

## NEWS

TESOL Contact:

John Segota  
+1 703-518-2513  
jsegota@tesol.org

### For Immediate Release

Barry Pilson  
+1 703-518-2512  
bpilson@tesol.org

## English Language Educators Meet With Legislators at DC Summit

TESOL International Association, the premier association for English language educators worldwide, recently hosted its 2014 Advocacy and Policy Summit in Washington, D.C. Nearly 70 TESOL professionals gathered to discuss pending legislation and advocate for English learners (ELs). The event was sponsored, in part, by the [American Federation of Teachers](#) and the [National Education Association](#).

The TESOL advocates organized more than 100 meetings on Capitol Hill. A learning experience for the attendees and legislators alike, the meetings served as venues for English language educators to address important issues and policy recommendations in the field of English language teaching. Critical legislation discussed concerned the need for an increase in Title III funding, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), and the English Learning and Innovation Act, an act that increases funds to EL professionals and supports districts with professional development, capacity building, and classroom innovation for ELs.

At the two-day event, which was held in June, presenters from the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Justice acknowledged landmarks in legislation and Supreme Court decisions affecting English language education in the United States. This year is the 50th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the 40th anniversary of both the Equal Education Opportunity Act and the Supreme Court decision in *Lau v. Nichols*. The first day of the event—23 June—was also the 33rd anniversary of the Supreme Court decision in *Castaneda v. Pickard*, a landmark decision establishing the right of English learners to an adequate education.

Regarding more current issues, the presenters discussed teacher development and teacher quality initiatives from the Department of Education, and an update on federal programs serving ELs in public schools. Other topics included the civil rights of ELs, the Student and Exchange Visitor Program, how the Common Core State Standards affect ELs, and federal programs for adult ELs.

– MORE –

Before the event, participants received issue briefs on the federal budget and appropriations, immigration reform, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the Higher Education Act, and the general legislative process. They were also invited to an online orientation seminar where they received tips on how to schedule meetings with congressional leaders.

“The Advocacy and Policy Summit is at its core an educational opportunity,” noted TESOL Associate Executive Director John Segota, who organized the event. “Participants come to Washington, D.C., and learn how to effectively advocate for English learners. The goal of the program is not only to educate attendees on key policies but also to empower them to take action in their local school districts and workplaces.”

[Registration](#) for the 2015 Advocacy & Policy Summit opens in April.

#### **About TESOL International Association**

Founded in 1966, [TESOL International Association](#) is a professional community of educators, researchers, administrators, and students committed to advancing excellence in English language teaching for speakers of other languages worldwide. With more than 13,000 members representing 150 countries, TESOL fosters the exchange of ideas, research, and peer-to-peer knowledge, and provides expertise, resources, and a powerful voice on issues affecting the profession. Through professional development programs, its international conference, special interest groups, and publications, TESOL engages tens of thousands of professionals to collaborate globally and create a world of opportunity for millions of people of all ages who want to learn English. For more information, please visit [www.tesol.org](http://www.tesol.org)

###