

In This Issue...

A Message from the Editor

Promoting equity and access:

Connecting our communities through language

The theme for the 2014 INTESOL conference and this issue of *INTESOL Journal* is “Promoting equity and access: Connecting our communities through language.” Across a wide variety of teaching settings, whether in preschool classrooms, in K-12 classrooms, in community centers or in universities, INTESOL members believe deeply in the capacity of language to connect humans to one another and embrace the advocacy responsibilities embedded in the role of English language teacher and researcher. Even a cursory perusal of the articles in this issue will make clear the authors’ shared commitment to interrupting inequitable practices and to opening full access to the curriculum and to the life of our communities. In short, we collectively see English learners as assets in our schools and in our communities, rather than as problems to be solved.

This is truly an Indiana-focused issue of *INTESOL Journal*. April Burke, Glen DePalma, April Ginter, Trish Morita-Mullaney, and John W. Young make use of descriptive statistics to compare demographic and accountability data of Indiana schools serving large EL populations to those of schools serving smaller EL populations and schools not serving ELs, and discover an unfair disadvantage for schools with large EL populations. In addition, Burke et al discuss the implications of the Indiana A-F school grading system and offer recommendations for teachers, administrators, and policymakers.

Next, Katie Brooks and Brooke Kandel Cisco trace the history of Indiana’s current test-based accountability system after decades

of federal-level educational reform and demonstrate how the system works. After analyzing how the Indiana accountability system contradicts what is known about appropriate measurement of English language learners, Brooks and Kandel-Cisco boldly advocate for an assessment system of multiple assessments capturing rich data, rather than continuing to rely simply upon standardized testing results to measure growth of English language learners in K-12 schools.

In the third article, an exploration of the inherent possibilities present in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in Community-based English language (CBEL) classes is taken up by Ginger Kosobucki in light of a growing demand for adult English classes. Kosobucki contends that Indiana CBEL classes are an under-researched, but essential area as adult immigrants continue to relocate to Indiana with unique learning needs.

Trish Morita-Mullaney next traces the history of Indiana's inclusion and exclusion of English learners in standardized testing. As Morita-Mullaney identifies changes in assessment practices in response to a changing political landscape and to fluctuating federal demands, she notes that comparing assessment data over time is problematic given the reality of the 14 documented changes have occurred in educational policy from 1999 to the 2013-2014 school year.

Finally, Brian Lanahan Miller shines a timely light on the continuing importance of culturally responsive teaching in a study site rarely explored in Indiana scholarship: preschool. Here Miller contributes a thoughtful behavioral study of a Japanese-speaking preschooler as he explores the culture clash even the youngest English learners experience as they enter U.S. classrooms.

Many thanks are due to Brooke Kandel-Cisco, editor for the 2012 and 2013 ITJ issues, for her long-suffering patience and wise mentoring of my first foray into serving as a journal editor. It is with great hopes in the usefulness of this scholarship that the authors and I offer this issue of the *INTESOL Journal*. Each

contributor has endeavored to bring you relevant, timely and stimulating research to support your work. May the collective efforts of this issue inspire all of Indiana's INTESOL educators toward a renewed commitment to improve the prospects of Indiana's English language learners through improved access to the curriculum, through high quality pedagogy and through tireless advocacy on behalf of our new neighbors.

Editor:

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