

ORTESOL Position Statement on Immigration



Adopted: *March, 9th 2019*

We as educators and English language professionals affirm our commitment to the protection and empowerment of the communities we serve including documented and undocumented immigrants and refugees residing in Oregon and those seeking refuge in the United States.

- We advocate for the humane treatment and protection of the civil rights of all immigrants, refugees and those requesting asylum and their families.
- We advocate for public discourse about immigration that is reasoned and respectful of the human and civil rights of all.
- We advocate for state and federal legislation and funding that strengthen educational services enabling immigrants to successfully participate in US society.
- We oppose any form of discrimination or the targeting of individuals based on immigration status or perceived immigration status, race, country of origin, native language or language proficiency, gender, sexual orientation and religion.

Values We Uphold:

1. Respect for diversity, multiculturalism and collaboration in a global community.
2. Appreciation of the significant contributions made by generations of immigrants, historically and in the current moment, to our country, our state and our communities.
3. Responsibility as educators to ensure safety, inclusiveness and fairness in schools, workplaces and in our communities.
4. Recognition that intercultural communication, understanding and cooperation in our communities and institutions is the shared responsibility of all. We are committed to our own ongoing professional development and training in the area of cultural competence and engagement in the community.
5. Endorsement of the spirit and intent of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which asserts the dignity and worth of the human person and the “inalienable and inviolable rights of all members of the human family”. It was adopted by member states of the United Nations in December 1948 in response to the gross violation of

human rights and massive displacement that resulted from the two world wars of the 20th century. In 2019, it is clearly still relevant as there are now more forcibly displaced persons in the world than at any time in recorded history, a staggering 69 million.

6. Recognition that the history of English language teaching has been used to perpetuate imperialism and colonialism; these practices have equated education with a process of assimilation. As professionals, we support teaching practices and institutional structures that affirm learners' identities and cultures. We celebrate practices and structures that promote intercultural understanding and the development of the skills needed for full civic engagement.

Policies & Practices We Promote:

1. Fostering a greater understanding and appreciation in public discourse for the human rights and contributions made by immigrants and refugees.
2. Striving for excellence in preparing our students for full participation in US society through effective instruction in language, civics, and culture.
3. Prioritizing the means to inform, support and empower our students to stand up for their rights and successfully negotiate the many challenges they confront in adapting to life in the US.
4. Collaborating with immigrant and refugee communities in order to better understand their needs and experiences and to enhance our capacity to support them.
5. Establishing a safe environment inside the classroom, on campus, and on and around school grounds to provide sanctuary or safe haven. Make it known that schools are legally designated as "sensitive locations"; ICE is generally prohibited from operating there. Publicly state that schools will not share student information including immigration status with law enforcement unless under warrant.
6. Organizing Know Your Rights workshops (KYR) for students and their families. Convey information about the constitutional amendments that apply to all those residing in the US regardless of immigration status. Assist families to create a family plan in case of arrest or detention by ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement).
7. Assisting undocumented and DACA students (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) in accessing scholarships and other aid to attend college.