



# ***Ed.D. in School System Leadership:***

Specialization in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) and Dual Language Education

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**Information Session:**

**Thursday, January 8th, 2026, 5:00-6:30 pm on Zoom.**

**Register:**

**[https://umd.zoom.us/meeting/register/gehi8bEoSrW9KOsh\\_WhEeQ](https://umd.zoom.us/meeting/register/gehi8bEoSrW9KOsh_WhEeQ)**

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## Introduction

Housed in the College of Education here at the University of Maryland, The Ed.D in School System Leadership, Specialization in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) and Dual Language Education (SLTL) program is the first of its kind in the entire state of Maryland as well as in the local DMV area. This **part-time** program is dedicated to preparing current teachers, teacher leaders, school and district administrators to address multilingual learners' needs at macro levels of education (i.e., school and district levels) to parallel the already important changes teachers are making at the classroom level. Given that the multilingual learner populations of the Mid-Atlantic region have increased substantially, including more than doubling in Maryland's entire P-12 system in less than a decade, school districts have recognized the ever-increasing need for more teachers and administrators to understand how to address these student populations' academic, language and cultural needs

across the curriculum. While teacher education programs in this area have started to increase, teacher leader and administrator preparation continues to lag behind severely.

As opposed to a traditional doctoral programs with a culminating dissertation focusing on theoretical contributions to a larger field, this program has students addressing real-time school district problems of practice in the form of a capstone project through the lens of Improvement Science, the goal of which is for these doctoral projects to be proposed to the school districts after graduation for implementation.

Note that this program is for those already with foundational knowledge and formal training/teacher education in working with multilingual learners. See admissions requirements below for more details.

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## **Who can apply to the program?**

This program is for teachers, teacher leaders, school and district administrators who are **currently employed** in the public school systems of Maryland, DC, or Virginia and will remain employed throughout the duration of the doctoral program. All applicants must also have foundational knowledge and prior formal training/teacher education in the fields of TESOL, world language education, and/or bilingual education. This includes graduate-level credits in the areas of second language acquisition theory, methods of TESOL/world languages/bilingual education, biliteracy/reading and writing for language learners, and assessment of/for language education.

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## **What certification credentials and degrees do I need to possess prior to applying?**

A current, valid teaching and/or administrator certification is required; those with conditional certifications are not eligible. All applicants must have already completed a Master's degree.

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## **How long is the program?**

The program is scheduled to take place Summer 2026-Spring 2030, including summer work (see the program's tentative schedule below for specific courses and semesters).

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## **When and where will courses take place?**

Fall and spring courses are fully online both synchronously and asynchronously (individual course professors will let students know specifics in advance). Summer courses are a mix of

synchronous online sessions and in-person sessions at the UMD campus in College Park, MD. All in-person summer sessions will be on Saturdays from 9am-5pm.

For Summer 2026, Saturday sessions will take place on June 6th, June 20th, July 11th, and July 25th from 9:00am-5:00pm (these are in addition to weekday evening sessions on Zoom). Summer 2027 and Summer 2028 will also have in-person sessions (dates TBA). All students must attend these in-person Saturday sessions in College Park; plan accordingly.

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## What is the Program of Study?

This is a 60-credit program that will take approximately 4 years to complete. This includes a combination of Leadership coursework and TESOL/Dual Language Education advanced coursework (see application requirements for prior TESOL coursework needed to enter the program). Below is the overview of Program Components and the breakdown of credits, as well as the TENTATIVE schedule of courses and doctoral work (subject to change):

Program Component	Credits
TESOL Core Courses	12
Leadership Core Courses	16
Research Courses	9
Professional Courses for Capstone	4
Apprenticeship	7
MidPoint Evaluation	6
Doctoral Capstone Project	6
<b>TOTAL CREDITS</b>	<b>60</b>

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## What is the tentative program schedule for the cohort starting Summer 2026?

Year 1	Summer 2026	EDUC 703: Conducting Library Research (2 credits)
		EDUC 704: Introduction to Doctoral Writing for Education Leaders (2 credits)
		TLPL 791: Qualitative Research 1: Design & Framework (3 credits)
	Fall 2026	ECUC 705: Education Policymaking and the School Leader (4 credits)
		TLPL 743: Teaching English Language Learners: Current and Future Research Trends (3 credits)
	Spring 2027	TLPL 740: Language and Education (3 credits)

		TLPL 744: Research Foundations of Second Language Education: Examining Linguistically Diverse Student Learning (3 credits)
Year 2	Summer 2027	EDUC 701: Applied Research and Data-based Decision-making (3 credits)
	Fall 2027	EDUC 767: Seminar on School District Leadership (4 credits)
		TLPL 637: Teaching for Equity in Bilingual/Language Immersion Programs (3 credits)
	Spring 2028	EDUC 740: Managing Educational Organization in a Diverse Society (4 credits)
		EDUC 770: Managing Innovation and Transformation of School Systems (4 credits)
Year 3	Summer 2028	EDUC 702: Applied Research Design for Education Leaders-Improvement Science (3 credits)
	Fall 2028	TLPL 888: Apprenticeship in Education (7 credits)
	Spring 2029	EDUC 828: Mid-Point Evaluation- Capstone Proposal (6 credits)
Year 4	Summer 2029	N/A
	Fall 2029	EDUC 829: Capstone (3 credits)
	Spring 2030	EDUC 829: Capstone (3 credits)

## What are the costs of the program? What are students responsible for?

Tuition for the 2025-2026 school year is currently \$841.00/credit. \*\*This is subject to change each year\*\*. As this is a self-sustaining program (as opposed to a traditional on-campus state-funded program), this tuition is the same for everyone regardless of in-state/out-of-state residency.

