

NJTESOL/NJBE, Inc.

AN AFFILIATE OF NJEA, TESOL, NABE

New Jersey Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages/New Jersey Bilingual Educators, Incorporated

A professional organization for those concerned with the teaching of English as a Second Language,
Bilingual Education and Standard English as a Dialect

NJTESOL/ NJBE Statement of Solidarity against Anti-Black Racism

NJTESOL/ NJBE stands both as a part of and in firm solidarity with the Black community in the wake of the recent and ongoing acts of police brutality against unarmed Black citizens in the United States.

As an organization focused upon the recognition and celebration of multilingual and multicultural learners, we regularly engage in advocacy that promotes the humanity of students from around the world. We acknowledge that our struggle against inequity is conjoined with that of the Black community both in the U.S. and around the world. Our learners represent cultural and linguistic richness from across this country and around the globe, and when our Black brothers and sisters are denied their humanity, so are we.

We not only align ourselves with the pursuit of justice for the recent killings of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor and George Floyd, but we recognize our agency in mobilizing against hatred within our sphere of influence. In classrooms, professional development, consulting and scholarship, we must insist on centering and believing Black voices as we further a cause pioneered by the Civil Rights movement on the backs of Black activists. As we both benefit from and further that legacy in our work, we further commit to the archaeology of self (Sealey-Ruiz) which challenges all who teach in multicultural and particularly urban settings to start with the critical love of the communities they serve to achieve racial literacy and ultimately educational justice.

We recommit ourselves to [rejecting bigotry bullying and harassment](#) and recognize our Asian communities have also suffered as recent targets of hatred. We firmly declare our diversity as our strength and stand against behaviors that threaten us as a multicultural community physically, psychologically and emotionally. Currently the bodily harm we stand against is also compounded by ICE enforced [family separations](#) which continue to terrorize families alongside the precarity of DACA in disrupting the lives of many multilingual students ranging from Pre-K to graduate levels. These injustices are underscored by COVID-19 as it continues to ravage marginalized communities, particularly Black communities, disproportionately.

As we acknowledge that language cannot be separated from the bodies of those who produce it (Flores, 2020), we will continue to provide space and support for students to access their full

linguistic repertoires (García & Seltzer, 2017) as we learn alongside our colleagues to amplify the strength already present particularly in the diverse communities and classrooms of New Jersey. We consider ourselves beneficiaries of a rich community cultural wealth (Yosso, 2006) already present in our students and the villages of support who surround them, and are dedicated to partnering with them in this ongoing fight for equity both in and outside of classrooms.

Black lives matter, and as part of a human community that acknowledges “injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere,” we reject silence and complicity amidst the suffering of our students and communities around the country. We echo the sentiments of NJEA in assuming our responsibility as educators in shaping the future of our society (NJEA, 2020). As such, we forge ahead and activate our privilege and position to proclaim that we, NJTESOL-NJBE are committed to antiracist education and advocacy, starting with ourselves.

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García, O., Johnson, S.I., Seltzer, K. (2017). *The translanguaging classroom: Leveraging student bilingualism for learning*. Caslon: Philadelphia, PA.

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<https://www.njea.org/njea-statement-on-george-floyd-racism-and-the-need-for-anti-racist-action/>

https://njtesol-njbe.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/pos_stmt_immigration_hate_speech.pdf

https://njtesol-njbe.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Advocacy-Statement_on_Bigotry.pdf

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Vimeo <https://vimeo.com/299137829>

Yosso*, T. J. (2005). Whose culture has capital? A critical race theory discussion of community cultural wealth. *Race ethnicity and education*, 8(1), 69-91.