making up 2.5% of the city’s population.

The top five source countries for immigrants to Toronto in 1999 were in Asia: China, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and the Philippines. There have also been significant numbers of immigrants from Africa, the Caribbean, and

Central and South America. Racial minorities, including those who are Canadian born, now make up more than 45% of Toronto's population.



<http://www12.statcan.ca/english/profil01/PlaceSearchForm1.cfm>

The percentage of the population of the GTA who speak neither French nor English as a first language is rising constantly, totalling 41% of the population of the GTA (see Chart 3). The number of residents who report they speak a language other than English or French at home has increased by an average of 17% from 1996 to 2001 (People for Education, 2002).

To help these immigrants learn English, all levels of government, boards of education, colleges and universities and other private and community organizations provide an array of ESL programs for children to seniors. However, due to a variety of reasons, these ESL programs have all suffered from various degrees of neglect. It is now time to develop a strategic plan to renew this important public service.

Jurisdiction

...who takes responsibility

The funding and delivery of ESL programs in Toronto is outlined in the chart below. To summarize, the provincial government funds all of the elementary and secondary ESL programs. The provincial government also funds ESL programs for adults and provides grants for settlement programs. The school boards deliver the provincially funded ESL programs. The federal government funds the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) Program and corresponding settlement programs. These programs are delivered by service provider organizations (SPOs), including community agencies, school boards, and colleges. There have also been private for-profit companies delivering the LINC program. It is important to note that the federal government does not fund any programs for school-aged newcomers.

Programs	Funding Source	Program Delivery
Elementary Programs	Provincial Government	School Boards
Secondary Programs	Provincial Government	School Boards
Adult ESL/ Settlement Programs	Provincial Government	Community Agencies School Boards
Adult LINC/ Settlement Programs	Federal Government	Community Agencies School Boards Colleges

Historic Development of ESL Programs in Toronto

...how we have tried to meet the challenge

Elementary and Secondary Education

Every year, more than 12,000 elementary and secondary students arrive in Toronto from other countries and start their new education in TDSB schools. Consequently, approximately one in three or 34% of students in Toronto public schools were born outside of Canada. Below is a list of other characteristics of Toronto's unique student population as outlined by the Chair and other senior officials from the newly amalgamated TDSB in March 1998. This list was developed in response to the federal government report, *Not Just Numbers* (Immigration Legislative Review, 1997).

The ESL Challenge in Toronto Public Schools

- Over 70 languages and dialects spoken by students from over 100 different countries are represented in Toronto public schools.
- School-based translations in more than 20 different languages are required for home and school communications.
- A large number of students come from countries with varying educational standards and many students have major gaps in their education.
- Many students have low levels of literacy in their own language.
- Many students and their families lack familiarity with the institutions and customs of Canadian life.
- The high mobility rate of new arrivals creates educational continuity problems as students often change schools during the school year.
- A higher percentage of immigrant and refugee children are living in poverty, which affects student learning.
- Immigrant and refugee students are at a higher risk of dropping out which results in higher levels of unemployment or income maintenance support.

Chair and Senior Officials, TDSB, 1998

Historically, school boards in Ontario have developed their own strategies for teaching English as a Second Language in public schools (Burnaby, James and Regier, 2000). As early as 1965, educators were faced by the challenges of identifying the needs of non-English-speaking pupils, the lack of effective assessment tools, the scarcity of curriculum materials and the existence of few qualified teachers. Over the years, individual school boards, schools, and teachers created their own models of ESL and other support programs to help educate immigrant students in our public schools. There has never been a national plan for the education and integration of immigrant children and youth. Provincial and local policies and programs have evolved on an ad hoc basis, often with limited reference to research data.

Historically, both federal and provincial governments found that meeting the needs of immigrants, including the education of their children, was fraught with political hazards. In their initial attempts, governments created a vast array of funding channels and delivery models, which unfortunately often felt like a maze to both students and service providers. The provincial government, for its part, tended to keep a lower profile and did not launch any major ESL initiatives, despite the obvious need for a clear policy on ESL to help teachers, schools, and immigrant students. Even the best efforts from both the federal and provincial levels of government lacked a coordinated approach.

Early Local Initiatives

It is in this context that the former Toronto Board of Education initiated a number of innovative policies, programs, and practices to help with the education of immigrant students. In 1970, the Board began to conduct *The Every Student Survey* involving all students in the education system to determine if birthplace, home language, or socio-economic status influenced access to school programs. Based on the collected data in the Survey, Cummins (1981) made the pivotal analysis that "it takes at least five years, on the average, for immigrant children who arrive in the host country after the age of six to approach grade norms..." (p.38). He also raised the concern of schools not meeting the educational needs of immigrant students and the potential danger of premature testing of immigrant students. The former boards of education that now make up the TDSB attempted to deal with these concerns by implementing the following initiatives:

- Additional ESL teachers
- Teaching assistants
- First language tutors and mentors

- First language and international (heritage) language programs, especially in the low socio-economic areas of Metropolitan Toronto
- School-based nutrition programs
- Child-care and parenting centres
- First language assessment
- Reception centres
- Summer school programs
- Parent conferences and meetings for specific ethnolinguistic groups
- Academic upgrading programs for newcomers with limited prior schooling
- Curriculum resource material for teachers and for classroom use
- Library resources in various languages

Importantly, the former Toronto Board of Education developed policies on equity and parental involvement to encourage respect for diversity. In addition, they provided understanding and support for immigrant students and their families.

The seven former boards that now make up the TDSB, acting financially in concert, were able to implement most of these initiatives to assist ESL students because they had a large tax base from which to draw revenue and also had control over their own expenses.

Beginning in 1998, the seven Metro area school boards were amalgamated into the Toronto District School Board with over 300,000 students and became the largest school board in Canada. As if merging seven major institutions into one did not create enough chaos, the provincial government also took over the tax base for education and introduced a severely restrictive funding formula, negatively impacting on virtually all aspects of the public school system. The funding formula has had a dramatic effect on ESL programming in today's education system.

Current Elementary Education Programs

Depending on the school, ESL students are assigned to partially self-contained ESL classes and/or integrated into the regular classes with short-term and small group withdrawals. Some schools provide no direct ESL support at all or only for a limited period of time. Other schools have used any type of resource available, such as librarians, to provide extra time to assist ESL students facing specific learning issues.

The Literacy Enrichment Academic Program (LEAP) is the only program designed specifically for students between ages 11 and 16

who have limited prior schooling and gaps in their education from their own countries due to war, trauma, poverty or other reasons. This program is designed specifically for children with at least average academic ability and intelligence. There are approximately 40 LEAP programs in elementary and middle schools across the TDSB offering half-day classes for students between ages 11 and 16.

A concern identified by interviewees is that there exists neither a program designed for ESL students with special needs nor a special education program adapted for ESL learners. This lack of specific programming is often a recipe for failure at school.

Current Secondary Education Programs

The last major survey from the former Toronto Board of Education in 1997 contains the best information about student diversity in secondary schools. The *1997 Every Secondary Student Survey* (Cheng and Yau, 1999) reveals that about half of the secondary students in the former Toronto Board of Education were racial minorities, the majority of whom were first generation immigrants born in different parts of Asia, the Caribbean, South and Central America, the Middle East and Africa. Almost half of the students were non-native speakers of English, representing over 70 different language groups. Visible minorities made up over half of the secondary school student body.

In addition, the researchers also found that visible minority students were over-represented by families from lower socio-economic background (63% versus 38% among white students). Over two-thirds of these students were first-generation immigrants speaking English as a second language. In the amalgamated TDSB, providing support for the difficulties facing ESL students has become increasingly complex.

In 2003, there were approximately 14,000 ESL students at the TDSB participating in three main programs at the secondary level: English as a Second Language (ESL), English Literacy Development (ELD), and Literacy Enrichment Academic Program (LEAP) for students under 16 years of age.

The ESL program assists students whose first language is not English and who have educational experiences in their own countries that help in their success in the secondary school program. There are potentially five levels of ESL. At the lower levels, there are intensive supports. Students may be required to take some mainstream courses. At the higher levels, ESL students have less ESL support and take more mainstream courses.

The ELD program focuses on students who have limited schooling in their own country or significant gaps in their educational background. The students may have difficulties with transferring first language learning to the second language. Often, these students will have added difficulties in numeracy. The ELD program has potentially four levels.

Literacy Enrichment Academic Program (LEAP) discussed earlier is an accelerated program for students between ages 11 and 16 who came to Ontario with limited prior schooling and limited literacy and numeracy skills in the first language due to war, trauma, refugee movements or other difficult circumstances. There are presently 15 LEAP programs in TDSB high schools.

There is little research and minimal tracking of ESL students by the TDSB to show where the ESL, ELD and LEAP students end up after graduation from high school. Some of the teachers who we interviewed noted that few students from these programs enter university. Duffy (2004e) reveals that the analysis of the achievement of immigrant students in Toronto schools stopped suddenly in 1998 when the seven local school boards were amalgamated to create the TDSB. Duffy argues that the TDSB chose to reduce the number of full-time analysts from 20 in 1998, to three. The work time of the remaining staff has been allocated mainly to the introduction of a computerized record system, leaving other important tasks stranded (Duffy, 2004e).

One study on the dropout rate of immigrant children conducted by Rob Brown (1999) found a dropout rate of 28%. For students coming from single parent families, the rate increased to 77%. Calgary-based researcher Hetty Roessingh has conducted the only long-term tracking of ESL students in Canada, and discovered that 74 % of all ESL students dropped out of high school (Duffy, 2004e).

In the *1997 Every Secondary Student Survey: Detailed Findings* (Cheng and Yau, 1999), researchers tracked the aspirations of students from low social-economic status, many of whom were ESL students. The proportion of low social-economic status students who aspired to university was about 40% compared to 70% of their peers with high social-economic status.

Post Secondary Programs

Although the primary focus of this paper is government-funded initiatives, it is important to mention ESL programs at the college and university levels. At these institutions in Toronto, ESL programs are focused on visa students who require higher levels of

English for the purposes of either admission into post-secondary programs or for general knowledge of English.

Colleges and universities have specific admission requirements for students whose first language is not English. Usually, the completion of high school in Canada is sufficient for entry into programs with no other testing required. However, some institutions require a set TOEFL score even though students have graduated from a Canadian high school. For students who have not completed high school in Canada, colleges and universities require either the completion of their specific ESL programs at the same college or university or a set TOEFL score. This set TOEFL score requires a sophisticated knowledge of English grammar, which many in the field feel is not obtainable by Canadian-born students. In addition, a fair amount of the test is culturally inappropriate for foreign-born students.

