

**Position statement on the value of
intensive English programs in the United States**

As a global association committed to advancing excellence in English language education, TESOL values accessible, high-quality education, collaboration in a worldwide community, and respect for diversity and multiculturalism. In today's interconnected environment, these goals have never been more important or critically needed, and international education and exchange serve a vital role in advancing these goals.

Language education and training are an important part of international exchange, and within the United States, short-term intensive English programs (IEPs) have served a unique role in advancing cross-cultural communication and understanding. Not only do IEPs often serve as gateways to higher education in the United States, they also serve an important cultural role as well. Through their study of English, students at IEPs are exposed to U.S. culture and society, and through interactions with their fellow students on campus and in their local community, IEP students gain firsthand knowledge of the United States, its values, and its people.

Such active cross-cultural interaction has the dual benefits of enriching the students' experiences and those of the local communities in which these programs are located. Such interaction advances mutual understanding, and as these students return to their home countries, they carry with them the knowledge and experience of their time spent in the United States.

The important role IEPs serve in foreign diplomacy should not be underestimated either. Many IEP students go on to important leadership positions in business, industry, and government, so their time spent in the United States shapes their viewpoint and opinion.

TESOL strongly supports and values the role IEPs play in promoting high-quality education, collaboration in a global community, and respect for diversity and multiculturalism, and urges the U.S. government to put in place regulations that facilitate, rather than hinder, students' access to English training in the United States.

*Approved by the Board of Directors
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