

Policy Recommendations for the 116th U.S. Congress

May 2019

TESOL International Association (TESOL) represents approximately 10,000 English language teaching professionals across the United States, including educators in early childhood through adult education. Issues and policy areas TESOL strongly supports include:

- *Sufficient and effective funding* for federal education programs serving all English learners and newcomers, from birth through adult education.
- *Improved professional development and career pathways* for existing and future English language teachers to gain the skills required to meet the needs of the country's diverse English learner population of over 4 million K-12 students.
- *Fair immigration policies* that do not discriminate or favor individuals based on their country of origin, English language skills, or education level, and seek to promote welcoming environments within schools and communities.

To support these priorities, TESOL asks the 116th Congress to act on the following issues:

I. PreK-12 Education & Teacher Preparation

- Pass the *Reaching English Learners Act* (H.R. 1153, S. 545), which addresses the nation's critical shortage of English language teachers by providing grants for the training and development of future teachers of English learners.
- Fully fund Title III of the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) at the FY 2020 authorized funding level of \$885 million. Title III provides supplemental funding for the instruction of English learners, and has been level funded since FY 2015 while both inflation and the population of eligible students have increased.
- Fully fund Title II of ESSA at the FY 2020 authorized funding level of \$2.3 billion. Title II provides states with funding for professional development for educators and school leaders.
- Appropriate the \$10 million in funding for Teacher Quality Partnership Grants for English language teacher candidates currently proposed in the House's Labor, Health, and Human Services draft budget.

II. Adult Education

- Fully fund Title II of the *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act* (WIOA) at the FY 2020 authorized funding level of \$678 million. Title II of WIOA funds adult and family literacy programs across the country, improving the English language proficiency skills that many immigrant families depend upon to become successful members of their communities.

III. International Education and Cultural Exchange

- Reject the administration's proposed cut for FY 2020 to the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) at the U.S. Department of State and maintain ECA funding at FY 2019 levels of \$700 million. Educational and cultural exchange programs overseen by ECA such as the Fulbright Program and the Office of English Language Programs support U.S. foreign, economic, and security policy objectives and serve a critical role in diplomacy.

IV. Immigration Reform

- Pass the *American Dream and Promise Act of 2019* (H.R. 6) and related *Dream Act of 2019* (S.874), legislation that provides a pathway to permanent citizenship for recipients of DACA and other undocumented immigrants who arrived to the United States as children or young adults.