Although these programs are geared towards visa students, there are some immigrants who attend these programs due to a lack of information on other courses. A number of interviewees noted that some immigrants attend these programs because they are disenchanted with other ESL and LINC programs.

In our interviews, many college admissions officers noted that students who have an ESL background often find college courses difficult and are unable to keep up with the coursework. Information on ESL dropout rates at the college and university level is not readily available. In his report *ESL, Ethno-Racial Origin, and Academic Achievement of University Students* (2004), Professor Paul Grayson surveyed 5,830 York University students comparing grade point averages between ESL students and their Canadian-born counterparts. He found that the GPA of newly arrived male ESL students is 20% lower than the Canadian-born students. Even female ESL students who have been in Canada since elementary school have a GPA 11.4% lower. Without continued research, information on accessibility, success rates and issues facing immigrant students will not be uncovered.

Adult Programs

Not-for-profit

Studies into immigrant economic performance by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (2001) show a direct correlation between knowledge of one of Canada's official languages and higher employment earnings. In fact, immigrants who arrive in Canada with little or no ability to communicate in English or French often become permanently trapped in occupations that do not "fully utilize their education and skills" (pg 24). Immigrants with

knowledge of English or French contribute not only economically but also significantly in social and cultural aspects. Both the federal and provincial governments have addressed the need for language programs through separate programs, operating independently from each other.

At the provincial level, programs have significantly changed in the past years, moving from one government branch to the next. At the present time, both the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities coordinate the provincial ESL programs. Provincial ESL programs have been delivered primarily through boards of education. The funding formula implemented in 1997 for public education has had a negative impact on the delivery of these ESL programs. While there is funding for teachers' salaries, funding for non-academic essentials, such as classroom space, heating and care-taking, is not provided. As a result, many adult ESL classes have been forced out of public schools. Community centres are basically asked to conduct these provincial ESL programs at a loss and subsequently, many have opted out of delivering these programs all together (Ontario Association of Adult and Continuing Education School Board Administrators, 2004).

Provincial ESL programs, operating primarily through the school boards, have few resources from which to develop curriculum, conduct assessments, administer student placements and monitor students' progress. Although some schools administer an assessment based on the Canadian Language Benchmarks, there is no standardized method and subsequently, little tracking of students' progress.

The federally funded ESL programs have also gone through many changes. A revised language program, LINC, began in 1990 to address many of the issues of previous programs, with a focus on the concept that language training is a fundamental right for all immigrants. Previous programs were directed towards those who were destined for the labour force and thus excluded many women (Abella, 1984, Belfiore and Heller 1992). In fact, a Charter challenge was initiated against the government for discrimination against women (Doherty, 1992). There were also issues regarding services for seniors, youth, people with limited education and literacy learners (Burnaby, 1992).

With the introduction of the LINC program, language programming for new immigrants began to be seen as a settlement service and not a program for citizenship preparation or vocational training. The inception of this program brought about changes, such as childminding and transportation support. While these provisions have been attributed to an increase in the number of disadvantaged

immigrants who are accessing LINC, there is great concern, however, that there is not enough space to meet the needs in the community (Cleghorn, 2000).

In 1992, Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), recognizing the need for consistency in the assessment of Canada's official languages, worked with their provincial counterparts to create the Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks. A set of national standards for ESL and ESL literacy programming, called Benchmarks, was developed to provide "standards so that each ESL school's certificates will have meaning beyond that school and so that credits can be transferred from one school to another or from ESL to regular classes" (Citizenship and Immigration, 2001, pg. 12). Also, CIC notes that the benchmarks provide a set of national standards or reference points for ESL programming which is accepted nationally for use in assessing a student's language abilities.

There are five LINC levels, each based on the Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB). For those who face literacy challenges, there is also a literacy component of LINC based on the Canadian Literacy Language Benchmarks. Added to the separate literacy assessment, the government has also made a distinction in the treatment of ESL literacy learners. Class sizes in the LINC classes usually range from 20-25 while in the literacy program, the class size ranges from 10-15. The ESL literacy programs are based on ESL literacy benchmarks and a literacy curriculum developed specifically for ESL literacy learners.

The present process of attending any LINC program in Toronto begins with the CLB assessment, administered at various YMCA centres. Prospective students are placed in the LINC level of their lowest benchmark and their information is entered into a province-wide computer program, which tracks the movement of all students. When students complete the benchmarks for LINC 5, they graduate from the program. There is no official exit assessment or testing.

Since early 2004, the federal government has begun the process of negotiating an agreement with the provincial government for the downloading of settlement services. This is expected to be completed within a year. The provincial government has also begun a public review of adult education including adult ESL programs. It is expected that these two new initiatives will have a significant impact on the funding and delivery of adult ESL programs. It is, therefore, important to conduct a comparative analysis of LINC and provincial ESL programs in order to guide the development of future provincial adult ESL programs in anticipation of the new Canada-Ontario Immigration Agreement.

Adult Programs

For-profit

The for-profit ESL programs found in Toronto are not part of the primary focus of this report, although their services are important to mention. Over 144,000 foreign students (visa students) in Canada attend universities, colleges, public and private high schools and ESL programs (Grewal, 2004).

In Toronto, many private schools offer either ESL or high school credit courses, and some offer both. Some public high schools also offer limited spaces for visa students on a full cost recovery basis. The companies that operate the private ESL programs are unregulated by any government agency. Only the teaching of Ontario Credit Courses is within the purview of the Ontario Ministry of Education and Training. Individual schools determine other issues such as teachers' qualifications, salaries, non-credit course curriculum and teaching standards.

One issue that has arisen in our research is that although these visa students pay full fees for their studies, they are often not aware of or entitled to any support services. Many of these students are young adults alone in Canada. They must deal with cultural and other issues in addition to their often stressful academic studies, without parental guidance and community support.

Core Principles

...identifying standards for best practices and solutions

Given the challenges delineated to this point, it is clear that the solutions to the current difficulties of Toronto's ESL system must be as multi-faceted as the issues and problems. Every successful ESL program is unique and must customize the way in which it applies the wide array of ESL research.

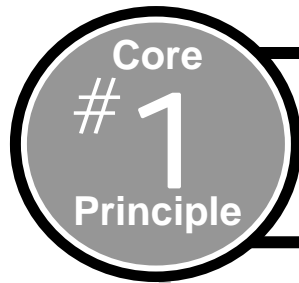
However, it becomes equally clear that any and all solutions must be founded on a supported, principle-based practice. Based on best practices and research in the field of ESL and education, we have distilled a set of eight key principles which we see as fundamental to the establishment of effective and successful ESL programs.

Core Principles of Effective ESL Programs

An effective ESL program will necessarily include the following core principles:

1. Equitable access for all who are in need of ESL programming.
2. An accountable and effective programming framework designed to meet student needs.
3. A thorough and consistent assessment process for all ESL students.
4. Placement that reflects ESL students' potential.
5. Specific ESL literacy components for those students facing literacy challenges.
6. Ongoing monitoring of individual student progress through appropriate assessment methods.
7. Inclusion of ESL methodology, cross-cultural and equity studies in all teacher education programs.
8. Support structures that enable the progress of ESL students through community and family involvement.

In the following pages, we explore these principles in the context of the current ESL situation in Toronto and make recommendations that can help bridge the gap between the current reality and the goal of effective and successful ESL program delivery.



Equitable access for all who are in need of ESL programming

An effective ESL system will ensure that all individuals, regardless of age, home country, first language, gender, length of time in Canada, work status, and ability to learn a second language, have equitable access to ESL programs.

The Current Service Gap

Accessibility for ESL programs throughout Toronto is limited due to various regulations imposed by different governments. These regulations hinder new Canadians from obtaining the essential background in the English language and culture that is required for successful integration into our city and society. Governments

responsible for funding ESL programs have built eligibility criteria around restrictive and exclusive models rather than on sound researched inclusive approaches.

“...students may require from five to seven years to develop the ability to understand the academic language used in textbooks and to use English to express the increasingly complex and abstract concepts encountered in the higher grades.”

*Ministry of Education
The Ontario Curriculum-Grades 1-8:
ESL & English Literacy Development
2001, pg. 6*

Over the years, many researchers and the government's own ESL curriculum documents have emphasized that the acquisition of English as a Second Language takes between five and seven years if proficiency is to be achieved (Cummins, 1981 and Ministry of Education, 2001). Students from countries where war or trauma kept them out of school for long periods face even more complex challenges in attaining proficiency in English because of limited education in their first language.

In addition, these students often face challenging social issues. Research has shown that it takes five or more years for school-aged ESL students to catch up to their peers in using English for academic purposes. Students who arrive with gaps in their schooling, and students experiencing psychological or social difficulties because of difficult immigration circumstances or traumatic events before their arrival in Canada, may need much more support over a longer period of time.

Even with research on the lengthy time required for learning a second language, both federal and provincial governments' ESL programs disregard this finding and instead impose restrictions and limitations on who is eligible for the programs along with the length of time allotted to complete the programs. In 1997, the provincial government created one of the most restrictive regulations and funding formulas for public education, severely impacting on ESL education in Toronto.

Funding Exclusions

Provincial funding formulas for elementary and secondary ESL include only those students who have been in Canada for four years or less and who have come to Canada from non-English speaking countries. Funding does *not* include students who:

- Are born in Canada but cannot speak English upon entering the school system (although an insignificant funding allocation exists, it is based on out-of-date data);
- Enter Canada from an English speaking country but cannot speak English;
- Enter Canada from an English speaking country and speak a dialect of English;
- Take longer than four years to learn English;
- Arrive after the beginning of the school year (ESL funding is given to school boards at the beginning of each year and based on the number of students present in September).

One Toronto elementary school principal reports that many of his students were *born in Canada but grew up speaking home languages other than English*. To the frustration of the principal, the ESL needs of these students are not recognized by the provincial government for funding purposes.

Faced with this inadequate funding, the school has been forced to develop a temporary 'home-made' solution using resource teachers (untrained in TESL) to support ESL and literacy, working alongside regular classroom teachers.

The provincial government has not attempted to reconcile this discrepancy between funding levels and the academic needs of ESL students in elementary and secondary education.

On March 3, 1998, the Chair and senior officials from the amalgamated Toronto District School Board made the following statement in a submission to the ministerial consultation on *Not Just Numbers* (Immigration Legislative Review, 1997): "Toronto is an extraordinary community and a city that has been rated as one of the best in the world. This is in large part because of a successful integration of newcomers into the institutions of Canada

through the school system.... The provincial government has taken over education funding in Ontario and we will not be able to define educational needs nor address them with appropriate programming" (pg. 2).

