

## NEWS

For Immediate Release

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## Enhancing English Language and ELT Pedagogy of Uzbekistan English Language Teachers

Alexandria, Va. (January 13, 2022) – Shifting from a strict classroom environment to a “free and friendly” one, transitioning teaching methods from textbook exercises to student-centered activities prepared by a freshly energized group of secondary English language teachers: These were a few of the takeaways from TESOL International Association’s work on a cascading professional development program as part of the English Speaking Nation (ESN): Secondary Teacher Training program.

The professional development program is funded by the U.S. Embassy Tashkent, administered by American Councils for International Education in cooperation with the Uzbekistan Ministry of Education, and conducted through a collaboration between TESOL International Association and George Mason University. Recently, representatives evaluated the third and final phase of the effort aimed at enhancing the English language teaching (ELT) pedagogy of Uzbekistan’s English language teachers. The team, which included TESOL’s Heidi Faust, traveled to 15 sites across 12 regions of the country, conducting observations, interviews, focus groups, and community of practice observation sessions.

“The teachers expressed so much gratitude for the ESN program,” Faust said. “They thanked the U.S. Embassy in Tashkent, the American Councils for International Education, TESOL International Association, and George Mason University for this experience. Many expressed that this program changed their teaching, as well as their lives. They want it to keep going.”



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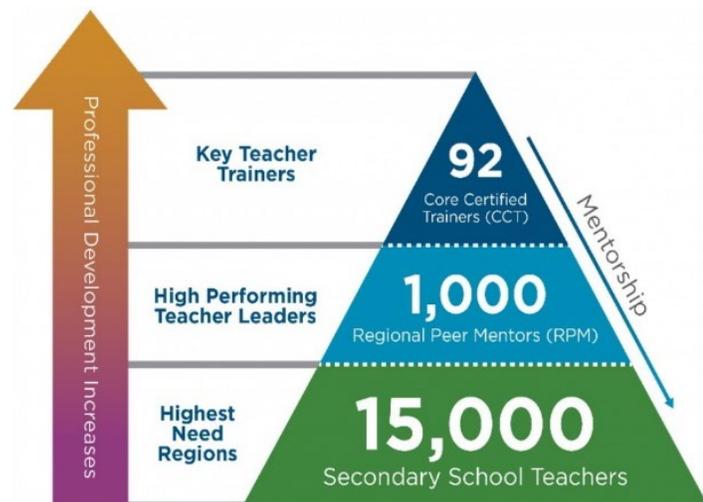
Some of the initial key findings reported by the team of program reviewers included changes in how English was taught, an increase in interactive learning, a heightened sense of energy and engagement in both students and teachers, and teacher interest in mentoring others and participating in communities of practice. One significant change was the transition from Uzbek to English being used as the primary language of instruction. “Teachers valued the opportunity to be part of an English-speaking community in the program and shared that they are more confident using English in their classrooms,” Faust said. “Many teachers also shared that transitioning to student-centered teaching made them love their jobs and their students more.”

The team also witnessed teachers applying ESN content in unique ways that increased student engagement, promoted student-to-student interaction, and allowed for individualized instruction. “It was obvious that they were not applying the activities only as an exact copy of how they saw it in our courses,” Faust added. “They were able to personalize the strategies and make extensions from the textbook that were appropriate for their learners.”

The ESN is a three-year, \$5 million dollar program started in 2019 with a goal of offering professional development opportunities to more than 15,000 secondary English language public school teachers in Uzbekistan. The program, implemented by American Councils for International Education, allowed TESOL International Association to certify 386 Uzbekistan teachers in the TESOL Core Certificate Program™ (TCCP), an intensive, internationally recognized certificate program. The Uzbekistan teachers engaged in 140 hours of in-person coursework with a 20-hour in-classroom practicum; this training was supported by five site-based TESOL coaches as well as seven ESN coaches. In an unexpected development, teachers who earned the TCCP certificate received a 50% salary bonus from the Uzbekistan Ministry of Public Education. In Fall of 2021 as part of the cascading professional

development program, two one-week Training of Trainers Professional Development sessions brought 220 core trainers and regional peer mentors from the program together to prepare for cascading their knowledge to other teachers. During the weeklong session, they completed a 12-hour program on the TESOL 6 Principles for Exemplary Teaching of English Learners® and created action plans for sharing their learning with their fellow English language teaching colleagues throughout the country. In the spring of 2022, they then

cascaded their knowledge about the TESOL 6 Principles and George Mason’s Teaching English Through English course to hundreds of regional peer mentors, who are now



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cascading the program to thousands of mentees. The cascading program is set to finish this summer. More information can be found on TESOL's [blog](#) and in this *TESOL Connections* [article](#).

### About TESOL International Association

TESOL International Association is the trusted global community for knowledge and expertise in English language teaching. TESOL advances the professional expertise in English language teaching to speakers of other languages in multilingual contexts worldwide through professional learning, research, standards, and advocacy. In principle and in practice, TESOL values professionalism, respect, integrity, and lifelong learning and seeks diverse and inclusive participation within the field of English language teaching. TESOL promotes equitable representation, engagement, and broad access to professional opportunities for all and works to eliminate any kind of discrimination. TESOL is a professional community of more than 13,000 English language professionals representing more than 150 countries. For more information, please visit [www.tesol.org](http://www.tesol.org).

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