Message

Hispanic Heritage Month kicked off this week on September 15th and continues through October 15th! It’s a celebration of Hispanic languages, histories, and cultures, and a great time to share with students the remarkable contributions of Hispanic people to the fabric of the United States. Here are some resources you might consider putting to use in your class during this month:

Hispanos en Maine – A free downloadable activity shared with you by our own Johanna Bridges, Spanish Teacher in Bangor! Thanks, Johanna!

Hispanic Heritage Month: Resources for Teachers
National Education Association: Materials by Grade Level
Anti-Defamation League: Hispanic Heritage Month Ideas for Teachers
Scholastic: Ideas for Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month
Learning for Justice: Classroom Resources

April Perkins

Hispanic Heritage Month

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Professional Learning

All virtual Maine DOE offerings will be recorded and posted to the Maine DOE YouTube channel unless noted with an asterisk.

Maine DOE Professional Development Calendar

WIDA Self-Paced eWorkshops are available 9.1.21-8.31.22

Virtual Workshop Series for New ESOL Teachers: Session 1
PowerPoint


9.22.21 at 3pm: Maine DOE Increasing Student Motivation to Learn a World Language

9.22.21-6.1.22 (Various Dates) 4-5pm: National Association of EL Program Administrators, in partnership with CCSSO and US DOE EL Continuous Improvement Series

9.28.21 at 1pm: CARLA Bringing Social Justice into Language Classes: Templates to Guide Instructional Planning

10.5.21 at 1pm: Maine DOE Submitting English Learner Data (This is a repeat of the training that occurred on 9.9.21, due to technical difficulties that prevented attendees from entering and affected the recording.)

10.14.21: WIDA eConference (Waiting list for registration.)

10.19.21 and 10.26.21 from 2-3:30pm: WIDA Nurturing Speaking Growth

10.21.21 at 3pm: Maine DOE Cultural Appropriation in World Languages Classrooms

11.19.21-11.21.21: ACTFL Virtual Convention and Expo

Articles of Interest

Maine DOE Newsroom: Educational Resources to Help Honor National Hispanic Heritage Month

LATV Media: Latine Vs. Latinx: What They Mean, Why They Matter

ABC 7 Chicago: Hispanic, Latino and Latinx: ‘Complicated, but it’s evolving’

Learning for Justice: Expelling Islamophobia

Portland Press Herald: Maine gets approval, more funds for COVID-19 relief in schools

TechCrunch: YouTube TV expands its live TV service with more Spanish-language networks

ARLnow: Arlington Public Schools’ German Language Program Struggles to Stay Afloat

New Hampshire Public Radio: Manchester School Board Raises Doubts About Staffing Of New English Language Learners Program

Amjambo Africa! The Afghan Community in Maine

Book Study Opportunity for World Languages Teachers

Would you like to build your knowledge and skill for Teaching and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence? Up to 20 teachers can sign up to receive a free copy of the book and participate in a virtual book study facilitated by April Perkins. If you're interested, register and share your scheduling preferences here. A final schedule will be shared with participants that takes everyone’s preferences into account as much as possible. There will be six total one-hour sessions, and 12 contact hours will be awarded for time spent reading and engaging in the discussions.
Assessment Updates

NEW for SY 21-22: ACCESS for ELLs and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs materials orders will be provided to WIDA/DRC by Maine DOE, using local SAU enrollment data from Synergy State Edition. Please confirm that all ELs have a recorded EL Start Date in Synergy.

To request paper materials per the student’s IEP or 504 plan, please submit the paper materials request for 2021-2022.

Resources, Updates, Reminders:
The data validation period for the 2021 ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS is underway and ends on 9/21/21. Please reach out to your District Assessment Coordinator for more information.

The first MEA of the year opens October 4th! As a reminder, English learners who are recently arrived in the U.S. have a one-time exemption from participation in the MEA for ELA/literacy [NWEA or MSAA]. For guidance, please see pgs. 11-12 and Appendix B of the MECAS Guidelines for 2021-2022 or reach out with any questions.

Important Links for School Year 2021-2022:
WIDA / Maine State Information Page
ACCESS online, ACCESS paper, and Alternate ACCESS Accommodations

ACCESS for ELLs and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs

Important Dates for SY 21-22

11/9/21 - Maine DOE provides student file to WIDA to generate materials ordering.

12/15/21 - Materials are received by SAUs.

12/15/21-2/25/22 - Additional materials ordering for new and transfer ELs; facilitated by SAUs.

1/10/22-3/4/22 - ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs administration window.

ACCESS for ELLs and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs: Assessment of English Learners Receiving Special Education

For those English learners who are receiving special education, it is important to confer early in the school year with the case manager/IEP team about which assessment accommodations are in place per the student’s IEP or 504 plan. The accessibility features and accommodations provide important access points for students with disabilities and are part of the student’s legal rights to FAPE under IDEA.