The federally funded LINC program for adults also limits access to immigrants for a maximum of three years from the time the student starts the training (CIC, LINC Application Package, 2005-2007, Program Overview—Duration of Language Training). These restrictions are again in direct conflict with most of the current research in the field of ESL and second language. Some community administrators of LINC programs were fearful that governments might actually decrease the time allotted for immigrants to complete the LINC program.

In addition to the three-year limit, students in LINC must be landed immigrants or convention refugees. This eliminates refugee claimants from the program. Since LINC is focused on 'newcomers', Canadian citizens are also not permitted to attend, thus eliminating a second category of people. Both of these restrictions create barriers and deny equal access for many adults who face challenges in the English language.

One of the restrictions that has had a negative impact on women is that of the three-year limit. Immigrant women are often tied to home responsibilities and child rearing. They often have many interruptions in their studies due to their family responsibilities. The three-year time restriction leaves women at a serious disadvantage. Women are subsequently denied equal access by the length of time allotted in the program. In order to accommodate the needs of immigrants, it is essential to provide language training to all who are in need, regardless of the length of time in Canada.

"Immigrant students are slipping through the cracks of a patchwork adult education system under the joint control of a province short of money and a federal government that is simply short-sighted."

*Letter to the Editor
Toronto Star
August 21, 2004*

In the past years, one challenging issue that continues to surface is that of a lack of programming for higher levels of ESL. The present level (Benchmark 6/7) is not sufficient for entrance into many educational settings and the workforce. Many ESL/LINC administrators are advocating for increased and stable funding for workplace-specific ESL, higher levels of LINC, and other support services. However, some LINC administrators do not argue for higher LINC level programs but rather for more workplace-specific English and English for academic learning programs. While this may be an admirable goal, ESL programs must be supported but without sacrificing accessibility to ESL programming for the broader community of need.

In December 2003, Citizenship and Immigration Canada was given \$25 million over five years (and an announced additional \$15 million per year) to develop language training initiatives to meet labour market demands. Enhanced Language Training (ELT) projects were thus developed to provide job-specific ESL programs at Canadian Language Benchmarks levels 7-10 to help those immigrants with basic English skills. The federal and provincial governments continue to partner and provide added funding for these language training projects. In 2005, the governments jointly invested \$3.4 million in 13 Enhanced Language Training projects in Ontario.

Unfortunately, the condition that costs must be shared by participating agencies has meant that many highly qualified organizations cannot afford to get involved. Subsequently, there are only a few ELT projects in the Greater Toronto Area. In British Columbia and Manitoba, where federal and provincial settlement agreements exist, there are 16 and 13 projects in progress respectively. Since the Canada-Ontario Agreement is at least a year away, the frustration of many immigrant students is obvious (for a review of this subject, see Goar, 2004: Shoddy Welcome for Newcomers. *Toronto Star*, 18 August).

The federal government has been receptive to some of the needs of the immigrant community and developed assistance programs to increase accessibility of immigrants to the programs. However, these positive initiatives have been slowly eroding. For example, when transportation was found to limit access to programs, the federal government provided funding for transportation assistance. However, the amount of assistance has been steadily reduced and only minimally subsidizes the actual cost. The continual monitoring of this assistance as well as administering the small reserves of assistance has created frustration among many organizations. This once positive initiative of the federal government to assist with transportation costs has had a severe impact on seniors, the disabled and especially women with children.

In our interviews, another growing concern that emerged was around the childminding program. Some felt that the long waitlists indicate that the program has not kept pace with the needs of the community. In situations where parents had more than one child waiting for a space, the probability of entering the program was severely limited. Added to the issue of space was travel. Parents with children were sometimes required to travel to access a program with childminding. Not only was the cost of transportation expensive (due to the cuts in transportation assistance), but also the use of public transit for these parents, especially in winter, caused undue stress. In order to meet the

needs of immigrant parents, especially women, childminding programs must address accessibility issues in relation to space as well as transportation.

To help close this service gap,
we recommend that:

1. ESL programs be made available to all persons who are assessed as being in need.
 2. Students not be excluded from ESL programs solely based on arbitrary time limits.
 3. Funding be based on actual numbers of students who have been appropriately assessed as in need of ESL programming.
 4. Being born in Canada not disqualify anyone from eligibility.
 5. Provision of profession-specific or technical ESL programs (e.g. Nursing or Engineering) be supported, but not at the expense of accessibility to ESL programming for the broader community of need.
 6. Initiatives such as transportation assistance and childminding be renewed to ensure equal access for all students.
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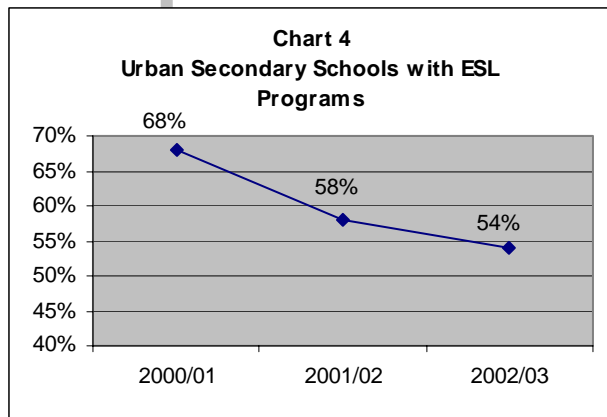
Core #2 Principle

An accountable and effective programming framework designed to meet student needs

The need for ESL programs continues to rise with the increase of foreign-born residents. However, the lack of accountability is hampering the effectiveness of the programs. Accountable programming and funding, built on sound frameworks, creates the foundation for an effective ESL system.

The Current Service Gap

In Ontario's urban areas, the number of foreign-born residents has increased by an average of 13.5% since 1996. However, the number of foreign-born residents in the Greater Toronto Area has increased by 15% since 1996 (People for Education, 2002). As well, the number of residents who report speaking a home language other than English or French has increased by an average of 17% over the same period (People for Education, 2003b). Yet,



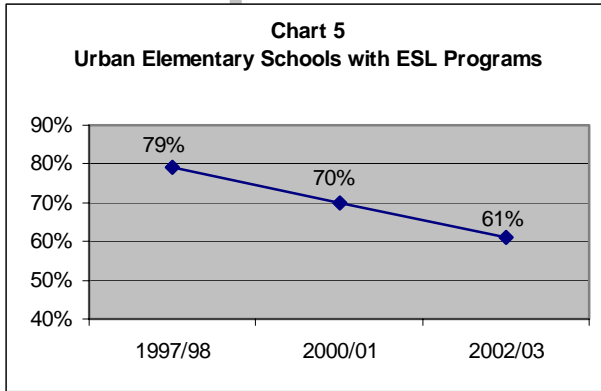
People for Education 2003b, pg. 14

according to People for Education's 2003 Secondary School Tracking Report, (2003a) 54% of urban secondary schools report having an ESL program, down from 68% in 2000/01, a drop of 14% (see Chart 4). (Urban areas in Ontario, according to People for Education (2003b), are defined as those cities with populations of over 300,000. These include the GTA area, Hamilton, Kitchener-Waterloo, London,

Ottawa and Windsor with a total 1,307,014 students attending 2,588 schools. This represents 66% of the students and 53% of the schools in the province.)

In elementary education, the number of specific ESL programs is limited, partially due to the belief that young children learn a second language with relative ease. However, in those elementary schools with ESL programs, People for Education (2003b) report a

steady decline (see Chart 5). While some schools have specific reception or withdrawal classes for new ESL students, other schools have few support structures and therefore, immigrant children are left to fend for themselves.



People for Education, 2003b, pg. 13

The LEAP program introduced earlier in this paper is found in approximately 40 out of a total of 451 elementary and middle schools and 15 out of 102 secondary schools in the TDSB. Students are permitted to stay for a maximum period of three years (however, these students may continue to receive support through the regular ESL program). Not only does the length of the LEAP program reduce accessibility, but also since these students and their families tend to move frequently, it is difficult

for those students to continue in the program due to the lack of existing programs across the city.

According to *A Brief Demographic Summary of New Canadian Learners in the TDSB as of October 31, 2003*, fifteen secondary schools across the TDSB offer 16 LEAP classes which are capped at a maximum of 12 students per program. Since there are approximately 14,000 ESL secondary students, clearly less than 2% of them are getting this concentrated help.

Based on our interviews, we have learned that in some secondary schools, there are no ESL/ELD programs or teachers although there are ESL students and some ESL teacher allocation. Some schools have an ESL program with no ELD program. In other schools, the ELD program is subsumed within the ESL program, eliminating the important distinction between the needs of ESL and ESL literacy learners. This is echoed in the *2003 Secondary School Tracking Report* by the People for Education (2003a), which notes that 10% of the schools reported having ESL students but no ESL programs or teachers, compared to 4% in 2000/01. In some schools, although there are newcomers in the area, there are no ESL programs. As a result, immigrants may be directed to other schools. This can encourage population and socio-economic status distinctions among schools.

Why Elementary and Secondary ESL Programs are on the Decrease

There are at least five factors that explain the reduction in ESL programs.

1. First, there is a significant increase in the required number of ESL students to generate the allocation of an ESL teacher at both the elementary and secondary school levels.
2. Second, since the ESL staffing allocation is not specifically dedicated, it is often taken away at the school level to meet other pressing staffing needs. In a desperate attempt to protect 'core' programs and staff, school officials often sacrifice the needs of ESL students.
3. Third, since the introduction of the severely restrictive provincial funding formula and the resulting budget crisis, drastic changes in administrative structure and personnel took place both at the Board and school level. At the secondary level, this has resulted in a drastic reduction of ESL departments and department heads that not only provided professional support to ESL teachers but also monitored the academic progress of ESL students.
4. Fourth, even before the amalgamation of school boards, parental involvement at secondary schools was a difficult issue. Now, with the severe cuts to the translation/interpretation budgets as well as to social work services, immigrant parents have little or no encouragement to connect with the schools. With neither language skills nor confidence, immigrant parents are barely aware of what changes have taken place at their children's school, let alone challenging school authorities if the academic needs of their children are not being met. Fortunately, in some schools, ESL teachers have become advocates for their students by taking an active role in staffing committees. The teachers' federation has also provided orientation to their members so that they can be more effective advocates.
5. The fifth reason for the decrease in ESL programming is a lack of accountability. There is neither a fund specifically designated for ESL nor accountability within the structure of the board or government to ensure that funds targeted for ESL are actually spent for this purpose.

There are three examples of this lack of accountability in the education system. The first example is that of the Learning Opportunities Grants. In 1997, an expert panel appointed by the provincial government recommended the allocation of \$400 million to the Learning Opportunities Grant as targeted funding for at-risk students. However, only \$185 million was granted and six years later, the analysis of the programs to be funded by the grant is still incomplete (People for Education, 2003b). Although there have been a number of funding additions to this grant, the support no longer targets the originally designated students.

