

# ESOL

## COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### What is ESOL training?

The State of Florida agreed in an out of court settlement in front of a federal judge in 1990 that teachers who serve the English Language Learner (ELL) student population in Florida must have appropriate training. ESOL Endorsement requirements for Language Arts teachers were part of the certification rules prior to the Multicultural Education and Training Advocacy (META) Consent Decree, which was signed on August 14, 1990.

The Consent Decree called for Language Arts teachers to have or be working toward the Endorsement if they served ESOL students. Understandable instruction and academic achievement are concerns and goals for ELL students in both Federal and State law. The Agreement calls for all teachers to have some ESOL training if they serve ESOL students, depending on which “category” of subjects the teacher is teaching.

On April 25, 2003, the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) and the Florida Board of Education participated in mediation regarding the terms of the Consent Decree. The result was a modification of the original Consent Decree. The stipulation set forth an additional option by which a teacher may obtain ESOL coverage (certification); it also establishes training requirements of 60 hours’ ESOL training for school-based administrators and guidance counselors within three years of hire.

The state required five ESOL courses to be developed if the district wanted to offer an Add-On Certification Program in ESOL to their Language Arts teachers: ESOL Applied Linguistics; ESOL Cultural Awareness; ESOL Curriculum, Methods and Materials; ESOL Empowerment; and ESOL Testing and Evaluation. In 2005-06, Reading teachers of ELLs were required to start the process toward ESOL Certification. “Basic” teachers (math, science, social studies, and computer teachers) must take one of the 60-hour courses to complete appropriate training that makes them eligible to teach ELLs; and an 18-hour training program was developed for “other” teachers. Two of the five endorsement courses are now available online (ESOL - Empowering ESOL Teachers and ESOL Curriculum, Methods, and Materials). A 60-hour Administration/Guidance Counselor ESOL course, in three sections, was developed in 2004-05; principals, assistant principals, and guidance counselors who lack the required 60 hours of ESOL training now take the ESOL Administration 60-hour training.

### Who takes ESOL training?

The district is required to provide trained teachers to all ELL students who attend school in Brevard County. *As of 2004, the district is also required to provide 60 hours of ESOL training to all school-based administrators and guidance counselors.*

According to the META agreement, *teachers who have ELL students fall into three groups, according to the subjects they teach:*

## **Teachers Category 1 – Primary Language Arts Teachers and Reading Teachers**

- Teach language arts as the sole language arts instructor to students who are “regular diploma” students (this would include an SLD teacher who is teaching “regular diploma” ESE students and who is the students’ only language arts provider).
- Teach reading to ELL students who are “regular diploma” students.

### **Requirement Options:**

1. Take five inservice ESOL courses (60 X 5 = 300 hours) and apply to add the ESOL Endorsement to Teaching Certificate.
2. Take and pass the Subject Area Exam (SAE) in ESOL, apply to add the ESOL Coverage to Teaching Certificate; successfully complete two ESOL courses (any two – 60 X 2 = 120 hours) before taking or within three years of passing the SAE to retain the ESOL Coverage.
3. Take five designated college courses in ESOL and apply to add the ESOL Endorsement to Teaching Certificate, with official transcript from the college attached for DOE action.

### **Application Information:**

Complete an application to add a subject to the Department of Education for the Endorsement (5 courses) or the Coverage (test and two courses) and send with inservice printout and/or college transcripts and/or SAE test score to Professional Development. The district will pay the application fee required.

### **Eligibility to teach ELLs:**

Category 1 teachers who have ELLs and who are taking ESOL requirements on an appropriate timeline maintain district compliance with state law; they are eligible to teach ELLs while they are taking their course work. They are out of field in ESOL until they meet the requirements to be certified in ESOL and apply for the addition to their certificates.

Category 1 teachers who are eligible to teach ELLs and who have an ELL assigned to them while taking course work but before they are certified must be approved by the School Board as out-of-field in ESOL but eligible for ELLs. The school principal is charged with the responsibility of notifying Human Resources with names of teachers who are eligible but out – of-field in ESOL so that the School Board can approve the placement. Principals must also notify the parents of the students that the teacher is out-of-field for ESOL.

## **Teachers Category 2 – Social studies, Math, Science, Computer Skills**

- Teachers of these subjects are called “basic subject area” teachers; they must take 60 hours of ESOL training if they teach ELLs.
- They are NOT required to gain certification in ESOL, and they are NOT reported to the School Board as “out of field in ESOL”.

