

Great job  
for Ph.D.  
in Thailand

Summer  
2007

Int'l Reading  
Award Goes  
to ESL  
Teacher in  
California

Stranger in  
Town

Petition  
Drive to  
Reinstate  
Tim Stewart  
at Essential  
Teacher

The Magic of  
Stories

Tougher ESL  
Visa Rules in  
China?

More articles  
to come!

---

/Index/  
/Letters/  
/Profiles/  
/Search/  
/Podcasts/

---

*Subscribe  
for free!*

# ESL MiniConference

## "Blowback" Hits TESOL Administration Petition Calls for Reinstatement of Tim Stewart

A link has been making the rounds in past weeks on various ESL-related listservs, alerting TESOL members and other ESL/EFL professionals to a growing controversy at TESOL, Inc., regarding the May 17th ouster of Tim Stewart from his post as editor of the Essential Teacher, the popular magazine typically bundled with TESOL membership benefits.

The petition is at [www.petitiononline.com/TimET/petition.html](http://www.petitiononline.com/TimET/petition.html).

The document asks the TESOL Board of Directors (meeting this week) to re-instate Stewart, arguing that "no clear reasons were given..., due process was not followed, and neither ET staff, nor the Serial Publications Committee, nor the full TESOL Board of Directors were consulted prior to Tim being removed as ET editor."

Among the signatures on the petition are some well-known names in the TESOL world, including:

Maggie Sokolik, former Chair of the Material Writers Interest Section;

Mary Jane Curry, TESOL Quarterly Editorial Board member;  
Gene van Troyer, Past President, JALT, past editor, The Language Teacher, JALT Conference Proceedings;

Anne Martin, former TESOL Board of Directors Member;  
Mark Algren, Convention Chair, TESOL 2003;

Sarah Benesch, TESOL Quarterly Editorial Advisory Board Member;

Robert B. Kaplan, Past President of TESOL;

Christy M. Newman, MWIS Newsletter Editor;

William Eggington, TESOL Board Member (2003-2006);

Nevine Abdelkhalek, Immediate Past Chair of the Program Administration Interest Section;

Teresa Almeida d'Eca, former TESOL TAC Chair;

Christine Meloni, former section editor and 2005-2006 Interim Editor, Essential Teacher;

Susan Gaer, former Chair of the CALL Interest Section;

Dafne Gonzalez, Coordinator, TESOL Electronic Village;

Will Seng, Book Review Editor, TESL-EJ;

Max Koller, Editor, English Teaching Forum;  
Ken Hyland, Editor, Journal of English for Academic Purposes;  
Bernard Spolsky, Past President of TESOL;  
Thomas N. Robb, former TESOL Board Member;  
Keith Morrow, Editor, ELT Journal;  
Suresh Canagarajah, Editor, TESOL Quarterly;  
Judie Haynes, former Chair of Elementary Interest Section and  
Editor, everythingESL.com.

In addition, a number of columnists and others associated with the Essential Teacher magazine have signed the petition and written eloquently in support of Tim Stewart as editor.

The dismissal of Tim Stewart apparently resulted from discord between him and Charles Amorosino, Executive Director of TESOL, over plans by Amorosino and TESOL Finance Committee Chair Christine Coombe to reduce the Essential Teacher's publication calendar from quarterly to three times a year. According to memos and e-mails posted at a blog, <http://essentialteacher.blogspot.com/>, the dispute started in September, 2006, and continued with various strongly worded complaints from Stewart to TESOL Board Members and Amorosino, via e-mail and phone conversations, about the impending changes at Essential Teacher.

(Note added June 30, 2007: Please refer to an editor's note on our [letters page](#) for new information regarding the circumstances of Timothy Stewart's dismissal.)

After unsuccessful efforts by Stewart to resolve the matter or even get a hearing with TESOL leaders at Seattle TESOL in late March, he posted an urgent note on the [EFL-Law](#) site, asking readers to forward his appeal, in a last-ditch attempt to block the policy change on the Essential Teacher's publication calendar. About the same time, Stewart was begging Amorosino and the board to at least consider making the fourth ET issue an electronic-only edition, rather than cutting it completely.

There are a number of compelling concerns associated with this controversy within TESOL over the firing of Tim Stewart. What is clear is that the organization is undergoing some structural changes, and perhaps moving away from its more open and transparent democratic precedents towards a more centralized, downsized operation in hopes of remedying financial woes.

The lingering question is whether something "essential" of the very spirit of the TESOL organization has been irreparably wounded: or perhaps, in the resolution and setting right of any errors made in this matter, TESOL will rekindle its grassroots, democratic base and come back stronger than

ever.

By Robb Scott  
Editor, ESL MiniConference Online  
[Robb@eslminiconf.net](mailto:Robb@eslminiconf.net)

2007 ESL MiniConference Online



PDF conversion by [PDF Online](#)