“When school boards are really in a bind about money, like the Toronto District School Board has been, and at the same time, they’re told they have to maintain class sizes, they have to find the money somewhere. If you tried to close the swimming pool, you’re going to get a lot of public awareness and criticism. You would never dare cut special-ed programs; they wouldn’t let you. If you tried to abandon French immersion, you’d hear about it from the parents. But you can cut ESL with relative impunity.”

*Quote from Professor Elizabeth Coelho,
OISE, University of Toronto
in Duffy, 2004f*

A second example of the lack of accountability surrounds the funds provided by the provincial government. In December 2003, the Minister of Education announced a grant of \$112 million to Ontario's schools for students facing poverty or learning ESL. The TDSB received \$46 million. This money, however, was immediately used to reduce the deficit of the TDSB without any board or community consultation or debate. Other boards did use the money to address issues in ESL. This alone illustrates the depth of TDSB's problems, not the least of which is the lack of accountability. This has been amplified by the inability of the community to follow closely what has been going on in public education.

The third example of a lack of accountability in the educational system and the decrease in programs is the issue of class size. Although the government has mandated an ‘average’ class size, this standard is not regulated. The

2003 Secondary School Tracking Report (People for Education, 2003a) found that 70% of classes in their survey exceeded the provincially mandated average class size of 22. In our interviews with secondary ESL teachers, there were reports of ESL class sizes ranging from 25 to over 40 at the beginning of the school year. One interviewee had to teach a class of 45 ESL students for three months before help finally arrived. One reason behind this woeful situation is that funding for ESL is contained in the General Legislative Grants given to school boards at the beginning of each calendar year. Therefore, ESL students who arrive after the beginning of the school year receive no funding.

The situation is very different in adult education, especially in the LINC program. In a comprehensive research report by Power Analysis (2002) for adult ESL programs, it was determined that Toronto had the largest mean class sizes in Ontario at 21.3

students. However, the class sizes range from 11.6 to 21.3 throughout Ontario. It was found that provincial ESL classes had a somewhat higher class size than the federal LINC classes, ranging from 17.1 for LINC and 21.2 for ESL. It is evident from the research of Power Analysis (2002) that adult ESL programs have had greater control of the numbers of students in each of the programs. In the LINC program, there is a cap on the number of students who can attend. This number is usually 25 (and 10-15 for ESL literacy learners), although the numbers can be negotiated in the yearly contracts.

Class size has direct implications on addressing students' needs, especially for students who are learning a second language and in classes where students have different levels of language proficiency. In addition, while these classes may include students with special academic needs and physical disabilities, there are no educational assistants present to support these special needs. Both the federal and provincial governments have stipulations on class size although it appears that in our public education system, these rules are not applied for a number of complex reasons. Consequently, students' access to education is jeopardized and they are not provided with adequate attention. In order to meet the needs of ESL students, governments, especially school boards, need to address the optimum size of class and ensure that the standards are maintained.

Why Adult ESL Programs are on the Decrease

There is little information available on the number of ESL programs in Toronto. However, the numbers of ESL programs have declined drastically in the past years according to ESL administrators at the school boards. One adult ESL administrator

Many students, including some in a focus group brought together for this report, speak of crowded, uncomfortable learning environments with the constant threat of class closure hanging over them.

from a school board argued that this decline is not due to lack of funding. Rather, the demand for LINC programs has increased, while ESL programs have decreased. Canadian citizens and persons ineligible for LINC are finding themselves with fewer available options. Moreover, the need for ESL programs has not been adequately researched and therefore, the actual numbers of adults requiring ESL programs is unknown. As

one administrator acknowledged, there has been little response from the immigrant community regarding the lack of ESL programs and therefore, the lack of programs is not thought to be a significant issue. A practical approach would be a concerted effort to research the needs of adult ESL learners who are not eligible to attend the LINC program.

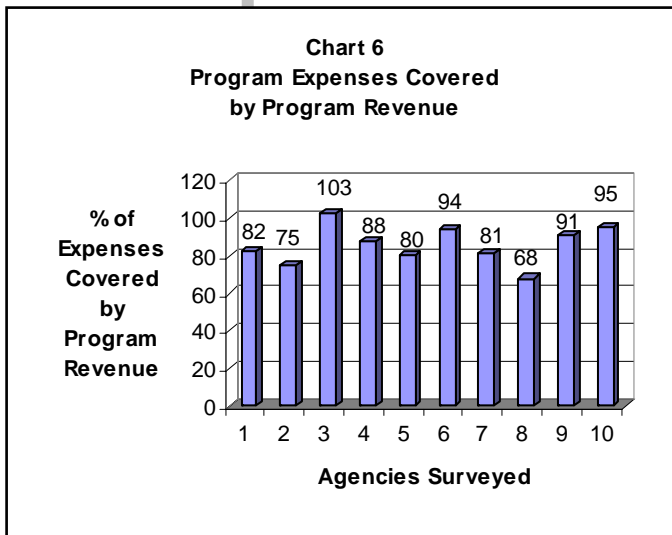
One of the lesser-known negative results of the provincial funding formula for public education introduced in 1997 is the decrease of school-based adult education programs, including provincial adult ESL classes. The Accommodation Grant in that formula, which funds space and operational costs of schools including care-taking costs, does not recognize any adult programs. In fact, schools with adults in them are deemed empty buildings (*Ontario Association of Adult and Continuing Education School Board Administrators, 2004*). As a result, school officials were under tremendous pressure to close these programs and the schools which housed the programs. Provincial ESL classes were forced to move to substandard spaces or to close altogether.

**There's lots of good intentions, but good intentions are not good enough.
We need money.
We need action.
We need research."**

Quote from Professor Hetty Roessingh, University of Calgary in Duffy, 2004d

Similarly, federally funded LINC programs have not been spared the woes of chronic federal government under-funding. In a recently released report entitled *Community Capacity Draining: The Impact of Current Funding Practices on Non-Profit Community Organizations* (Eakin, 2004), the researchers of the

Community Social Planning Council of Toronto found that community agencies are operating government funded programs at a significant loss (see Chart 6). These agencies are on average receiving 14% less than they need to cover the actual operating costs of the programs. As a result, government funded programs are draining community organizations of their discretionary and locally raised funds as agencies must cover the difference between funding dollars and the full costs of running the programs. Since approximately 81% of the federally funded LINC programs in Toronto are run by community



*Eakin, 2004 pg.12.
Community Social Planning Council of Toronto*

agencies, the federal government seems to be in the lead in 'draining the capacity' of community agencies. This should be considered within the context that although Ontario receives 60% of Canada's newcomers, just 30% of the total federal language-training budget is spent in Ontario. The Community Social

Planning Council of Toronto report shows how this federal under-funding is "trickling" down to impact on local community agencies.

According to one community agency that runs both LINC and provincial ESL programs, it receives approximately \$900,000 for the LINC program but has to take \$100,000 from other sources to cover the real cost of delivering LINC. The provincial ESL program is also financially draining as it is contracted through the school board which only pays the teachers' salary and little else. The agency is forced to subsidize provincial ESL classes because of community demand. If the agency only runs LINC classes with

their strict admission criteria, many community members, who do not qualify for LINC, will have no access to any ESL classes. The reality is, unlike the above-mentioned agency, which has a better capacity to do private fundraising, other smaller agencies are forced to turn their backs on provincial ESL classes and regretfully ignore the needs of their communities.

“... the employment conditions for the teachers under LINC (and other adult ESL) are highly unfavourable despite their high qualifications, and funding is precarious.”

*Burnaby, James and Regier
2000, pg. 65*

The issue of funding adult ESL programs in an accountable and effective framework requires much attention by community organizations who, as Burnaby, James and Regier (2000) state, “follow an annual proposal and reporting structure that causes a great deal of stress to the delivery agency” (pg. 63). Eakin (2004) considers it a ‘best practice’ when the non-profit organization can expect full cost of program delivery by funders and a poor practice when the funder expects a “contribution which results in under funding” of the program (pg. 31).

One other issue expressed by many of those involved in the LINC and ESL programs for adults was the under funding of wages for teachers, childminders and coordinators. In the LINC program, only in the past years has the federal government funded a minimal increase of 2% for wages. For almost ten years, there was no pay increase, no benefits, and no sick leave (Burnaby and James, 2003). In addition, teachers and childminders are laid off from the program for set periods of time as a cost cutting measure. In the latest contract, some wages were actually reduced and funding for teachers’ professional development was eliminated.

Similarly, funding issues are also a concern for adult ESL programs run by the school boards and funded by the provincial government. In these programs, teachers and other staff face very similar issues to those involved in the LINC program.

Although Power Analysis (2002) found the teachers were almost all highly qualified, the federal government continues to diminish the professionalism of LINC. As Burnaby and James (2003) state:

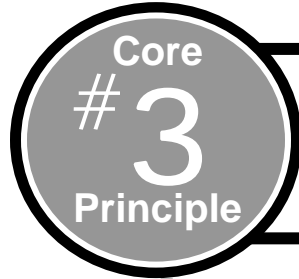
“The employment conditions for the teachers under LINC (and other adult ESL programs) are highly unfavourable despite the high qualifications of the teachers, and funding is precarious” (pg. 284). The authors continue by arguing that “non-credit ESL teachers were deprofessionalized and their job conditions deteriorated” as governments began to fund ESL programs in school boards and community agencies (pg 285).

Within the past two years, CIC has increased the qualifications for all teachers by imposing a mandatory TESL Ontario Certification requirement for all LINC teachers. Even with this additional requirement, there has been no additional remuneration. In order to maintain the high qualifications of LINC teachers and attract new teachers, the federal government must improve the working conditions of teachers. LINC agencies must advocate for more equitable funding until the government recognizes its essential role in the education of adult immigrants and creates a satisfactory work environment for these employees. In recent years, advocacy groups like the ‘Campaign for Stable Funding for Adult ESL Classes’ have worked hard to lobby both federal and provincial governments on funding issues.

In both elementary/secondary education and adult education, governments have significantly reduced research into the areas of language acquisition of immigrants. Duffy (2004d) states that there is not enough research to identify the effectiveness of programs. As noted earlier in this report, the research department at the TDSB has been severely reduced, “leaving them little chance to answer what should be a fundamental question for all big-city school boards in Canada: Are English-as-a-second-language students succeeding? And if not, why not?” (Duffy, 2004f).

