TESOL Board Revises Position on Literacy for Young English Language Learners

Alexandria, Virginia (April 2010) – At its recent meeting, the Board of Directors of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc. (TESOL), approved a revision to its Position Paper on Language and Literacy Development for Young English Language Learners. First approved by the TESOL Board of Directors in 2001, the statement was updated to include new information reflecting recent developments and research findings from the field.

In the statement, TESOL provides key principles and recommendations for language and literacy development for young English language learners (ages 3-8). Literacy learning and language acquisition are essential to young children’s cognitive and social development. For all students, a strong and solid early education is critical to ensuring their long-term academic success. Improving reading programs in early childhood and primary classrooms is the key to making sure that all students read on grade level by the third grade. For young learners of English who are speakers of other languages (ESOL), the challenges of literacy and language development are different if they are learning in an all-English environment where they need the language to function in school, or if they are in an environment where English is taught as a foreign language (EFL) in school.

TESOL’s full Position Paper on Language and Literacy Development for Young English Language Learners (ages 3-8) is available at www.tesol.org.