Participants will be required to pay application and registration fees as well as any additional fees or expenses, including course materials, mileage, and parking.

PENDING AVAILABILITY: 25% of tuition is covered by scholarships from the Department of Teaching and Learning, Policy and Leadership.

PENDING AVAILABILITY: 75% of tuition (plus any fees) is the responsibility of the student.

## Can I transfer credits from another program?

No, we will not be accepting any transfer credits. This is a cohort program, meaning all students must take all courses for the cohort when they are offered to the cohort.

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## What are the doctoral milestones of the program?

The first two years of the program (including summers) will be coursework, which brings together research, theory, practice, and leadership that bridge the fields of TESOL/Dual Language Education and School System Leadership.

Beginning Year 3, all students will take part in a semester-long apprenticeship where they will be part of larger projects throughout the school system that focus on English learner/multilingual learner needs. The work done during that apprenticeship will connect with the coursework and will also provide ideas for the capstone that the students will eventually work on. Following the apprenticeship, students will be paired with advisors who will help them with their Mid-Point Evaluations, which is developing a proposal for the capstone.

The final year, Year 4, will entail working on the capstone project. As opposed to a traditional dissertation, the capstone is a practical project aimed at addressing a Problem of Practice concerning leadership/administration and multilingual learners in the school system. All capstone projects in this program utilize the framework of Improvement Science.

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## What is Improvement Science? How will it guide my journey through the program?

Improvement Science is a methodological framework that guides **scholar-practitioners** to define problems within a specific **system** (school or district), understand how the **system** produces the problems (i.e., understand the entire of history of how we got to where we are today), identify changes to rectify the problems that work for the resources available for that specific **system**, test the efficacy of those changes, and spread the changes if indeed those changes lead to an improvement. The entire program builds up to the capstone, and all capstone projects in this program follow the framework of Improvement Science to systematically and practically make changes that address the needs of multilingual learners in the systems.

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## What exactly does the 7-credit Apprenticeship entail during Year 3?

Central to doing an Improvement Science project is having an in-depth understanding of the system, meaning knowing the entire history of how the system got to where it is today and a thorough understanding of the system's workings and resources available beyond what we know in our current positions. All students will be required to spend a semester (87 hours) working with an office in their school system (outside of their normal work hours- this varies in how it looks) that connects to their Problem of Practice for their capstone. The goal of this is to have a truly in-depth knowledge of the Problem of Practice from all perspectives to best determine what practically can be done to address the problem. Examples from previous students include working with the Gifted and Talented Office to learn more about how it runs (and why) and how

the history and current set up has led to inequities with multilingual learners being identified for G&T, or working with the Dual Enrollment Office to learn about their history and processes to determine the workings of connecting with local colleges/universities and how best to ensure multilingual learners have access to this. Doing the Apprenticeship is key to constructing a successful capstone proposal.

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## **What are the requirements for applying to the program?**

In general, applicants must have the following:

1. Must possess a Bachelor's degree (GPA: minimum 3.0/4.0)
2. Must possess a Master's degree (GPA minimum 3.5/4.0)
3. At least 12 credits of post-baccalaureate work (either as part of your Master's degree or separate from it) in:
  - a. Second Language Acquisition Theory;
  - b. Methods for teaching language learners;
  - c. Assessment for language learners;
  - d. Literacy or reading & writing for language learners
4. Three (3) letters of recommendation (two must be academic letters of recommendation focusing on you as a learner, one is from a supervisor)
5. Statement of Purpose → Explain why you are interested in this program specifically and what you can offer this program as it relates to your future career goals.
6. Writing Sample (Master's Thesis, publication, course paper)
7. Updated resume.

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## **What is the application process?**

1. All applications must be completed and submitted by Sunday, March 1, 2026.
2. Those who meet minimum requirements for admission and who have turned in completed applications by the March 1 deadline will be invited for interviews the first two weeks of March.
3. Applicants are notified of final decisions by March 31, 2026.
4. Admitted students must confirm their attendance by April 15, 2026.
5. Course 1 begins June 1, 2026.