To help close this service gap,
we recommend that:

1. The provincial government develop a comprehensive policy on ESL education that is firmly based on what is known about second language acquisition and the needs of newcomers.
 2. The provincial government earmark ESL funds for use in ESL programs with an appropriate accountability framework.
 3. School boards develop a clear ESL policy to ensure the dedication of ESL funding for ESL programs with a clearly defined system of accountability.
 4. Research address needs of adult ESL learners who are not eligible for the LINC program.
 5. ESL program funding models be developed to reflect full cost so community agencies are not required to subsidize programs from core funding.
 6. The federal and provincial governments create a more satisfactory work environment for LINC and ESL staff through fair wage settlements.
-



A thorough and consistent assessment process for all ESL students

A defined assessment process includes assessment, placement, and guidance/counselling/referral system. This includes consistent assessment procedures, use of translation and first language literacy assessment at convenient assessment sites.

The Current Service Gap

At the secondary school level, assessment is the first step for new ESL students to enter high school. Officially, ESL students are assessed at one of the two reception centres. These centres use a variety of testing materials to assess each skill area including math.

Assessment breakdown ...a case in point

One not atypical case involves a student whose ESL needs apparently went unmet since he started kindergarten. By grade three his frustration at not being able to communicate had developed into a pattern of behaviour labelled “behavioural”. His teacher could not cope with him in the classroom and his parents could not understand why the school treated their child like a big problem. Although outside help was called in, no clear solution was found.

At the end of the assessment, the student is sent to a school in his/her area. The local school is responsible for placing the student in a suitable ESL/ELD program. In 2003/04, the two existing reception centres served 4,244 secondary students.

Prior to the 1997 cuts by the provincial government, the two reception centres had adequate staff to provide assessment, placement, monitoring through a tracking system and support to students and families. In 2002, however, as a result of yet another round of budget cuts by the provincial government, the assessment centres were reduced to a shadow of their former selves.

Over half of the Intake Workers' positions were eliminated and all guidance support was slashed. The tracking system became too time consuming to continue with reduced staff. Moreover, the two reception centres were originally designed to serve only the secondary schools of the former Toronto Board of Education. However, due to the amalgamation, the centres are now expected to serve all secondary schools of the six former Boards.

Although the Ontario Curriculum of 1999 (Ministry of Education, 1999) has outlined recommendations for the assessment of ESL students, the government has not provided funding for this purpose. As a result, these recommendations are often not implemented at the school level.

Officially, ESL assessments are completed at the reception centres. Unofficially, some local schools complete their own assessments that consist of simple writing samples and math questions. The assessments provided by individual secondary schools have little or no equivalent measurement throughout the city. In our interviews,

we found that some schools tended to do their 'own thing' even though they lacked the necessary assessment tools and skills.

Elementary schools generally do their own assessment and placement of new immigrant students. In some interviews and discussions with elementary ESL teachers and administrators, it became evident that in some schools the office secretary determined the initial placement of the ESL students. The stark reality is that in the absence of clear Board guidelines regarding the

assessment and placement of newly arrived students, inconsistent treatment of ESL students may have become the norm, although the Ontario Curriculum would indicate very different recommendations.

The success of integrating immigrant students into our schools requires that schools provide a welcoming environment for students and their families. As well, schools must conduct a consistent and professional assessment of students' educational background, proficiency in English and academic achievement. Also, schools must provide a support system to students and settlement referral services to their families.

**Ontario Ministry of Education
Recommendations for Assessment
of ESL Students**

- 1. Reception and orientation, to provide a welcoming environment for new students and their families**
- 2. Initial assessment, to determine each student's educational background, level of proficiency in English, and academic achievement**
- 3. Placement, to determine the best program and selection of courses for each student**
- 4. Monitoring, to keep track of each student's progress in second-language acquisition, academic development, and cultural adjustment, and to provide support as needed**

*Ministry of Education.
English as a Second Language and English Literacy Development:
The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9 and 10, 1999*

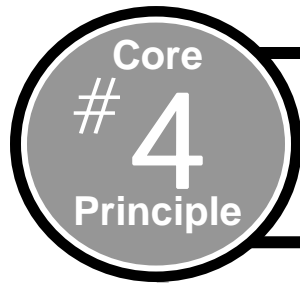
Unfortunately, as with elementary schools, the combination of the lack of accountability and the lack of strong advocates on behalf of ESL students and their families has exacerbated an already unwieldy situation. The inevitable result is that the needs of ESL students at the secondary level have been largely overlooked.

At the adult level, assessment of students in provincially funded ESL programs is not standardized, with each service provider creating and administering their own assessment. In federally funded adult ESL programs, the scene is quite different. Each student is officially assessed at specific YMCA assessment sites across the city. These assessments are the nationally recognized standard for determining adults' proficiency in ESL. All skill areas are assessed through a set of functional tasks that are reflective of actual language use in life. There is also an ESL literacy component administered in the student's first language. The students' information is registered in an on-line database and students are then sent to a school that will best suit their needs. No student is allowed to enter the LINC program without the Canadian Language Benchmark Assessment. The LINC curriculum is related to the Canadian Language Benchmarks with each level of LINC corresponding to one or two of the Benchmarks.

Standards such as the CLBA do not exist for students of school age. Since each province develops its own assessment, there is great variation from province to province. Consequently, this creates a duplication of effort with no standard national set of benchmarks to document the progress of students in acquiring English. While many advocate for a larger responsibility of the federal government in ensuring "the children of immigrants are treated equitably in the public education system" (Quote from Professor, Elizabeth Coelho, OISE, University of Toronto in Duffy, 2004d), we believe that one of the key components of federal government responsibility is that of official assessment of ESL students at all levels. The federal government must take responsibility for assessment by creating a similar system of assessment for all ESL students through a national standard such as the Canadian Language Benchmarks.

To help close this service gap,
we recommend that:

1. All ESL programs incorporate a formal assessment process.
 2. The Federal Government fund initial language and academic assessment of all immigrants, including school-aged children, as part of the settlement process.
 3. Assessment process include assessment, placement and referral/counselling in students' first language.
 4. All elementary and secondary students be assessed at conveniently located centres before entering the school system. This assessment would begin the monitoring process and track the numbers of ESL students entering the school system and their progress.
 5. In public education, funding be tied to the number of appropriately assessed students.
-



Placement that reflects ESL students' potential

Assessment and placement must guard against the streaming of ESL students to help reverse the historical tendency toward placing a disproportionately high number of ESL students in lower, non-academic programs.

The Current Service Gap

Since the 1970s, the issue of streaming students from immigrant, visible minority and lower socio-economic backgrounds into vocational schools was vigorously debated by educators, students, parents and community groups. This resulted in the NDP government's decision, in the early 90s, to de-stream Grade 9 in an attempt to address streaming issues and reduce the high dropout rate. However, this initiative came to an abrupt end when the

Conservative government came into power in 1995.

To complicate matters, most ESL students are assessed on the basis of the same tests administered to native English-speakers. Meyers believes it “sets the ESL students up for failure” and leads many to being streamed into applied education and special education programs designed for those with learning disabilities, emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Duffy, 2004e

As a result of the Secondary School Reform initiated by the provincial government in 1997, secondary school courses are now divided into Academic and Applied levels for grades 9 and 10 students. For Grades 11 and 12, courses are clearly marked for college, university and workplace destinations. This system is designed to graduate students in four years instead of five. Grade 8 students (14 years old) are required to make choices about which school to attend depending on whether they wish to go to university, college or work. The concern is that 14-year-old-students are generally too young to make such important decisions and that the school system makes it extremely difficult for

students to change their minds later in their high school years. ESL students are particularly vulnerable to this problem.

In 2002, the TDSB announced a new initiative called Pathways to Success to restructure all secondary schools in an attempt to address the 70% of high school students who do not go on to university.

While on the surface this sounds like a laudable goal, in reality it has given rise to fears that this could result in streaming at-risk students like never before. When this restructuring is combined with the Board's need to meet severe budgetary considerations, ESL and other at-risk students could be denied access to academic programs, a move that would jeopardise their academic and career choices.

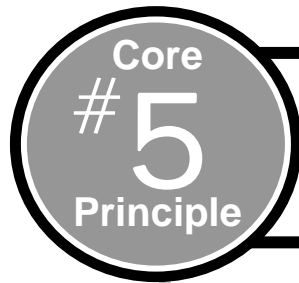
The Board needs to encourage all schools to maintain high academic standards and also provide support for students to achieve these standards. Instead, what the Board has proposed to do could be interpreted as 'lowering the standards' so that more students will stay in school.

Some of our interviewees raised concerns that the downloading and devolving of responsibility from the Board to the local school and the decisions made by some schools regarding ESL course offerings will harm the academic future of ESL students. An academically oriented collegiate, for example, could decide not to offer any reception-level ESL courses, effectively turning away newly arrived students with immediate ESL needs. Unless the students (and their families) have informed advice at this early stage, they would not know what impact this might have on the future of their academic career. ESL students typically lack understanding of the education system and the choices they have, placing them at risk. Clearly, the Board must establish system standards and an accountability mechanism so that at-risk students are protected from arbitrary decisions at the local school level.

Students whose families are in a position to help them navigate through the complex school system may be spared potential damage. For students whose immigrant families have no understanding of the system, no ability to negotiate in English and no advocate on their behalf, however, the situation is bleak.

To help close this service gap,
we recommend that:

1. Students and parents be given clear guidance and information about the implications of secondary school choices.
 2. Further research be conducted regularly to assess the extent, trend and ongoing impact of streaming of ESL students. This could be modelled on the former Toronto Board of Education's *Every Student Survey* or obtained from objective data from the Student Information System.
 3. Students whose initial assessment and placement may have been incorrect receive support to get into more appropriate programs through remedial and transitional courses.
-



Specific ESL literacy components for those students facing literacy challenges

Each student who has been professionally assessed as a literacy learner should be placed in a literacy or ESL literacy specific program that addresses the needs of literacy learners.

The Current Service Gap

ESL literacy students are those who face challenges in the basic skills of reading and writing in their first language or dialect. They have had limited access to education in their home or residing

Literacy is often seen as a continuum so that there is no precise point at which an individual can be said to be 'literate'. It is important to note in this connection that literacy is a set of skills that one carries across languages. Learners who lack these skills face additional challenges when trying to learn another language.

*Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 1998
Canadian Language Benchmarks Literacy
Assessment, Questions and Answers*

countries. These learners, while learning a new language also have difficulty transferring skills from the first to the second language. They often come from countries that have had unrest and war and subsequently face many other issues that may impact their learning. There is little research as to the length of time required for ESL literacy learners to become 'literate'. However, the length of time allotted by both the federal and provincial programs of three to four years is definitely not adequate when compared to the

research of Cummins (1981) who shows that it takes five to seven years for those not facing literacy challenges to reach grade norms.