- Any one of the five ESOL courses for teachers meets the training requirement for “basic subject area” teachers to be eligible for ELLs.
- The inservice records of “basic subject area” teachers verify their ESOL training for audit purposes.

### **Teachers Category 3 – “Other teachers”**

All teachers other than Language Arts, Reading, Math, Science, Social Studies, and Computer skills are called “other ESOL” teachers; they must take 18 hours of training to be eligible for ELLs. This category includes pre-kindergarten teachers and reading coaches.

- These teachers do NOT receive certification in ESOL.
- Their inservice records verify their training in ESOL and their eligibility for ELLs for audit purposes.
- They are NOT reported to the School Board as “out of field for ESOL”.

### **School-Based Administrators**

Under the LULAC stipulation modifying the META Consent Decree, principals and assistant principals at schools are now required to have 60 hours of ESOL training.

- School administrators must take the ESOL training within three years of hire as a school-based administrator, unless they have already taken 60 hours of ESOL before being hired as a school-based administrator.
- We developed a partially online ESOL Administrator/Guidance Counselor 60-hour course in 2004-05; it contains a 24-hour section online, “Foundations”. The additional 36 hours of the 60-hour Administrator/Guidance ESOL course are comprised of two 18-hour sections: ESOL Administration Teacher Evaluation and ESOL Administration Family Outreach.

### **School-Based Guidance Counselors**

Under the LULAC stipulation modifying the META Consent Decree, school guidance counselors are now required to have 60 hours of ESOL training.

- Guidance counselors must take the ESOL training within three years of hire as a school-based counselor.
- We developed a partially online ESOL Administrator/Guidance Counselor 60-hour course in 2004-05, which includes a 24-hour section online, “Foundations”. The additional 36 hours of the 60-hour Administrator/Guidance ESOL course are comprised of two 18-hour sections: ESOL Administration Teacher Evaluation and ESOL Administration Family Outreach.

## **Pre-Service Agreements**

All teachers who have ELL students must be ESOL trained according to the category of subject they teach.

Prior to 1995, there was no district pre-service agreement for ESOL training. Teachers who were hired prior to 1995 who have not yet taken ESOL training may take ESOL training during evening, Saturday, and summer classes.

In an effort to meet state requirements, a pre-service agreement was enacted in 1995-96.

All new teacher hires in 1995-96 and 1996-97 signed a pre-service agreement before hire. Under its terms, teachers new to the district committed to take the appropriate number of hours of ESOL training within the state specified time frame whether or not they had ELL students.

- Language Arts teachers agreed to begin the training within the first two years of employment and acquire certification within six years of employment.
- “Basic Subject Area” teachers committed to take their one course (60 hours) within the first two years.
- “Other ESOL” teachers committed to take their 18 hours of training within one year.

In 1997-98 and thereafter, the pre-service agreement was modified. All new teachers hired since July 1997 sign an agreement to take ESOL training according to their appropriate timeline and requirement **when they are assigned ELL students.**

## **Training Timelines**

Timelines vary according to the agreement you signed and your individual situation; however, the State Board Rule Endorsement requirements have remained the same since 1990. The summer following a year “counts” within that year.

If you signed an agreement on or after July 1, 1997, and you teach Language Arts or Reading

- You must take one ESOL course within two years when you are assigned your first ELL student.
- You must take another ESOL course in the year that you are assigned another ELL student.
- After you have taken two ESOL courses, you have the options of (1) taking your third ESOL class when assigned your next ELL student; or (2) taking the Subject Area Exam in ESOL when assigned your next ELL student. If you pass the SAE in ESOL, apply for ESOL coverage to be added to your teaching certificate; you have met all ESOL requirements and are now “in field” for ESOL.

- If you took your third ESOL class above, when assigned your next ELL student you must take another (your fourth) ESOL class.
- When assigned your next ELL student you must take another (your fifth) ESOL class. Apply for the ESOL Endorsement to be added to your teaching certificate; you have met all ESOL requirements and are now “in field” for ESOL.

If you signed an agreement on or after July 1, 1997, and you teach a “basic subject area”

- Experienced teachers have one year from the time you are assigned an ELL student to complete the one 60-hour course required.
- Beginning teachers have two years from the time you are assigned an ELL student to complete the one 60-hour course required.

If you signed an agreement on or after July 1, 1997, and you teach an “other ESOL” subject

- You have *one year* from the time you get an ELL student to complete the 18-hour program if you are *an experienced teacher* and *two years* if you are *a beginning teacher*.

