



NJTESOL/NJBE, Inc.

NJ Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages/NJ Bilingual Educators

Position Statement on Family Separation and Hate Speech

New Jersey educates over 80,000 English learners (ELs) which include 11,000+ unaccompanied minors.

NJTESOL/NJBE is a professional organization comprised of educators and administrators dedicated to the instruction of English Learners (ELs). As such we work directly with immigrant children and their families from around the world. We witness the trauma and fear they carry with them in the classroom on a daily basis. Stories of family separation at the border and in our own communities and the recent shooting in El Paso, Texas are stark reminders of why that trauma and fear exist. We all have stories of our students being told to “go back to where you came from!” It is indeed an increasingly painful time to work in this field. We stand in solidarity with our students and their families and will continue to advocate on their behalf. We know that the social emotional status of our children and their families impact their learning. The time for our schools and communities to commit to the necessary resources to address the particular needs of the children and families we serve is now.

As educators and administrators, we are sworn to teach all children in accordance with Plyler vs. Doe regardless of immigration status. We urge our politicians and all Americans to stand with immigrant children and families that we serve, reject family separation policies, denounce hate speech at all levels of government and work for comprehensive immigration reform so that we can peacefully and effectively educate our students. A commitment to providing equitable and safe places to learn begins with each one of us.