There is another group of literacy learners who speak English (who may have come from English-speaking countries or were born in Canada) but have significant challenges with reading and writing. These students often have had minimal educational experience and although, they may seem to have control of the English language, they lack the skills necessary for reading and writing. Students who have literacy difficulties but understand and speak English fluently have very different needs than those who are studying ESL and also have little or no formal education in their first language. Literacy programs that are geared towards those who are fluent in English may seem out of place for the purpose of this report. However, there are immigrants who come to this country from English

speaking countries who have difficulties in literacy. These immigrants need programs specific to their needs at both the adult and public school levels.

In adult education, there is a definite division of literacy and ESL literacy. At the federal level, the LINC program has specific classes designed exclusively for students who face ESL literacy challenges. Through the CLBA assessment, these students are placed in ESL literacy classes. The classes are smaller, usually between 10-15 students with a focus on mechanical skill development, as well as the next stages of literacy development. After the students have completed literacy benchmarks 1 (Stage 1 and Stage 2), they move into the mainstream LINC program and continue with their studies, usually at a slower rate than other

students. ESL literacy programs have curriculum guidelines as well as benchmarks specifically designed for ESL literacy learners.

At the provincial level, one literacy program is Adult Basic Education (ABE), designed to help those who have a firm grasp of listening and speaking but have difficulties in reading and writing. At the provincial level, there are also ESL literacy programs offered on a part-time basis. One of the concerns voiced by some interviewees is that this group of learners, who do not qualify for the more available LINC literacy program, are often left with little or no support in the community. Those who face ESL literacy difficulties often face discrimination and the ensuing lack of self-esteem. Their frustrated voices are often never heard.

At the secondary school level, there are two main programs directed at literacy learners: LEAP and English Literacy Development (ELD) for new students who have come to Canada with limited literacy skills in any language and who are likely able to speak some English.

In interviews with teachers and staff, few understood the distinction between ESL, ELD and literacy. In some cases, the ELD program was subsumed within the ESL program, blurring any distinction between the two programs. The difference between ESL and ELD needs to be maintained in order to specifically meet students' needs. For example, students who come from English-speaking

A Somali teenager attending an adult ESL literacy program had a very difficult time in the classroom. He had very little schooling in his home country to the extent that holding a pencil was a challenge. He had no family in Canada and lived alone in a basement apartment. He told his story of leaving his country and the atrocities he witnessed.

He applied for high school and was sent to grade nine. A while later, he arrived back in the adult ESL classroom after school one day asking the teacher for help. He pulled out the grade nine Science textbook and pointing at the section on photosynthesis, he said, "I just don't understand."

countries need specific programs for literacy development. Others students who have limited literacy skills in their own language need English language training and specific ELD programs which develop both English speaking skills as well as literacy skills. To blur the differences between these programs is not serving the needs of this group of students.

At the elementary level, some of our interviewees voiced a different concern. Since the Ministry of Education's priority in recent years has been on early literacy, funding and initiatives have gone into creating early literacy programs at elementary schools. The interviewees fear that while this will benefit Canadian-born students and immigrant students who have been in Canada longer, it will be at the expense of the immediate ESL needs of newly arrived students.

Quite a few interviewees from the TDSB think that ESL needs its own identity rather than being subsumed into Literacy. They are concerned that the general definition of literacy tends to treat everyone the same, ignoring the complex challenges facing ESL students that extend beyond language acquisition.

Understanding the complexity and separateness of ESL and ELD is imperative for addressing the needs of new immigrant students. Not only are the teaching methods distinct but the learners' needs and backgrounds are often at opposite ends of the learning spectrum. Teachers need in-service training in curriculum and teaching methodology in order to understand these differences and to more appropriately help their students. There also must be curriculum for literacy and ESL literacy students and very importantly a consistent and regulated assessment process for determining each student's level of literacy. This will be discussed later in the paper.

To help close this service gap,
we recommend that:

1. ESL and ELD programs continue to be separate programs and implemented as such at the school level.
 2. ESL and ELD programs be based on concrete, well researched principles with set curriculum and monitoring to ensure the best program possible.
 3. ESL and ELD pre-service and in-service training address ESL literacy as a separate component.
 4. Research be conducted into the effectiveness and need of ESL literacy programs at the adult level.
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Core #6 Principle

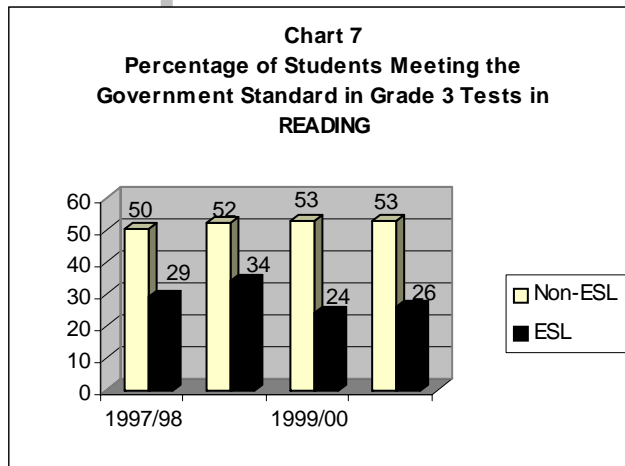
Ongoing monitoring of individual student progress through appropriate assessment methods

It is difficult to assess which monitoring and testing methods provide the most accurate results while creating the least amount of harm. In Ontario, elementary and secondary ESL students are required to take the same ministry-mandated tests. However, ESL students require different assessment instruments than do native English speakers.

The Current Service Gap

Opinions are divided among educators as to the efficacy of the Ontario government's mandatory testing. The majority of Ontario's teachers (58%) believe that the tests are "not at all

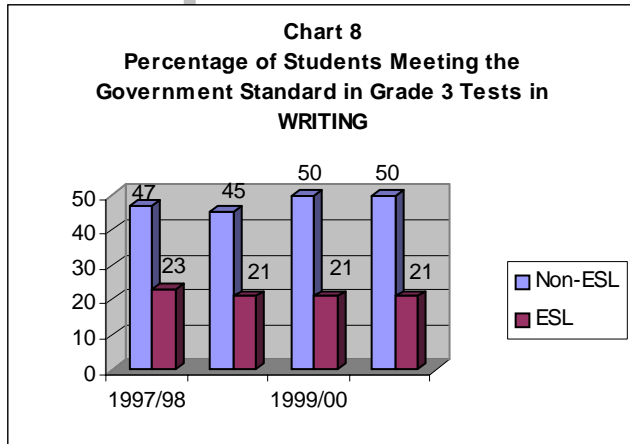
accurate" (Urquhart, 2004). Nevertheless, all schools are under pressure to improve their students' scores.



People for Education 2002. pg. 5

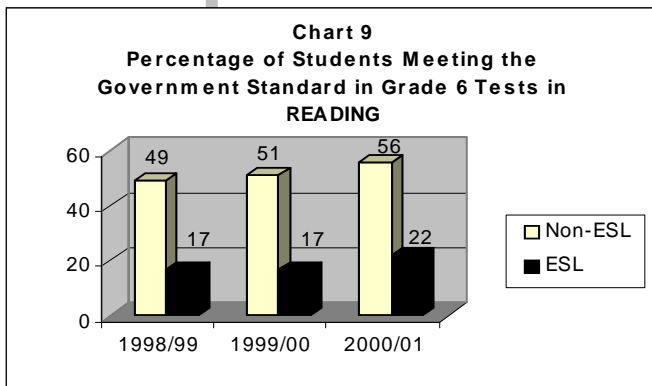
According to the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) data, even though the Grade 3 and 6 testing scores of non-ESL students have improved over the past four years, the scores of ESL students have not increased-- indeed in most areas they have declined (see Charts 7-10).

One school has tried to cope with the challenge by developing an integrated model with team teaching between classroom teachers and ESL, special education and literacy resource teachers. In addition, the school has developed outside partnerships to bring community resources to help tutor, mentor and track the progress of potentially at-risk students.



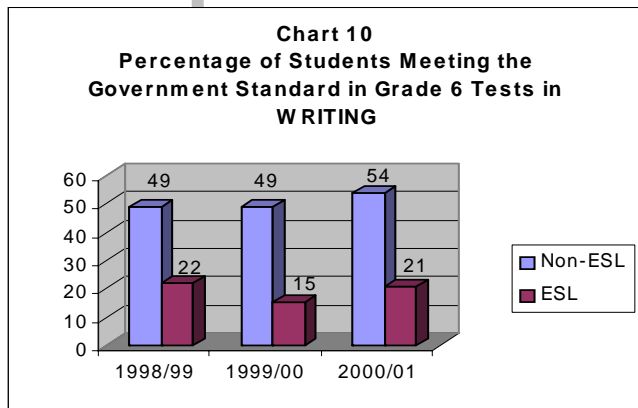
People for Education, 2002, pg.5.

At another school, the principal has made sure all the teaching staff take ESL in-service training so that all can work with ESL students. The school also has a program called Learning through the Arts, which brings in artists from the community to work with classroom teachers. The interviewees' observations are that the program has been a real boost to the whole school and has helped build confidence in ESL students. However, funding for this program has been a real issue and the school has had to embark on a major fund-raising campaign to keep the program.



People for Education, 2002 pg. 6

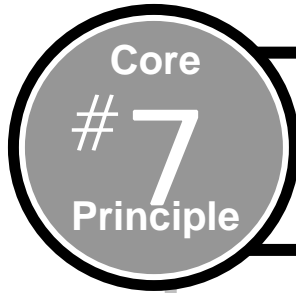
At one school, however, parents of immigrant and special needs students decided to protest against provincial testing by withdrawing their children from the testing all together. For immigrant parents with little English facility, it is almost impossible to understand the whole process of this testing and the way the scores are reported in the media has resulted in parents putting undue pressure on their children. According to one principal, some parents took the ranking of the schools by testing scores so seriously they attempted to change schools for their children on that basis.



People for Education, 2002 pg. 6

To help close this service gap,
we recommend that:

1. The whole EQAO test structure be revised particularly as it applies to ESL students.
 2. All ESL students be officially exempted from EQAO testing until such revisions takes place.
 3. All parents of ESL students be provided with appropriate and timely information about testing procedures and results.
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Inclusion of ESL methodology, cross-cultural and equity studies in all teacher education programs

All education programs in Toronto, whether in early childhood education, kindergarten, elementary, secondary or adult, most likely have a high percentage of ESL participants. It is imperative that all teachers be required to take ESL teaching methodology and cross-cultural studies in their teacher training.

The Current Service Gap

With the exception of adult programs, the state of teacher training in ESL is in crisis. In Toronto where the majority of students face ESL challenges, teachers are not equipped to deal with this

“Instead of ensuring that ESL students develop a full range of language skills in kindergartens, school emphasis is now on reading readiness skills to prepare students for the grade 3 standardized tests. It is sad to see students trying to complete a paper about first letter sounds when they don’t even know what the English words are for the pictures.”