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## **What does the University of Maryland application entail?**

To apply, you will need to do the following:

- Set up an account and fill out the online application form:  
<https://gradschool.umd.edu/admissions/application-process>.
- Pay the \$75.00 application fee

- Provide UNofficial transcripts showing a completed Bachelor's degree with a GPA minimum 3.0/4.0
- Provide UNofficial transcripts showing a completed Master's degree with a GPA minimum 3.5/4.0
- Provide UNofficial transcripts of any additional graduate-level credit-bearing coursework you've done that was at least 9 credits or more at a single institution (for example, a 12-credit Post-Baccalaureate Certificate Program or credits towards another doctorate not completed)
- Provide evidence showing you have completed at least 12 credits of graduate-level credit-bearing (not CPD) work (either as part of your Master's degree or separate from it) in:
  - Second Language Acquisition Theory;
  - Methods for working with language learners;
  - Assessment for language learners;
  - Literacy or Reading & Writing for language learners
- Provide three (3) letters of recommendation:
  - At least two must be academic letters of recommendation focusing on you as a student (from prior degrees and/or professional development work);
  - One from a supervisor
- Submit a Statement of Purpose → Why this program specifically and what you can offer this program as they both relate to your future career goals.
- Provide a Writing Sample (Master's Thesis, Course Paper, Publication)
- **NOTE: As this is a part-time program, we cannot accept anyone in need of an international student visa (which requires full-time student status).** Applicants must be U.S. citizens, possess a U.S. Passport, or have a permanent resident card.
- **NOTE: Even if you are a U.S. citizen or have a permanent resident card, if you did not receive any of your prior degrees (i.e., Bachelor's and Master's) in the United States, then review the UMD policy for applicants needing to take an English proficiency assessment:**  
<https://gradschool.umd.edu/admissions/english-language-proficiency-requirements>. If you need to take an English proficiency assessment, we will only accept "Full Enrollment" scores and they must be submitted to UMD prior to the UMD application deadline of March 1.
- **NOTE:** This program does NOT require GRE scores as part of the application package.

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## When are applications due?

All applications must be fully completed and submitted in the University of Maryland admissions system by March 1, 2026.

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## Are there any application fees in the admissions process?

The official standard online application to the Graduate School of the University of Maryland



currently has a \$75 fee, which will be the responsibility of the applicant.

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## **Are there interviews for admissions?**

All applicants who meet the minimum qualifications for admission and who turned in completed applications by the March 1 deadline will be invited to a 20-minute interview with the Program Director, Dr. Drew Fagan, during the first two weeks of March.

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## **When are final decisions made?**

Applicants will be notified of their status by March 31, 2026. All admitted students must confirm they will attend the program by April 15, 2026.

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## **How many seats are available for the program?**

Our goal is to keep this program as individually-focused as possible. As such, we are only accepting 15 people into this cohort.

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## **Is there a waitlist, and could I be admitted into the cohort after it begins?**

Yes, there will be a waitlist. After April 15, If any of the originally accepted applicants choose not to attend we will move towards fully accepting applicants on the waitlist. Once the program begins, we cannot accept additional people into that cohort, and the waitlist will be closed. Students on the waitlist who do not get into this cohort can apply again for a subsequent cohort.

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## **When are transcripts due?**

You may submit unofficial transcripts with your application. If you are accepted and confirm that you will attend the program, all official transcripts must be sent to the university by June 1.

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## **Do I have to submit immunizations records?**

All admitted students must adhere to university policy for submitting immunization records. These must be submitted by June 1. More information about this can be found here: <https://health.umd.edu/immunizations>.

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## **Can I take a semester off or take courses at a different time from the rest of the cohort?**

No. As this is a cohort program, participants must take all courses in the specified semesters in which these courses are offered for this particular cohort in order to remain in the program. All program participants must be in full attendance for fall, spring, and summer courses (whether they are in-person or in real-time synchronously on Zoom). Having more than the allotted number of absences will result in the participant being asked to leave the program.

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## **Can I get reimbursed for my tuition?**

Please check with your individual school systems regarding their policy for tuition reimbursement.

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## **Can I apply for financial aid?**

Yes. Our program is a half-time graduate-level program (at least 6 credits per semester, including some summers), meaning that students can apply for federal aid via FAFSA to help pay for their portion of the tuition. If you qualify, most of this aid will be in the form of student loans. Pending availability, our program will offer a 25% scholarship but we will not be able to provide anything further.

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## **Will there be future cohorts?**

While we cannot guarantee anything, we do currently anticipate another cohort starting Summer 2028.

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## **Important Dates to Remember**

January 8, 2026	Information Session on Zoom (registration link below)
March 1, 2026	Completed application due to UMD
First Two Weeks of March	Applicants who meet minimum admissions criteria and who submitted completed applications by the March 1st deadline are invited for interviews.
March 31, 2026	All applicants are informed of their status.

April 15, 2026	Deadline for admitted students to confirm they are attending. Waitlisted students will be contacted after this date regarding open spots.
June 1, 2026	First day of the first course.  All official transcripts and immunizations records must be submitted.

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## How can I learn more about the program?

Attend our Information Session on Thursday, January 8th, 2026 from 5:00-6:30 pm. Register here: [https://umd.zoom.us/meeting/register/gehi8bEoSrW9KOsh\\_WhEeQ](https://umd.zoom.us/meeting/register/gehi8bEoSrW9KOsh_WhEeQ)

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## Additional Questions?

Contact Dr. Drew Fagan, Program Director, at [dfagan@umd.edu](mailto:dfagan@umd.edu).