The Alternate ACCESS for ELLs is Maine’s alternate assessment of English language proficiency, designed for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. Eligibility to participate in alternate assessments is an IEP Team decision, must be documented in the student’s IEP [section 6B], and is based on state guidance for participation.

With questions, contact Jodi: jodi.bossio-smith@maine.gov
Can Students Receive Both ESOL Services and Special Education Services?

This question is often asked by educators and I want to provide you with some facts.

Yes. The English Learner Students’ and Limited English Proficient Parents’ Dear Colleague Letter (p.12) mandates that all ELs who have not yet reached proficiency on the state English language proficiency assessment must receive ESOL services. This mandate includes ELs with disabilities. Additionally, the Dear Colleague Letter (p .25) specifies that the establishment of “no dual services” policies (i.e., a policy of allowing students to receive either ESOL services or special education services, but not both), is prohibited under IDEA and federal civil rights guidance (Policy Update on Schools’ Obligations Toward National Origin Minority Students with Limited English Proficiency, 2).

How long is the waiting period before referring a student who is an EL?

The IDEA and federal civil rights guidance (Dear Colleague Letter) prohibit a policy of delaying evaluations of ELs to determine the need for special education and related services over a specified period of time based on English language proficiency or EL status.

Can primary grade students who are ELs or older English Proficiency Level 1 students be referred for special education?

Yes. ELs at any proficiency level may have disabilities. The IDEA and federal civil rights guidance (Dear Colleague Letter) mandate that all ELs must be provided special education and related services if determined to be eligible.

The following resource from the U.S. Department of Education expands on this topic.

Tools and Resources for Addressing English Learners with Disabilities: Chapter 6 Tools and Resources for Addressing English Learners With Disabilities (ed.gov)

The Spotlight articles are meant to be useful to you. If you have specific topics that you would like me to explore in the weekly newsletter, please reach out to me with your thoughts at robin.fleck@maine.gov.

Announcements

Administrative Letter 27: Legal Requirements to Provide English Language Acquisition Services to Students who are English Learners (Revised 9.15.2021) See this important update:

It is a federal requirement that all students who are English learners be identified within 30 days of enrollment from the beginning of the school year. For students enrolling at the start of the school year, parents/guardians must be notified of their child’s English learner status within the same 30-day period. After the start of the school year, SAUs must notify parents/guardians within two weeks of their child’s identification.

For example, if a student enrolled on October 1st, you would have 30 days to complete the screening. If you screened on October 15th and the student qualified for EL status, you would need to notify parents/guardians by October 29th. If you screened the student on October 30th, you would need to notify parents/guardians by November 13th.

Seeking ESOL Consultants:
Are you an ESOL-endorsed teacher willing to serve as a consultant for schools in need? Sign up here if you’d like your contact information to be shared with schools who reach out to the DOE for help locating a teacher.
Job Opportunities

Portland Adult Education Intake Coordinator

Limestone ESL Teacher (Consultant) - Virtual, After-Hours Services Needed for Two Students

Waterville ELL Teacher

Westbrook ELL Ed Tech III (One Year)

Maine Arts Academy French Teacher

RSU 21 Part-Time Elementary Spanish Teacher

AOS 98 (Boothbay Region HS) Spanish Teacher

RSU 22 Middle School Spanish Teacher

St. Brigid School Grades 4-8 Spanish Teacher

Wiscasset School Department ASL Interpreter

RSU 57 Spanish Teacher

RSU 20 Part-Time ESOL Teacher

Blue Hill Harbor School French Educator

MSAD 54 World Language Teacher

Lee Academy Foreign Language Teacher

International Day of Sign Languages

September 23rd is the International Day of Sign Languages, established by the United Nations. This year’s theme is “We Sign for Human Rights,” as declared by the World Federation of the Deaf. There are more than 300 different signed languages across the globe, and this year’s theme emphasizes the need for advocacy to “promote the recognition of our right to use sign languages in all areas of life.”

Did you know that as of last school year American Sign Language (ASL) was taught in seven public schools across the state of Maine? Maine is also home to several students who use a signed language other than ASL. On this day, and every day, we recognize the richness of sign languages and the cultures they express.

The International Day of Sign Languages takes place during the International Week of Deaf People, September 20-26, established by the World Federation of the Deaf.

Maine resettlement groups prepare to welcome evacuees from Afghanistan

World Languages

ESOL

3rd Wednesday of Each Month

Focus Topic: English Learner Data & Alternate ACCESS for ELLs Eligibility

Next: 10.20.21 at 3:30pm

Register by 10.17.21

World Language

2nd Wednesday of Each Month

Focus Topic: Gender-Inclusiveness in World Languages

Next: 10.13.21 at 3:00pm

Register by 10.10.21

Monthly Office Hours

World Education News & Reviews: Education in Afghanistan

An informal opportunity to connect with DOE staff and teaching colleagues