Hello everyone! I hope yesterday’s warmer weather gave you a dose of reinvigoration to carry you through until the real spring.

This week, I would like to share one of my favorite quotes from Noam Chomsky with you.

“A language is not just words. It is a culture, a tradition, a unification of a community, a whole history that creates what a community is. It’s all embodied in a language.”

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Professional Learning

- Alliance Française Events: Le Mois de la Francophonie (March 2021)
- UMaine Canadian-American Center—Writing in French in North America Lecture Series and Canadian History Lecture (3/29/21, 4/26/21, and 3/25/21)
- 3/13/21 at 10am: Center for Exceptional Children Webinar on Selecting and Implementing Accommodations for English Learners with Disabilities on Content and English Language Proficiency Assessments
- NECTFL Virtual Workshop Series (3/14/21, and 3/20/21)
- Coach Foreign Language Project: Teaching with Culturally Responsive Comprehensible Input Webinar Series (3/13)
- Duke/UNC/University of Michigan Webinar Series “How to teach about the Middle East—and get it right!” (3/18/21, 4/22, and 5/20)
- Alliance Française - French Classes Spring Session Starts March 22nd
- 3/23/21 at 3pm: Share My Lesson webinar on What ELL Educators Need to Know as Schools Reopen
- 3/25, 4/22, & 5/20 4:30-6pm: Maine Multicultural Center Book Study for Educators on “We Want to Do More Than Survive: Abolitionist Teaching and the Pursuit of Educational Freedom” by Dr. Bettina Love
- 4/22/21-5/1/21: Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages Conference (Now virtual only!)
- Save the Date! 5/7/21 (Time TBD): Maine ESOL Meeting (Virtual)
- 6/23/21 (Time TBD) French Cultural Services—National Seminar on French Dual Language Immersion and Education
- 7/25/21-7/31/21: Deutsche Woche in Bar Harbor
The ACCESS assessments window runs from January 11th – April 16th 2021

Districts and schools have been working diligently to provide the opportunity for English learners to participate in the ACCESS assessment this year when safely feasible! Thank you to those who have reached out with questions related to assessment practices, student eligibility, and guidance on remote learner participation. Over the last year it has become more critical than ever before to understand where students are in their English proficiency development, particularly considering how immigrant and refugee populations have been among the hardest hit during this pandemic.

Special Considerations 2021

Do you have a student unable to participate in assessment due to either a medical emergency or reasons related to the COVID-19 pandemic? If so, please see our MECAS home page for information about special considerations requests.

In the event that you have more than 5 students who will require a special consideration request, please reach out to assessment coordinator Jodi Bossio-Smith for more information.

This week, WIDA and DRC sent out a reminder to all ACCESS Test Coordinators to please return grades 1-3 completed writing booklets as soon as possible to DRC! These are hand-scored and returning in a timely fashion will ensure a smooth delivery of ACCESS data, despite the extension of our assessment window.

Please feel free to reach out with any questions!

Questions? Comments? Need Support?

Jodi Bossio-Smith, State Coordinator for Alternate and WIDA Assessments
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This document includes questions received from the field regarding assessments, including the ACCESS for ELLs. This is a unique year and the DOE Assessment Team continues to work to support Maine districts, schools and educators in the safe administration of assessments!

Articles of Interest

US DOE: From Secretary Cardona—A Letter to Parents & Students

Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium: Effective Strategies for Educating Immigrant Girls

BELatina: The United States is Falling Behind in Bilingual Education, Why Does It Matter?

The 74 Million: Lifeline: How Bilingual Learning Pods Are Helping English Language Learners Navigate Classes During the Pandemic Without Teachers or Peers

WIDA: Conversations with Tim—Talking about Translanguaging

Portland Press Herald: Teacher diversity remains challenge-filled priority for Portland Public Schools

Guardian: French senior citizens link up with language students in lockdown

Mainebiz: Companies are setting DEI goals and changing their cultures, one step at a time

Lead with Languages: Building the Sandbox—My Journey Towards Language Advocacy
Job Opportunities

Wells-Ogunquit CSD High School French Teacher
Cape Elizabeth High School Spanish Teacher
Lewiston Middle School Language Facilitator
Union 69 Part-Time Foreign Language Teacher
RSU 38 High School Spanish Teacher
The New School (Kennebunk) American Sign Language Teacher
Chewonki Spanish Teacher (Residential)
Cheverus High School Spanish Teacher
Augusta ESL Ed Tech II
RSU 20 World Languages Teacher

Community Supports: Angolan Community of Maine

The Angolan Community of Maine serves the Angolan communities of Cumberland and Androscoggin counties. Through outreach, social supports and education they have provided COVID related services to over 156 families since August 2020.

ACM ensures safe isolation or quarantine and helped community members to comply with social distancing and stay home orders by providing culturally tailored support and social services. Over this period, they made sure that clients all had all the supports and benefits that they qualified for and had food security. Also, they actively reached out to community members and cautiously went door to door to educate them on Covid-19 symptoms, contamination methods, prevention methods, and encourage them to comply with CDC guidance. ACM educated the community on COVID prevention and distributed education materials as well as food to over 156 families every other week.

In collaboration with other organizations, the Angolan Community of Maine offers culturally appropriate mental health support and established a community Covid-19 hotline. ACM will continue to provide social supports for community members throughout the year. They are actively educating the community about COVID vaccinations and assisting their members in getting vaccinated.

FMI call (857)214-5268 or visit them on FaceBook.

Highlight

An impressive honor has been bestowed upon deserving Maine educator Nathalie Gorey, a French teacher at Mt. Ararat High School in Topsham. For her many years of leadership and commitment to promoting French language and culture through education, Nathalie has been named a Chevalier-Knight in the Ordre des Palmes Académiques (French for "Order of Academic Palms"). (Read full article in the Maine DOE Newsroom!)

Félicitations, Nathalie!!!

Virtual Office Hours

ESOL

Our next virtual office hour is on 3/17/21 at 3:00pm.
Join Zoom here.
Meeting ID: 839 6220 3107
Passcode: ?2j!TtAe
Recordings will be available on the Maine DOE YouTube channel after each session.
3/10/21 Recording

World Languages

Our next virtual office hour is on 3/19/21 at 3:00pm.
Join Zoom here.
Meeting ID: 825 3957 1009
Passcode: @OTh3scw
Recordings will be available on the Maine DOE YouTube channel after each session.
(Note that there is no recording for 3/5/21 as there were no attendees.)