Meyers, 2003, pg. 2

situation. For example, in elementary and secondary education across Toronto, there is a high likelihood of having ESL students in each class. In some schools, the percentages of ESL learners are 80-90% of the students in the classroom. However, even with these high percentages and the continued influx of new immigrant children, formal training in ESL is not required for classroom teachers.

People for Education (2002) noted that some schools had large increases in ESL students. A number of schools said they had more students and fewer teachers, and a number of schools expressed concern that ESL students were being taught by special education teachers, librarians and, in one case, the physical education teacher, none of whom had any ESL training.

Meyers (2003) argues against the premise that all teachers are ESL teachers and therefore do not require specific ESL training. She notes that ESL training should be mandatory and extend to administrators in school boards, Ministers of Education, educational policy makers, and instructors in the Faculties of Education. The author points out that even in kindergarten, most teachers have no training or support in how to

build the foundations of language. It is generally assumed that osmosis is the most effective tool for learning ESL by young children. Contrary to this belief, if in kindergarten, the basic language skills are not developed, the children will have to constantly struggle to keep up with the other students.

A principal related a story about a grade 4 newly arrived ESL student who consistently disobeyed the teacher's instructions. Upon discussions with the student's parents about her behaviour, it was learned that the child had never been in school before and had spent a good deal of her life hiding in a basement with her family in war-torn Bosnia.

In early childhood education, there again is no formal training required for those who are involved with daycare or childminding programs. For example, in the LINC childminding program, there are no formal requirements or training in dealing with immigrant children and their specific needs. Also, there is little or no professional development available to those working in the childminding program. Without training or professional development, those working in the childminding program may not be equipped with the knowledge of how and

when to refer children, whose needs go beyond simply language difficulties, to professionals for assistance.

Although at both the elementary and secondary levels, ESL additional qualifications are mandatory for teachers who teach ESL, not all teachers who teach ESL have these additional qualifications (particularly those teachers who teach ESL on a part-time basis). Meyers (2003) notes that teachers have not had training on the various language stages and do not understand the gap between "a student's facility with spoken English and his/her abilities in literacy" (pg. 6). In a study by Klesmer (1994), findings indicated that teacher perceptions of students' abilities tend to be inaccurate in regards to ESL and literacy.

It just doesn't make sense for new teachers not to be equipped with the skills to handle language needs of newcomers.

Quote from Paula Markus
Coordinator for ESL in TDSB
in Duffy, 2004a

In Duffy's (2004a) report entitled *ABCs of Teaching ESL*, he notes that only 60 of 1,300 graduating students at the University of Toronto's teacher education program will take the ESL elective. Graduates from university programs will most often have little or no training on teaching and supporting ESL students.

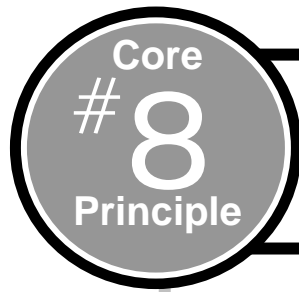
The situation is very different for adult ESL programs. Presently, Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) certification is becoming a prerequisite for teaching ESL and LINC. This certification requires a total of 300 hours of training including methodology, theory and a practicum. The certification process was developed in part to counteract the notion that any speaker of

English could be an English as a Second Language teacher while at the same time, bringing a sense of professionalism to the ESL teaching profession. However, as was previously addressed in this report, the professionalism of adult ESL teaching has been continuously eroded, as is evident in the lack of fair teachers' wage settlements by the federal government.

ESL and ESL literacy training are disciplines that demand priority. If programs are going to meet students' needs, then all stakeholders including teachers, administrators, counsellors and policymakers must have an understanding of the cultural and professional issues involved in the education of ESL students.

To help close this service gap,
we recommend that:

1. All teacher-training include a component on how to address the needs of ESL and ESL literacy students.
 2. All teachers be responsible for the education of ESL students
 3. The needs of ESL and ESL literacy be addressed in all subject areas.
 4. Ongoing professional development in ESL issues be mandatory for all those who educate ESL students.
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Support structures that enable the progress of ESL students through community and family involvement

Immigrants face an enormous task of adjusting to life in Canada. Every ESL program must provide a network of support structures that enable students and their families to access guidance, counselling, social, and settlement services.

The Current Service Gap

One of the truly unfortunate decisions by the TDSB during the period of severe funding cuts was the elimination of positions for employees whose jobs were to reach out to at-risk students, including immigrant students and their families. School Community Advisors, in the pre-amalgamation days of the former Toronto Board of Education and their counterparts in other boards, were a key link between immigrant students and their parents and the schools. Not only did they provide multi-lingual translation services to school council meetings, they also organized parenting classes as well as education workshops in different languages. In these workshops, parents learned about the school system and the ways in which they could play a role in the education of their children.

In the absence of the School Community Advisors, some TDSB schools have Settlement and Education Partnership in Toronto (SEPT) workers. The SEPT program is funded federally through the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration to provide information and referrals to new immigrant families on housing, employment, education, health care and other community services.

The role of the SEPT workers is very different from that of the School Community Advisors. The SEPT workers are allocated to schools according to a formula that combines high numbers of newly arrived families and socio-economic factors. In contrast to the School Community Advisors, who were available to all schools, the SEPT workers only work in their identified schools. Further, they focus their work on the newly arrived families (less than two years), rather than the whole school community.

Many of the interviewees at the school level expressed regret at the loss of School Community Advisors. One school was able to cope with the translation issue because of the volunteer help provided by a dedicated instructor in the International Languages (Heritage) Program. Another interviewee expressed great concern that the lack of an appropriate mechanism of communicating with immigrant parents posed a real challenge to the Board's public commitment to its Equity Foundation Principles. In addition, because of the lack of connection to the school system, the voices of immigrant parents have not been heard on issues such as the crisis created by cuts to ESL programs.

Funding cuts have had grave impacts on support systems that directly and indirectly affect immigrant students at the secondary school level. There have been funding cuts to library support services resulting in a decrease in multi-language collections and supports for ESL students. People for Education (2003b) noted these other changes to urban secondary schools:

- 97% increase in charge fees for community use of schools, an increase of 81% from 1999/2000.
- 4% decrease in the number of guidance counsellors, making an average of 453 students for one guidance counsellor.
- 30% decrease in the number of psychologists.
- 11% decrease to regular access to social workers.
- 22% decrease in regularly scheduled youth workers.

Without the use of school space, there has been a decrease in the sense of community around our schools. However, the possibilities of developing this sense of community have inspired various groups to advocate for a shift in direction of the school boards. Duffy (2004b) notes the use of one Vancouver school in order to help families feel part of a community. The school provides a family gym hour, preschool programs, parenting classes and adult ESL programs. The school stays open until 10:00 PM each evening.

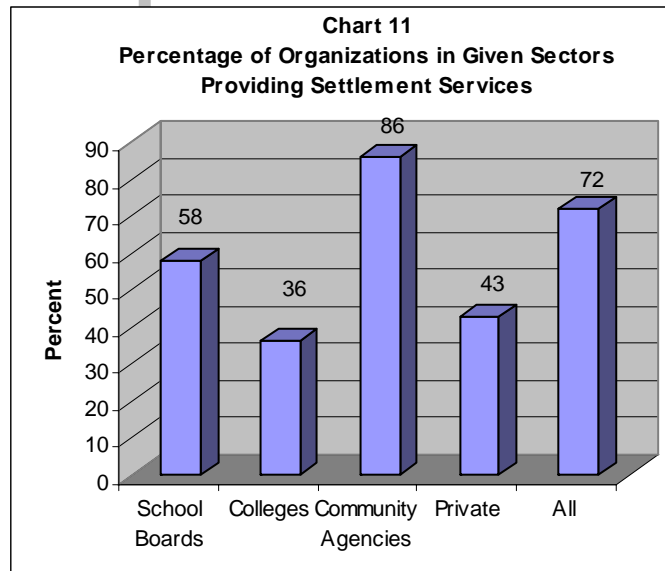
People for Education (2002) note other changes:

- Reduction in the number of Principals and Vice-Principals (22 at the secondary level and 68 at the elementary level).
- Reduction of Educational Assistants, secretarial positions, teacher consultants, instructional leaders, and short and long-term occasional teachers.
- Elimination of most ESL departments and the heads of the ESL departments.
- Elimination of all 13 youth worker positions.

- Elimination of all 22 School Community Advisor positions.

The TDSB officials who made a deputation before a federal government panel (Toronto District School Board, 1998) made the following statements that need repeating:

- Reduced support to students lacking English will increase their risk at school and in the workplace.
- Lack of early assessment and intervention will lead to more expensive and less effective remedial activities later.
- Students who have a variety of psychological needs will not receive the necessary attention and will be adversely affected academically.
- Increased difficulty in communicating with parents will create a sense of isolation between home and school and jeopardize a student's chance for success.
- A community-based infrastructure, built up over decades through which numerous integration services are delivered, will be lost.



Power Analysis, 2002 pg. 25

The availability of settlement services to adult ESL students varies considerably depending on the program (see Chart 11). Community agencies have provided the highest percentage of settlement services to new immigrants while colleges and private programs provide less than half of their students with settlement services. Since immigrants entering Canada face many challenges including learning another language, it is essential that settlement

services and ESL programs are integrated into a holistic approach. Cleghorn (2000) argues that accompanying settlement services should be provided as part of the ESL program and that every ESL program be attached to settlement programs that have the capability of professionally addressing settlement issues. This would entail that every LINC program be directly associated with professional settlement services, such as the federally funded settlement

program called Immigrant Settlement and Adaptation Program (ISAP).

The Toronto Public Library provides important resources for ESL students at all levels, from children to adults. They report that there has been an “increasing demand for English as second language materials across the city; circulation for ESL collections at the library has been spiralling up for a number of years. Between 2000 and 2003, the growth in ESL circulation was phenomenal: a 99% increase from 274,490 in 2000 to 546,099 in 2003” (memo from Toronto Public Library, Dec. 12, 2004). To meet the growing needs of the ESL population, the Toronto Public Library has continued to increase the budget for their ESL collection. In 2003 and 2004, they spent over half a million dollars on ESL materials for children, teen and adult users. ESL materials for teens and adults are available in almost all library locations (95 branches), while materials for children are available in 65 locations. ESL collections housed in public libraries are a crucial adjunct to ESL classes and provide valuable resources for teachers and students.

