iTEP Case Study:

Eastern Christian School

North Haledon, New Jersey, USA

About iTEP

The International Test of English Proficiency (iTEP) was introduced in 2008 to modernize English language assessment with on-demand scheduling, 24-hour grading, and accurate test data. iTEP provides a convenient and cost-effective testing option delivered in a highly secure test center environment or remotely at-home.

iTEP offers academic testing for secondary schools and universities for both admissions and on-campus ESL programs. iTEP also offers a range of career testing used by companies around the world to determine English proficiency needed for hiring and promotion decisions. For more information see www.itepexam.com.

Case Summary

In 2010, Eastern Christian School in North Haledon, New Jersey, USA needed to implement a new testing process of English language proficiency assessment for incoming international students. Traditional "paper and pencil" testing methods that were being used resulted in rushed hours of review by Eastern Christian ESL teachers. The process was very cumbersome, labor intensive, and some-times caused delays in getting students their results. A different process to get newly arrived international students tested on campus, assessed, and placed in courses in a timely manner was desired.

After learning about iTEP at a conference, Eastern Christian piloted iTEP testing for on-campus English language assessment with its international students. After the trial testing and a thorough review, Eastern Christian selected iTEP SLATE (Secondary Level Assessment Test of English) as

their primary English proficiency assessment option for incoming students. The iTEP SLATE exam provided English language evaluation for high schools and middle schools, like Eastern Christian, to make both informed admissions and on-campus language assessment decisions. The online and on-demand iTEP SLATE offered the ultimate testing flexibility and a comprehensive assessment of Grammar, Listening, Reading, Writing, and Speaking with official score reports in 24 hours guaranteed.

The Problem

Eastern Christian High School is one of the oldest and largest Christian PK-12 institutions in the New York Metropolitan area. Highly selective, the school is popular with international students because of its values-based learning, strong presence of international churches in the area, and prestigious reputation. Eastern Christian has a well-established international student program and has hosted students from all around the world. With a total student population of about 840 students, the school welcomes the diversity that students from China, Korea, Italy, Spain, India, Nigeria, and other countries bring to campus. Eastern Christian faced two testing issues. First, the on-campus process using "pencil and paper" testing of international students upon arrival was inefficient and labor intensive. There was a limited window of time to manually grade tests before the students needed to be placed in classes. Second, the on-cam-

pus testing often did not match the various admissions test results that the international students had submitted. This inconsistency of scores caused further issues and delays in correct class placement.

With international students flying thousands of miles to begin their education at their new school, Eastern Christian needed an English language exam that was comprehensive, efficient, reliable, and with results almost immediately available. The school needed to find and implement an English language testing process that contributed to both student and teacher success. This process also needed to be convenient, secure, and consistent. With an eye towards the already increasing costs of international education, the testing needed to be of high quality, but affordable.

The Approach

Each year Eastern Christian received students from all over the world with a wide variety of ages, backgrounds, and English proficiencies. While an English language testing process was in place, both administrators and teachers recognized a better solution needed to be found. After attending several international student conferences to see what English language options were available, the decision was made to try iTEP testing. The iTEP SLATE Plus exam was piloted with a small sample of international students already enrolled at the institution. The pilot program showcased the proficiency of the current international students in a more accurate and comprehensive manner than the previous testing.

After the pilot program, the next step was simple: implement iTEP SLATE Plus testing for all future incoming international students. Moving away from the old, traditional "paper and pencil" testing led to more flexible testing driven by iTEP SLATE Plus. A testing time of approximately 80 minutes and delivery of score reports in 24 hours gave Eastern Christian's ESL Director, Cynthia Adair, more time to test and accurately assess and place international students in their classes. Relying on iTEP's professional ESL graders further provided an independent English language assessment, but Eastern Christian retained open access to each test taker's writing and speaking sections for further review in case any questions arose.

The iTEP Solution

The iTEP SLATE Plus exam proved to be the right solution for Eastern Christian School. For on-campus testing, using iTEP's online testing allowed for quick and in-depth assessment of each international student's Grammar, Listening, Reading, Writing, and Speaking fluencies. Being able to test in 80 minutes on a computer and receive a comprehensive score report in 24 hours eliminated the need for Eastern Christian's ESL teachers to hurriedly grade exams and make assessments within a limited time frame before classes started.

Further, using ITEP SLATE for both admissions testing with applicants around the world and for on-campus testing ensured a consistency of language assessment across the board for each international student that enrolled at Eastern Christian. This dual approach of using ITEP SLATE for both in-country admissions and on-campus assessment reduced assessment discrepancies, ensured a smoother placement into classes, and contributed overall to greater student success. The online SLATE Plus exam is efficient, secure, accurate, affordable, and designed to meet the needs of young learners – all things that Eastern Christian was looking for to best help their international students.

> " We were looking for a test that was secure, contained relevant information on applicants' language abilities, saved valuable time, and improved accuracy. iTEP hit the mark. "
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> **Dr. Ruth Kuder, Executive Director & Head of School.**