

## CASE STUDY

# Tree of Life Christian School

## Pre-Admissions English Language Testing



### 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](http://www.itepexam.com).

### CASE SUMMARY

In 2014, Tree of Life Christian School needed to find an English proficiency exam to assess the potential of international students. The pre-admissions process for potential students included a 90-minute interview with the International Program Director, Terri Fraser, to gauge their conversation skills and ability to adapt to the school's program. Once international students were accepted, they took annual exams to track their progress. Tree of Life needed one exam to suit both situations. The exam also had to be easy to set up, compatible with the school's technology, and provide accurate results quickly.

With previous experience implementing iTEP in another international program, Director Fraser recommended iTEP as a solution. Tree of Life Christian School selected the iTEP SLATE (Secondary Level Assessment Test of English) exam as their primary English proficiency assessment option for pre-admission and progress tracking. The iTEP SLATE assessed students to help the International Program gain and share insights into students' abilities and make informed decisions

about student placement and learning needs. The exam allowed applicants to test in their home country while accepted students could test on campus. The iTEP SLATE-Core exams were compatible with the school's Chromebooks and offered almost immediate Grammar, Listening, and Reading results.



## THE PROBLEM

Tree of Life Christian School is a unique PK-12 college prep school renowned for its thought leadership in diversity, with a student population that has a diversity level of 46%. Located in the multicultural city of Columbus, Ohio, USA, the school welcomes the cultural exchange that comes from a culturally diverse student population. The school's student population includes international students as well as domestic students from various cultural backgrounds. With a high demand for program spots, the school's international program is highly selective. Admission is based on skill level and availability.

Tree of Life Christian School faced two main testing challenges. Firstly, the school required an English proficiency exam to evaluate prospective students in their home country as part of the pre-admissions process. The International Program Director, Terri Fraser, conducted 90-minute interviews to assess students'

conversational abilities and their readiness to adapt to an English-speaking environment. An English proficiency exam would allow the director to screen students for eligibility and streamline the student selection process before conducting lengthy interviews.

Secondly, the school needed an English proficiency exam that could be used on campus to evaluate accepted international students in grades 7–12. The exam had to be user-friendly and provide accurate results promptly. Delays in obtaining exam results could hamper student placement or application and visa processes.

Therefore, it was imperative that the school procure an English proficiency exam that was versatile enough to meet the school's requirements while being easy for staff to use.

## THE APPROACH

In 2014, Tree of Life Christian School chose the iTEP SLATE as their primary English proficiency exam. The International Program Director, Terri Fraser, recommended the iTEP exams based on prior experience with iTEP at another school. The iTEP SLATE-Core is an online English proficiency test that evaluates students in Grammar, Reading, and Listening. Program applicants can securely test in their home country with no worries about submitting results. Upon completion, the results, called the iTEP Score Reports, are sent directly to the school. "We get results back immediately," noted Fraser. The iTEP Score Reports are a crucial part of the pre-admission process. "It's nice that they can do [the exam] online," said Fraser. "I won't interview a student until I get [the exam results] because it takes me an hour and a half to interview a student."

The iTEP SLATE also became a valuable tool for tracking students' progress and identifying if they were ready to matriculate into English classes with their English-fluent peers. Students are tested in August, at the end of the summer vacation, and again in May, at the end of the school year. The exam setup process is user-friendly and compatible with the school's Chromebooks. "I can go into my Chromebook and just [choose the] best exam. Then I input all the student information, get it all set up, and then call the student in," said Fraser.

## THE iTEP SOLUTION

The iTEP SLATE exam proved to be a successful solution for Tree of Life's English proficiency testing challenges. It facilitated the student selection process and enabled the school to monitor student progress in a user-friendly manner. Additionally, Director Fraser found the exams useful in other ways.

The iTEP Score Reports are usually shared with international students' host families. Director Fraser found that sharing the results provided more awareness for host families, allowing more open communication channels and closer relationships between families and students. Director Fraser is also considering using iTEP exams to evaluate the school's growing population of students from refugee or immigrant families, who may not have English as their primary language at home.

Director Fraser expressed significant satisfaction with the iTEP exams and stated, "I will definitely continue promoting iTEP just as I have been doing to other schools that talk to me because I do like how easy it is, and that there's a person I can talk to versus just chatting [with a robot]."

For more information about testing at the high school level, contact iTEP at [info@iTEPonline.com](mailto:info@iTEPonline.com). You can also check out the latest iTEP International news by visiting our Facebook page ([facebook.com/iTEPSLATE/](https://facebook.com/iTEPSLATE/)). For more information about Tree of Life Christian School, visit [www.tolcs.org](http://www.tolcs.org).



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