



Position Statement on Adult Ed Governance Shift

Written Summer/Fall 2000

Illinois Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages Bilingual Education (Illinois TESOL•BE), a state affiliate of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc. (TESOL), is a non-profit organization which has promoted scholarship and professional interest in the area of English as a second language (ESL) since 1970. As a leader in the support of research and instruction, Illinois TESOL•BE provides a forum for the tremendous diversity of students, teachers, parents and administrators in Illinois and is an advocate for informed legislative policy in ESL education. Currently there are approximately 1,100 members statewide.

The enrollment for adult ESL classes has increased from 396,000 adult education students in 1980 to over 1.8 million in 1997 (Office of Adult and Vocational Education). These students are immigrants, permanent residents, or migrant workers, who represent a broad range of educational experiences in their home countries, from no formal education to advanced degrees. Illinois TESOL•BE is prepared to work with the Governor's Office, the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), the Illinois Board of Higher Education, and the adult education community to ensure that ESL services throughout the state are continued for these students throughout (and following) the transfer of governance of adult education from the ISBE to the ICCB by July 1, 2001 (per HR4266).

During this transitional year, the Illinois TESOL•BE Executive Board petitions for the ICCB to:

- Retain current definitions of eligible students for adult education services.
- Support the eligibility of community-based organization to receive base funding and performance funding (based on adult learner outcomes). The roles and contributions of community-based organization are unique,

serving the needs of special populations and communities, often as first-contact.

- Maintain or expand the number of programs to include CBO's, ROE's, school districts, and new entities found in the WIA definition, as well as the geographic distribution of adult education funding for ESL programs.

- Include ESL in any initiatives to credential adult education in Illinois.

- Continue to support the professional development service center network now in place to provide technical assistance and staff development for programs, administrators, and instructors in community based organization, community colleges, and other education agencies.

- Include Illinois TESOL•BE in on-going discussion of ESL issues through participation in the advisory council provided for in the bill.