One essential way of supporting students from diverse backgrounds is to have school staff representative of the student population. Teachers and school administrators who have a linguistic and cultural background reflective of the students provide invaluable assistance to students and their families. This is important not only during the initial reception and assessment stages but also throughout the adjustment period and learning of the second language and culture. Teachers and school administrators who are representative of the student population are able to communicate with the students and also have an understanding of their culture and the many challenges of immigration. These teachers can also assist and support other teachers in understanding the complexities of various representative cultures and challenges facing immigrants. At every level of ESL, from elementary to adult programs, ESL administrators, boards of education and principals need to proactively hire teachers who represent the student population.

To help close this service gap,
we recommend that:

1. The provincial government increase funding to include support services for all immigrant children and their families.
 2. The Boards hire community advisors and youth workers.
 3. The Boards support and strengthen city-wide cultural and linguistic parent liaison groups in order that these parents can participate and their needs be addressed.
 4. The Boards provide access to schools in order to create a safe place for immigrant families to meet and build community.
 5. Support for federal government ESL classes and settlement services for new immigrants be maintained as the new Canada-Ontario Immigration Agreement initiative is being considered.
 6. Translation and interpretation services be recognized as a priority in all of the Boards' budget setting processes.
 7. Every adult ESL/LINC program be attached to an ISAP or other settlement program that can professionally assist new immigrants and their families.
 8. School boards and organizations providing adult ESL programs be proactive in hiring teachers, support staff and administrators that culturally and linguistically reflect the student population.
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Conclusion

With the acquisition of English, immigrants of every age can integrate with more ease into our society and life in Canada. Many levels of governments, boards of education, and organizations have contributed to create programs that serve this need for the knowledge of English. These programs have gone through many changes and today we find that our immigrants are at a serious disadvantage when learning English as a Second Language. We have not kept pace with the increasing needs of newcomers entering our city. Our ESL programs are in need of expansion and renewal.

This report has not only raised concerns about issues facing newcomers to this city, but has also charted a course on how we might best serve immigrants in their quest for learning English. It is time that we listen to the voices of immigrant parents, children and students. As a civil society, we simply cannot afford to cut ESL programs with relative impunity as we have done in the past (Coelho in Duffy 2004f). We cannot allow the creation of an “underclass” of citizens in our country (Duffy, 2004c). We must act now to remedy the situation and chart an effective course. This course must invest in research and advocacy for equality for immigrant students. This course must invest in desperately needed long-term solutions and frameworks set in place by governments and school boards, frameworks that will withstand political change.

Toronto has the highest rate of immigration of any Canadian city. We also have the highest rate of potential in working with immigrant adults and children to maximize their success in this country. We must not squander this resource. We must renew our ESL programs in Toronto. Rebuilding these programs using the eight core principles outlined in this paper can provide the foundation for this renewal.

Appendix 1

Glossary of Acronyms

ABE:	Adult Basic Education
CIC:	Citizenship and Immigration Canada, the federal government branch responsible for settlement programs such as LINC and ISAP
CLB:	Canadian Language Benchmarks
ESL:	English as a Second Language
ELD:	English Literacy Development, a program for school aged newcomers who, as a result of limited educational opportunity, arrive in Canada with limited academic background and limited literacy in any language.
ELT:	Enhanced Language Training
EQAO:	Education Quality and Accountability Office
ISAP:	Immigrant Settlement and Adaptation Program, a federally funded settlement program
LEAP:	Literacy Enrichment Academic Program
LINC:	Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada, the federally funded language program for newcomers to Canada
PFE:	People for Education, a group of citizens concerned about the state of our education system
SEPT:	Settlement and Education Partnership in Toronto
SPO:	Service Provider Organization—organizations delivering the LINC program
TDSB:	Toronto District School Board
TESL:	Teaching English as a Second Language

Appendix 2

Jurisdictional Recommendations: Federal Government

1. ESL programs be made available to all persons who are assessed as being in need.
2. Students not be excluded from ESL programs solely based on arbitrary time limits.
3. Funding be based on actual numbers of students who have been appropriately assessed as in need of ESL programming.
4. Provision of profession-specific or technical ESL programs (e.g. Nursing or Engineering) be supported, but not at the expense of accessibility to ESL programming for the broader community of need.
5. Initiatives such as transportation assistance and childminding be renewed to ensure equal access for all students.
6. Research address needs of adult ESL learners who are not eligible for the LINC program.
7. ESL program funding models be developed to reflect full cost so community agencies are not required to subsidize programs from core funding.
8. The federal and provincial governments create a more satisfactory work environment for LINC and ESL staff through fair wage settlements.
9. All ESL programs incorporate a formal assessment process.
10. The Federal Government fund initial language and academic assessment of all immigrants, including school-aged children, as part of the settlement process.

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11. Assessment process include assessment, placement and referral/counselling in students' first language.
 12. ESL and Literacy Programs continue to be separate programs and implemented as such at the school level.
 13. ESL Literacy programs be based on concrete, well researched principles with set curriculum and monitoring to ensure the best program possible.
 14. ESL literacy pre-service and in-service training address ESL literacy as a separate component.
 15. Research be conducted into the effectiveness and need of ESL literacy programs at the adult level.
 16. All teacher-training include a component on how to address the needs of ESL and ESL literacy students.
 17. Ongoing professional development in ESL issues be mandatory for all those who educate ESL students.
 18. Support for federal government ESL classes and settlement services for new immigrants be maintained as the new Canada-Ontario Immigration Agreement initiative is being considered.
 19. Every adult ESL/LINC program be attached to an ISAP or other settlement program that can professionally assist new immigrants and their families.
 20. School boards and organizations providing adult ESL programs be proactive in hiring teachers, support staff and administrators that culturally and linguistically reflect the student population.
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Appendix 2

Jurisdictional Recommendations: Provincial Government

1. ESL programs be made available to all persons who are assessed as being in need.
2. Students not be excluded from ESL programs solely based on arbitrary time limits.
3. Funding be based on actual numbers of students who have been appropriately assessed as in need of ESL programming.
4. Being born in Canada not disqualify anyone from eligibility.
5. Provision of profession-specific or technical ESL programs (e.g. Nursing or Engineering) be supported, but not at the expense of accessibility to ESL programming for the broader community of need.
6. Initiatives such as transportation assistance and childminding be renewed to ensure equal access for all students.
7. The provincial government develop a comprehensive policy on ESL education that is firmly based on what is known about second language acquisition and the needs of newcomers.
8. The provincial government earmark ESL funds for use in ESL programs with an appropriate accountability framework.
9. The federal and provincial governments create a more satisfactory work environment for LINC and ESL staff through fair wage settlements.
10. Research address needs of adult ESL learners who are not eligible for the LINC program.

11. ESL program funding models be developed to reflect full cost so community agencies are not required to subsidize programs from core funding.
12. All ESL programs incorporate a formal assessment process.
13. Assessment process include assessment, placement and referral/counselling in students' first language.
14. In public education, funding be tied to the number of appropriately assessed students.
15. Students and parents be given clear guidance and information about the implications of secondary school choices.
16. Further research be conducted regularly to assess the extent, trend and ongoing impact of streaming of ESL students. This could be modelled on the former Toronto Board of Education's *Every Student Survey* or obtained from objective data from the Student Information System.
17. Students whose initial assessment and placement may have been incorrect receive support to get into more appropriate programs through remedial and transitional courses.
18. ESL and Literacy Programs continue to be separate programs and implemented as such at the school level.
19. ESL Literacy programs be based on concrete, well researched principles with set curriculum and monitoring to ensure the best program possible.
20. ESL literacy pre-service and in-service training address ESL literacy as a separate component.
21. Research be conducted into the effectiveness and need of ESL literacy programs at the adult level.

22. The whole EQAO test structure be revised particularly as it applies to ESL students.

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23. All ESL students be officially exempted from EQAO testing until such revisions takes place.
 24. All parents of ESL students be provided with appropriate and timely information about testing procedures and results.
 25. All teacher-training include a component on how to address the needs of ESL and ESL literacy students.
 26. All teachers be responsible for the education of ESL students.
 27. The needs of ESL and ESL literacy be addressed in all subject areas.
 28. Ongoing professional development in ESL issues be mandatory for all those who educate ESL students.
 29. The provincial government increase funding to include support services for all immigrant children and their families.
 30. Every adult ESL/LINC program be attached to an ISAP or other settlement program that can professionally assist new immigrants and their families.
 31. School boards and organizations providing adult ESL programs be proactive in hiring teachers, support staff and administrators that culturally and linguistically reflect the student population.
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Appendix 2

Jurisdictional Recommendations: School Boards/Organizations Providing Adult ESL

1. ESL programs be made available to all persons who are assessed as being in need.
2. Students not be excluded from ESL programs solely based on arbitrary time limits.
3. Being born in Canada not disqualify anyone from eligibility.
4. School boards develop a clear ESL policy to ensure the dedication of ESL funding for ESL programs with a clearly defined system of accountability.
5. All ESL programs incorporate a formal assessment process.
6. Assessment process include assessment, placement and referral/counselling in students' first language.
7. All elementary and secondary students be assessed at conveniently located centres before entering the school system. This assessment would begin the monitoring process and track the numbers of ESL students entering the school system and their progress.
8. In public education, funding be tied to the number of appropriately assessed students.
9. Students and parents be given clear guidance and information about the implications of secondary school choices.
10. Further research be conducted regularly to assess the extent, trend and ongoing impact of streaming of ESL students. This could be modelled on the former Toronto

Board of Education's *Every Student Survey* or obtained from objective data from the Student Information System.

11. Students whose initial assessment and placement may have been incorrect receive support to get into more appropriate programs through remedial and transitional courses.
12. ESL and ELD programs continue to be separate programs and implemented as such at the school level.
13. ESL and ELD programs be based on concrete, well researched principles with set curriculum and monitoring to ensure the best program possible.
14. ESL and ELD pre-service and in-service training address ESL literacy as a separate component.
15. Research be conducted into the effectiveness and need of ESL literacy programs at the adult level.
16. All parents of ESL students be provided with appropriate and timely information about testing procedures and results.
17. All teacher-training include a component on how to address the needs of ESL and ESL literacy students.
18. All teachers be responsible for the education of ESL students.
19. The needs of ESL and ESL literacy be addressed in all subject areas.
20. Ongoing professional development in ESL issues be mandatory for all those who educate ESL students.
21. The Boards hire community advisors and youth workers.
22. The Boards support and strengthen city-wide cultural and linguistic parent liaison groups in order that these parents can participate and their needs be addressed.

23. The Boards provide access to schools in order to create a safe place for immigrant families to meet and build community.

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24. Translation and interpretation services be recognized as a priority in all of the Boards' budget setting processes.
 25. School boards and organizations providing adult ESL programs be proactive in hiring teachers, support staff and administrators that culturally and linguistically reflect the student population.
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Appendix 3

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