## Registration for ESOL Courses

Information regarding 60-hour ESOL course offerings and registration is sent to Administrators and ESOL Contacts at the schools at the beginning of the school year, before the end of first semester, and before the end of the school year. Teachers may register themselves in the Electronic Registrar Online (ERO) sessions as needed.

ESOL 18-Hour courses are announced in the Professional Development Council’s District Inservice Day Newsletter; at times we announce additional sessions via memo to the ESOL Contacts. If you have any questions and/or concerns, please contact Jeannie Judnich via e-mail or at 631-1911, extension 302.

## Validity Period of Certificates

This is the time period for which a certificate is valid. If you have a temporary, non-renewable certificate, the validity period is three years from July 1 – June 30; at the end of the three years, you must apply for a five-year, renewable Professional certificate.

When you get a five-year, renewable Professional certificate, you have five years to earn enough inservice points and/or college credit to renew it. ALL validity periods in Florida START on July 1 and ALL validity periods END on June 30; only the year changes. Any inservice or college credit used to renew a certificate must be earned during the validity period (with the exception of ESOL or Reading banking).

## ESOL Banking Rules

To assist teachers in using the credit earned for ESOL courses, the DOE allows “banking” of ESOL points. The “banking rules” changed in 1997, so the number of “bankable points” you have is now determined by the current DOE rules.

### **If ESOL training is taken under a five-year, professional, renewable certificate:**

Points for any ESOL courses taken may be banked if you have enough points for renewal of certificate without using those ESOL points.

- You may now bank as many ESOL points as you have that are “excess” and may bank them for more than one renewal period. (Old rules provided that for courses taken prior to July 1, 1997 a maximum 120 points could be banked and they could be used only in the subsequent renewal period.)

### **If ESOL training is taken under a three-year, non-renewable, temporary certificate:**

Points for any ESOL courses taken may be banked if you have enough points for renewal of certificate without using the ESOL points.

- \*An educator who holds a temporary certificate may use inservice points completed in ESOL training toward renewal of the educator’s FIRST PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE ONLY.

*\*Administrative Rule 6A-4.0051(5)(b) - An educator who holds a temporary certificate may use college credits or inservice points completed in English-for-Speakers-of-Other-Languages training and the teaching of reading toward renewal of the educator’s first professional certificate. Such training must not have been included within the degree program, and the educator’s temporary and professional certificates must be issued for consecutive school years.*

## Transfer of College Course Credits to ESOL Training

It is possible to transfer previous college credit to inservice points for ESOL credit under the Brevard County Add-On Certification Program for ESOL, provided that the course work matches the objectives of one of the ESOL courses approved for the Add-On Program.

If you think you have taken a college course that “matches” one of the ESOL Endorsement courses, take the following steps as soon as possible:

1. Check the “ESOL Automatic Course Transfer List” on the Professional Development website to see if your course is listed as pre-approved for transfer. If so, complete an Individual Inservice Request Form (print from the Professional Development website) and attach your official transcript with the matching course highlighted. Send these documents in courier to Dr. Pat Shelton, Certification and Professional Development.

2. If the course you took is not on the Automatic Transfer List:

- a. Get an Official Transcript from the university involved, verifying that you took and successfully completed the course with a grade of B or better;
  - b. Get a course description from the appropriate college catalogue, and review it for a “language acquisition” component or mention of “language differences and strategies for dealing with them”, or similar description,
  - c. Complete an Individual Inservice Request Form (print from the Professional Development web site) and attach your official transcript and course description. Send all to Dr. Pat Shelton, Professional Development, requesting a review of the course and transfer of the course credit to ESOL inservice credit.
- If the course is approved for ESOL credit and you took the course within your current validity period, you may also use the credit to renew your teaching certificate.
  - If the course is approved, but you took it before your current validity period started, you will get ESOL credit on the training database, but you will NOT be able to use the credit toward renewal of your certificate.

If you have additional questions about transferring college credit to ESOL inservice credit, contact Dr. Pat Shelton, Professional Development, via e-mail.

## Contacts

*For questions about placement into ESOL courses, ELL identification and ESOL materials, email Jeannie Judnich, ESOL/Equity Resource Teacher.*

*For training, certification, banking, or renewal questions, email Dr. Pat Shelton, Professional Development*

*For questions about the Brevard County ESOL Program Policies, email Betty A. Dunn, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services.*